



February 6, 2022 Reconciling in Christ Sunday

*An asterisk * invites you to stand
in body or in spirit,
and you are invited to read
responses found in **bold**.
You are welcome to sing during
worship if you are vaccinated!*

Welcome to First Lutheran Church!

Gathering in God's Presence

Prelude — “You Say”
— “Come Now”

Written by Lauren Diagle
Written by Steve Kidder
Jeremiah Band

Welcome

*Opening Statements

In God's Boundless Diversity, we are all Made in God's Image! We gather together in this time and space, breathing in the Spirit's invitation to connect and learn, and answer Jesus' call to justice and action.

We pledge to be advocates for all siblings from God's diverse Kin-dom. We commit to daily bettering ourselves and being active in our advocacy. We dedicate ourselves to staying informed, speaking up, being honest, and supporting justice work every day.

***Gathering Hymn** — no. 641, St. 1, 4, & 5, congregation sings the refrain

“All Are Welcome”
Led by the Jeremiah Band

*Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Holy Parent, And of the + Child, And of the Holy Spirit, ever-present in our lives.
Amen.

Your people, Lord, long to feel seen, named, and cared for.

The church has excluded and pushed away people, calling them “other” and “different”

and waits for those who have been harmed to lead the work of reconciliation.

Today we worship, with open hearts and minds,
readying ourselves for the holy ministry of justice and equity work.

As your people, we know God is with us
and that your Holy Spirit makes reconciliation possible.

As we learn how to make the church a safer space,
we trust in the Spirit's guidance.

As we seek to be an advocate for our LGBTQIA+ siblings and all who are told they are "other,"
we trust in the Spirit's guidance.

As we seek to learn more about the intersectionality of ministry,
we trust in the Spirit's guidance.

It is with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and grace of Jesus, we confess and ask forgiveness. We proclaim with joy and love that people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions matter; that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) matter; that neuro-diversity and differing abilities of bodies are sacred; and that we as a church stand firmly against racism, homophobia, transphobia, and any other sin that makes people feel less than because of who God lovingly made them to be. We commit our words and actions to be ones of advocacy for all of the people in your Kin-Dom. Holy Creator, we celebrate your boundless diversity, and see the ways we are made in Your image. **Amen.**

***Canticle of Praise** — from *Songs for the Holy Other*

“Love Astounding”
Sung to the tune NETTLETON

**1. Love astounding, love confounding
limits fearful minds impose.
Love renewing, love pursuing
every heart until it knows
love's transforming, healing goodness,
love's abiding, gentle grace,
love's endurance, love's assurance,
love's consoling, strong embrace.**

**2. Love receiving, love believing,
we rejoice with thanks and song,
faith regaining, hope proclaiming;
love has taught us, we belong
safe within love's tender keeping,
safe from fear's persistent call.
Love defending, love unending,
love of God enfolding all.**

***Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

Mighty God, soften our hearts this day as we seek to hear your words and commands. In a world where we are daily confronted with ways we are different, told to make ourselves smaller for the convenience of others, teach us as your people how to celebrate your boundless diversity reflected in every person who is made in your image! To have safe spaces is to experience your saving grace. Guide us to be people of faith who are committed to learning and re-learning what it means to welcome, include, celebrate, and advocate for all you call Beloved. **Amen.**

Hearing & Responding to Scripture

A Reading from Hebrew Scriptures — Jeremiah 1:4-10

4Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,

5“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;

I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

6Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” 7But the Lord said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

8Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
says the Lord.”

9Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,
“Now I have put my words in your mouth.

10See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to pull down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 71:1-6 — *spoken responsively by verse*

1In you, O LORD, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.

2In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me.

3Be to me a rock of refuge,
a strong fortress, to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.

4Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.

5For you, O LORD, are my hope,
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

**6Upon you I have leaned from my birth;
it was you who took me from my mother's womb.
My praise is continually of you.**

A Reading from the Epistles — 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

1If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

4Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. 9For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; 10but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. 11When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. 12For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation** — from *Liturgy of Welcome*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, Hear God's

Word, God's wel - come to us! wel - come to us!

***Gospel** — Luke 4:21-30

The Gospel of Luke, the 4th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

21Then [Jesus] began to say to [all in the synagogue in Nazareth,] “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” 22All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” 23He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’” 24And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. 25But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; 26yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. 27There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” 28When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. 29They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. 30But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon — “Loving through Change”

Reed Fowler
ELCA Ministry Candidate

God of man - y fa - ces, we of - fer our praise,
God of man - y gen - ders, our world re - flects you,
God of man - y names, we in - vite you to show
God of man - y bod - ies, a - bide with - in ours,

sing - ing your glo - ry through all of our days.
sun - rise and sun - set u - ni - ting our hues,
us the new names that re - flect our true souls.
shift - ing more each day through time and through scars.

Hear ev - er grow - ing voi - ces, once fra - gile, now strong,
wo - ven in - to a ci - ty with jewels of all shades,
Breathe with your ho - ly spir - it to give us the Word
Come sanc - ti - fy our bod - ies, all fash - ioned by you,

car - ry - ing mel - o - dies in ex - pan - sive new songs.
hou - ses of ru - by and walls rowed wth jade.
that will in - dwell dry bones, grant - ing new live once heard.
ho - li - er ev - ery - day, still be - com - ing more true.

*Prayers of Intercession

With the whole earth, let us lift our hearts and voices in prayer.

God, today we pray for anyone suffering from depression, anxiety, eating disorders, PTSD, schizophrenia, or any other mental illness. We ask you to guide them, and us, to assist them in getting the help that they need. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

God, we think of women and female-identifying people as we continue to fight for gender equity. Assist us in this fight, so that one day, we may all be seen as equals in the eyes of the law. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

Jesus, we ask that you help us to become better allies. Guide those who are learning more about their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, those who have been victims of hate, those who have not been accepted, and those who are not able to be open about who they are. **God in your mercy. Hear our Prayers.**

Creator God, teach us how to be better advocates for our Black, Brown, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) siblings, and help them to be treated equally as they should have been from the start. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

God, we pray for those who have been wrongfully convicted of a crime, those who have not gotten the justice that they deserve, and all those whose voices are being ignored by the criminal justice system. We pray that the true wrong-doers are held accountable. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

God, since March of 2020, we have battled the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. Bless everyone who has been negatively affected by this virus. Remind us daily to do what we can to show love to our neighbor. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

Teacher God, we pray for those who are struggling to learn due to learning disabilities, lack of resources, and difficult learning environments. We ask that you help us to ensure everyone has access to a good education. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

God, we pray for the sick and especially for the sick who cannot get help. We hope that one day, everyone will have access to adequate healthcare. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

Spirit, we think of anyone who is suffering with the loss of a loved one, and we ask you to guide them through the process of grieving. We pray that they will find your comfort and peace. God in your mercy. **Hear our Prayers.**

Trusting in the One who made us, dwells in us, and calls us, we lift up these prayers, and all others in our hearts, as we pray together the prayer Christ taught us using these inclusive words or the words you are most comfortable with:

Our creator in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Offering

Music at the Offering

“God Calls You Good”

Paul M. Vasile
Jeremiah Band

*God calls you good, beloved child. You are a treasure deeply prized.
And you can say to every doubting voice: ‘God calls you good, beloved child.’*

Departing to Serve God’s World

Announcements

***Sending Hymn** — no. 1038, from *All Creation Sings*

“God, We Gather as Your People”
Led by the Jeremiah Band

See Back Page

***Blessing and Dismissal**

Siblings in Christ, let us go out into the world in peace;
take up the pledge to be an advocate for our LGBTQIA+ siblings
and all those in need of inclusion and advocacy, and leave this space with a fervent passion for welcome.
Gathered into one by the Spirit, we go in peace to serve the Creator.
Seek God’s boundless diversity in all you see, and know you are made in God’s image!
Thanks be to God!

Acknowledgements

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Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris
Preacher: Reed Fowler
Director of Music: Emily Bruflat
Audio/Video: Leif Hammar

Greeters: Jan Jensen, Ellen Conover
Reader: Cheryl Kautt
Ushers: Steve Erickson, David Kennedy
Musicians: Steve Kidder, Jake Banks, Ivy McHugh, Raina Roemhildt, Rebekah Roemhildt

Worship Service Created By

This year, ReconcilingWorks national office partnered with the spirit and voice of our young people to cultivate a worship experience centered around their voices and passions for the work of advocacy. They created the Prayers of the People petitions, and their understanding of what it means to take a pledge to support our LGBTQIA+ siblings have inspired us to dream of ways to expand our reach of welcome in the church and larger world.

THANK YOU to the young people who helped make this worship service possible! www.reconcilingworks.org

Announcements

- Flowers are in celebration of RIC Sunday given by the Social Justice Committee.
- Please wear an N-95, KN-95, or surgical mask in the building at all times, covering your mouth and nose! Level 3 masks are available in the Gathering Space.

Resources for LGBTQ+ Allyship in a Christian Context: Would you like to learn more about being an ally to the LGBTQ+ community? Or, perhaps you have questions about your own sexuality and/or gender identity. There are numerous resources, but the following would be a good place to start:

- *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians* by Austen Hartke
- *One Coin Found: How God’s Love Stretches to the Margins* by Emmy Kegler
- *Shameless: A Sexual Reformation* by Nadia Bolz-Weber
- *Love Without Limits: Jesus’ Radical Vision for Love with No Exceptions* by Jacqueline A. Bussie
- *Facing the Music: My Story* by Jennifer Knapp
- *God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships* by Matthew Vines
- *Children’s Book: A Church for All* by Gayle E. Pitman
- Queer Grace: An Online Encyclopedia for LGBTQ and Christian Life: <http://queergrace.com/>
- For more recommendations, visit <http://queergrace.com/books/>, and remember to support local and/or minority-owned bookstores!

Prayers

- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Tom and Deb Johnson, Tom Michels, Abigail Christenson, Betty Gustafson, Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Myrene Bunge, Glen

Stryker, Erika Schuldt, Tim Sebring, Mary Pieklo, Gloria Kane, Gwen Powell, Nancy Maag, and Urusla McRostie.

- We pray for those who have faced discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity. May First Lutheran be truly safe, welcoming, and free of judgment for those who have been mistreated.
- We pray for all those families continuing to adjust to the loss of loved ones.

***Sending Hymn** — no. 1038, from *All Creation Sings*

“God, We Gather as Your People”

St. 1: Jeremiah Band St. 2: Pulpit/Piano Side St. 3: Lectern/Font Side St. 4: All



1 God, we gath - er as your peo - ple to raise our song a -
2 Oh, we sing for all the chil - dren, that one day they be
3 Oh, we pray for all the young lives cut short by fear and
4 God, we're work - ing for the fu - ture when chil - dren far and



bove, and we dare to claim the prom - ise of your love.
free; and we sing for gen - er - a - tions yet to be,
shame, so a - fraid of who they are and whom they love.
wide can . . . live their lives with dig - ni - ty and pride.



Though the day may not yet be here, we
that they nev - er have a rea - son to
May the mes - sage now be ban - ished that your
As they grow in strength and stat - ure, may they



trust it soon will be, when your chil - dren will be free.
doubt that they are blest. May they, in your love, find rest.
love is for the few; may their faith in you re - new.
join us hand in hand, as a - gainst all hate we stand.



Oh, may our hearts and minds be o - pened, fling the church doors o - pen



wide. May there be room e - nough for ev - 'ry - one in - side.



For in God there is a wel - come, in God we all be -



long. May that wel - come be our song.