March 15, 2026 ☩

Fourth Sunday in Lent

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

"God's Work. Our Hands. To serve ALL people."

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold.**

P: Indicates the Presider. AM: Indicates the Assisting Minister.

We Gather

Prelude - "St. Christopher" setting, David Cherwien

Words of Welcome

***Gathering Hymn** - no. 722 "O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate"

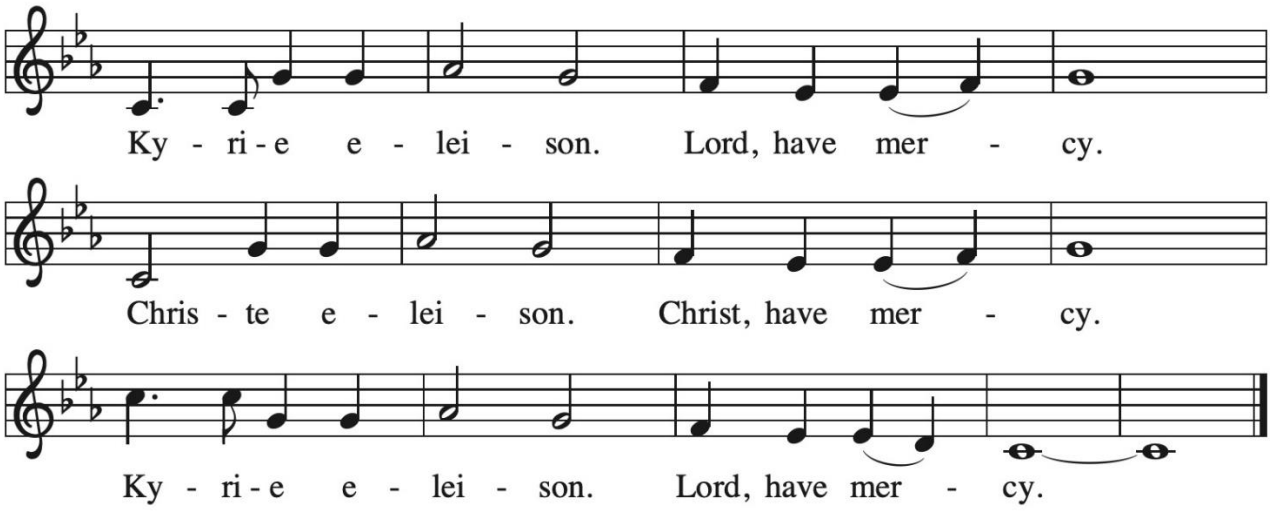
***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.
Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.** God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.
Amen.

*__Apostolic Greeting__ P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

*__Kyrie__ – page 31, *All Creation Sings, Setting 12*



*__Prayer of the Day__

P: Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

We Listen to God's Word

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

1 1 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from
being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the
Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." 2 Samuel said, "How can I
go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I
have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' 3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you
shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." 4 Samuel did what
the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him
trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" 5 He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to
the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his
sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before
the LORD." 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his
stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the
outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." 8 Then Jesse called Abinadab and made
him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." 9 Then Jesse made

Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” 10 Jesse made seven of
his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of
these.” 11 Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the
youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him, for we
will not sit down until he comes here.” 12 He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and
had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him, for this is the
one.” 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and
the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out
and went to Ramah.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23- *The psalm will be spoken responsively by whole verse.*

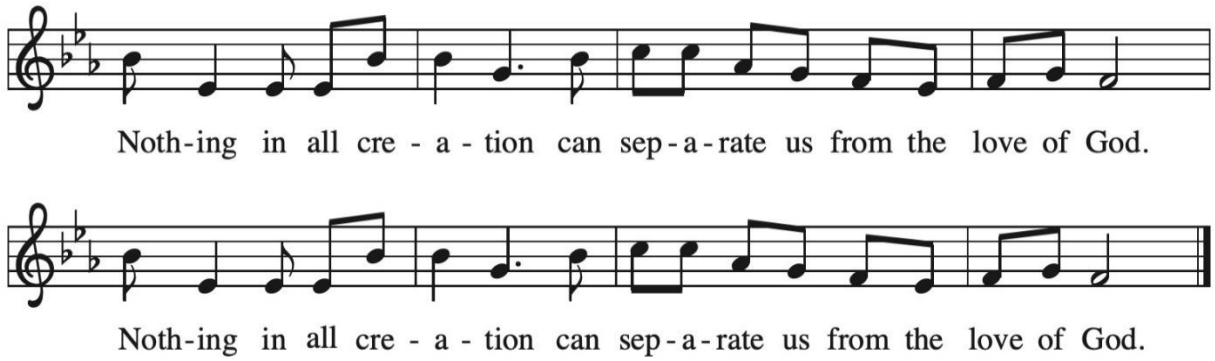
1 The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.
2 **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures**
and leads me beside still waters.
3 You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.
4 **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;**
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
6 **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,**
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

8 Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, 9 for the
fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. 10 Try to find out what is pleasing
to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. 12 For it is
shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, 13 but everything exposed by the light
becomes visible, 14 for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

*__Gospel Acclamation__ "Nothing in all creation" – page 34, *All Creation Sings, setting 12*



Gospel: John 9:1-41

The Gospel of John, the 9th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

1 As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who
sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor
his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4 We must
work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As
long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 When he had said this, he spat on the
ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7 saying to him,
"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back
able to see. 8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this
not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No,
but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." 10 But they kept asking him, "Then how
were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes,
and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my
sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a
Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also began to
ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I
washed, and now I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does
not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?"
And they were divided. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It
was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called
the parents of the man who had received his sight 19 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you
say was born blind? How then does he now see?" 20 His parents answered, "We know that this is
our son and that he was born blind, 21 but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we
know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." 22 His parents said
this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who
confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. 23 Therefore his parents
said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give
glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” 25 He answered, “I do not know whether he is
a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” 26 They said to him, “What
did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” 27 He answered them, “I have told you already,
and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his
disciples?” 28 Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of
Moses. 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where
he comes from.” 30 The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he
comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does
listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32 Never since the world began has it been
heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he
could do nothing.” 34 They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to
teach us?” And they drove him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe
in the Son of Man?” 36 He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in
him.” 37 Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” 38 He said,
“Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. 39 Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so
that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.” 40 Some of the
Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are
we?” 41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We
see,’ your sin remains.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon Pastor Chris Culuris

***Hymn** –no. 793 “Be Thou My Vision”

***The Apostles’ Creed** –
Together let us profess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only
Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the
Father, and he will come to judge the
living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***Prayers of Intercession**
AM: Reconciled by God’s mercy and sustained by God’s presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *After each petition*: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

AM: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

*__Sign of Peace__ P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**
Please offer one another some sign of Christ's peace.

Offering – For electronic giving please scan the QR on announcement page and ***Thank you!***

Offering music –"Your Kingdom Come O Father" arr. David Cherwien

*__Offering Prayer__

AM: O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

We Share God's Holy Meal

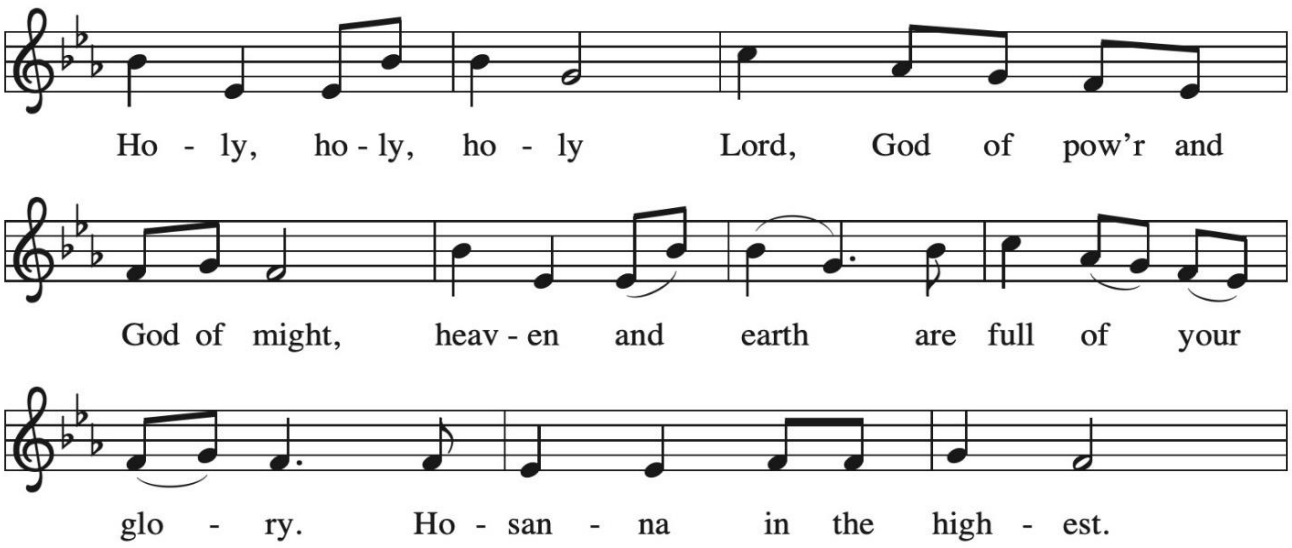
*__Great Thanksgiving and Preface__ – spoken

The Lord be with you. **And also with you**

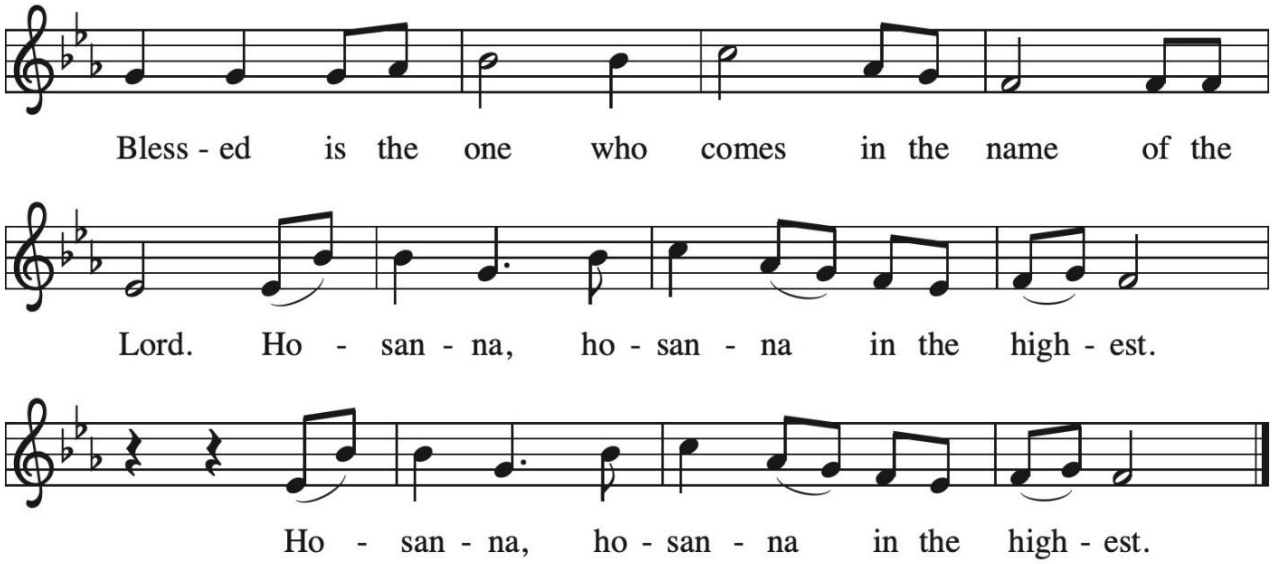
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*__Holy, Holy, Holy__ - page 36 from *All Creation Sings, Setting 12*



Holy, Holy, Holy continues…



***Words of Institution**

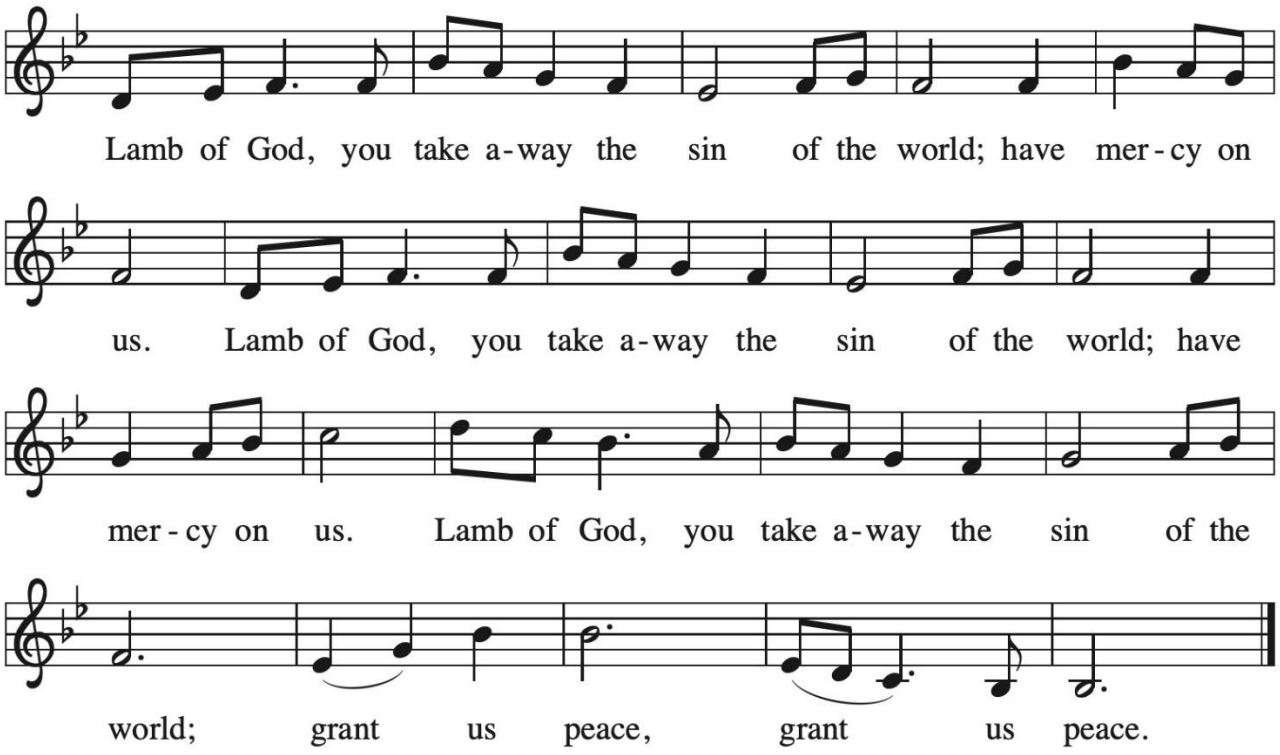
***The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom 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 kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen

***Invitation to the Table** – P: Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

Distribution of Communion - *we will be serving communion continuously.*

Lamb of God – page 40, *All Creation Sings, Setting 12*



Hymn –no. 614 "There Is a Balm in Gilead"
Hymn - no. 553 "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"

Prayer After Communion
P: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

We Go in Peace

Announcements

***Sending Hymn** – no. 779 "Amazing Grace"

***Blessing & Dismissal**

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ☩ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

AM: Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

***Postlude** – Prelude in g minor J. S. Bach

In Worship Today
Pastor: Chris Culuris
Organist: Brenda Handel-Johnson
Assisting Minister: Mary Spear
Clarinet soloist: Paul Szybnski
Director of Choirs:
Sarah Chambers

Ushers: Kinley Janovsky, Tom Thorkelson, Steve Bolint
Communion Preparers: Mark & Ellen Conover
Communion Servers: Amy Pehrson, Cindy Nadeau
Acolyte: Loic Bly, Max Szybnski

Tech: Rachel Ribar, Colton Janovsky
Bread Baker: Nancy Thorkelson

Prayers: We pray for those on our long-term list: Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Lenore Schnobrich, Gloria Kane, Harvey Kane, Karen Handel, Erika Schuldt, Ruth Edberg, Bob Lamb, Dorothy and Paul Lutz, Steve Erickson, Barbra Grabowski (Ted Kunze's sister), Garrett Paul, Mary Ann Scharf, David Ribar, Nate Tuener (family friend of Bob and Rhoda Stenson), and Sandy Grochow.

Acknowledgments

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FLC Refrigerator Page

Worship, Education and Service:

- The **Staff Support Committee** will be serving fellowship after worship today.
- **Pontius Pilate's Passion**: This Lenten season, join Annalise Rivas for an exploration of the Passion story like you've never seen it before. Wednesday evenings from 6:45-7:30pm in the Pioneer Parlor, February 11 - April 8.
- **Meals On Wheels** drivers needed. If interested call Sue at 507-550-0730 and leave a message.
- Monday morning **Bible Study** continues at 9:30am in the chapel.
- **Serve Boldly Milwaukee** participants meet on Wednesday, March 18 at 8:15 pm.

Events at FLC and around the area:

- **Soup Supper this Wed, 5:15 – 6:15pm**: Building & Grounds, Greens, and the Tech Committees are providing our soup supper.
- **A Noisy Offering** will be collected on Wednesday nights for the St. Peter Area Food Shelf throughout March.
- **March Food Share Drive**. There's still time to contribute. Please drop your donations in the grocery cart in the Gathering Space. SPAF is in need of flour, oil and sugar. Thank you!
- **Personal Hygiene product of the month: <u>toothpaste</u>.** We collect a different item each month for the St. Peter Area Food Shelf. Please drop donations in the box in the gathering space.
- **FLC is hosting the USD Chamber singers in concert at 7:00pm, on Thursday, March 19.** <u>We are organizing overnight housing for 40 musicians.</u> Can you provide a bed and breakfast for 2 or more singers? Sign-up sheet is on the table in the Gathering Space or send Deacon Brenda a note and thank you!
- "**Walking the Palm Sunday Path**" on March 29. FLC is participating in this family friendly event to proclaim that we are Christians who are about loving God and loving our neighbors. We will gather for sandwiches at noon at FLC. At 1pm we will caravan down to Mankato. From 2-3pm we will walk on a 7 stop route carrying banners and messages of Christian love for neighbor with a live donkey (all are invited to create a sign or banner at Trinity Lutheran-St. Peter from 1-3pm on March 22). All are invited to join at any point of this walk that will be based on Matthew 25.
- June 28th- July 2 is the **Adult BWCA** trip. If interested call Mark Szybnski at 507-380-9180 or email him at markszybnski@gmail.com.
- Join **Pastor Heather Culuris** for an exploration of Hope. Jane Goodall's book "The Book of Hope" will be featured as well as discussion of biblical hop, multimedia resources, music, and poetry. Wednesday evenings during Adult Ed in the Pioneer Parlor. April 8, 15, 22, and 29. It is best if you can read the book before the sessions. It is available to order online, as an ebook, as an audiobook, or from the library.

Please use the QR code below for electronic giving and thank you!

QR offering code