

JESUS
TAUGHT THEM
AS ONE HAVING
AUTHORITY

MARK 1:22

Called by the Spirit, we serve Christ, sharing God's love with all.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
WEBSITE: firstlutherantopeka.org
1234 SW Fairlawn Road, Topeka, KS 66604
Church office: (785) 272-5302 CDO office: (785) 272-5999

Ministers
Pastor
Children's Day Out (CDO) Director
Caring for Kids 1st Director
Organist
Director of Music
Director of Handbell Choir
Secretary
Assistant Secretary
Bookkeeper
Missionaries in Russia
Missionaries for Ripe For Harvest World Outreach

All Members of First
Pastor Jenny Jackson
Julie Lamott
Bryleigh Willis
Jerry Anderson
Mark Fuller
Linda Anderson
LaDonna J. Little
Jill Loomans
Cindy Crawford
Rev. Bradn & Natasha Buerkle
Jim & Dawn Anderson

WE WELCOME all who worship with us today! We extend a special greeting to our visitors and invite you to worship with us again soon. Please make yourselves known to our pastor and people.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION: Lutheran Christians believe that in the sacrament of Holy Communion, by the power of God's Word and Holy Spirit, we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ, along with the bread and wine, for our forgiveness and salvation. If you share in this belief, you are welcome to participate with us. Non-communing children and adults may come forward to receive a blessing. White grape juice is available, as well as gluten free wafers. If you desire to receive communion at your pew, please alert an usher during the prelude. Communion is done by intinction.

GREETINGS PARENTS: **Sunday School for children Pre-K through 5th grade** takes place during our worship service. Children will be invited up for a children's sermon with the pastor, after which any who would like are invited to attend Sunday school. This will include a Bible reading, story, craft, and more. The teachers will bring the students back to worship in time for communion with your family. Should you prefer your child to remain in the sanctuary during worship, we have Children's Bibles in the pews and worship activity bags just outside the sanctuary. Faith Formation for our middle school and high school students will take place during the week at our youth group times.

BRIEF WORD ABOUT OFFERING: Offering plates are available at the back of the worship space, on the bulletin table. To give online, please go to FirstLutheranTopeka.org and click on 'contribute'.
Please place attendance form in the offering plate.

WHEELCHAIR available in the north entranceway or in the church office.
EARPHONES for the hearing impaired and **LARGE PRINT BULLETINS.**



THE CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

HOLY COMMUNION, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP, SETTING FOUR

5:00 P.M. & 10:00 A.M.

JANUARY 27 & 28, 2024

Before worship, talk to God. During worship, let God talk to you. After worship, talk to your fellow worshipper.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE “Herr Christ, der einig Gottes Shon” BuxWV 192
“The Only Son from Heaven”

(D. Buxtehude, 1637-1707)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CHIMES

Please turn and face the cross as it is carried in.

519 GATHERING SONG “Open Your Ears, O Faithful People”

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, creator of darkness and light, word of truth, wind sweeping over the waters.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God, our rock and refuge,

C: we pour out our hearts before you. We have known you but have not always loved you. We have wounded one another and sinned against you. We have not always recognized the Holy Spirit dwelling in each of us. Remember your covenant. Renew your creation. Restore us, that we might proclaim your good news to all. Amen.

P: The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. God has spoken: The time of grace is now. In Jesus, the reign of God has come near. By the authority of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are God’s beloved.

C: Amen.

GREETING

P: Siblings in Christ, beloved children of God: grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

C: And also with you.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Congregation shall sit.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD

God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung, and preached.

NOISY OFFERING and CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God anymore, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 111 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. (Psalm 111:10)*



The fear of the LORD is the be - gin - ning of wis - dom.

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with ¹my whole heart, * in the assembly of the upright, in the ¹congregation.

²**Great are your ¹works, O LORD, * pondered by all who de- ¹light in them.**

³Majesty and splendor ¹mark your deeds, * and your righteousness en- ¹dures forever.

⁴**You cause your wonders to ¹be remembered; * you are gracious and full ¹of compassion. R**

⁵You give food to ¹those who fear you, * remembering forev- ¹er your covenant.

⁶**You have shown your people the power ¹of your works * in giving them the lands ¹of the nations.**

⁷The works of your hands are faithful- ¹ness and justice; * all of your pre- ¹cepts are sure.

⁸**They stand fast forev- ¹er and ever, * because they are done in ¹truth and equity. R**

⁹You sent redemption to your people * and commanded your cove- ¹nant forever; * holy and awesome ¹is your name.

¹⁰**The fear of the LORD is the begin- ¹ning of wisdom; * all who practice this have a good understanding. * God's praise en- ¹dures forever. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.

¹Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark the 1st chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Mark 1:21-28

Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Congregation shall sit.

SERMON

310 HYMN OF THE DAY *"Songs of Thankfulness and Praise"*

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

APOSTLES' CREED

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

A: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

A: Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer especially Karon, Sue, Laura, Verla, Ruth, Alice, and Donna as well as our homebound members, all unable to worship this weekend, and all family, friends and even enemies we name now, either out loud or in the silence of our hearts (pause). Surround them with your unwavering presence. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We lift up in prayer our siblings in Christ across the Central States Synod, especially the people and ministry of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, (Hoisington, KS); Our Savior's Lutheran Church, (Camdenton, MO); St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, (Cole Camp, MO); and Iglesia Luterana Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, (Garden City, KS). May God continue to lead people in working together for the sake of the Gospel. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives. We trust that all who have died rest in your loving care. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. **R:** Peace be with you.

Congregation shall sit.

CHOIR ANTHEM *"Here I Am, Lord"*

(D. L. Schutte / J. Schrader)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Blessed are you, Holy One,

C: for all good things come from you. In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

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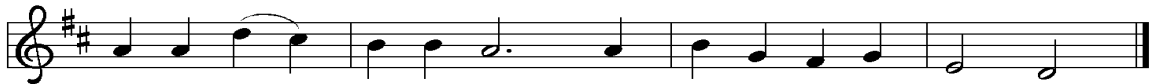
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C: **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.

P: Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table of mercy and joy.

Communion today will be served at the rails, with bread and small individual cups of wine or grape juice. For those who would prefer, a chalice of wine will also be available to dip the bread into.

Congregation shall sit.

COMMUNION SONG “*Lamb of God*”

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Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY “*There Is a Balm in Gilead*”

(African American Spiritual, arr. Sam Batt Owens, 1928-1998)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

Congregation: Amen

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Giver of every gift, Christ’s body is our food, and we are Christ’s body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P: God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, † bless you and remain with you always.

C: **Amen.**

876 SENDING SONG “*Let the Whole Creation Cry*”

DISMISSAL

A: Called by the spirit,

C: **We serve Christ, sharing God’s love with all.**

A: Go in peace. You are God’s beloved.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation shall sit.

CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING



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THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given by Nancy Sherbert in memory of her grandmother, Mary Levett.

THE ETERNAL CANDLE FOR JANUARY is given by JoAnn Stanley in memory of Dena Rodell.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH ARE REQUESTED FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Karon Gambrell (Stormont-Vail Hospital), Sue Wild (Stormont-Vail Hospital), Laura Haefke (Aldersgate Rehab), Verla Buch (Lexington Park Rehab), Stephen Blank (home), Richard Price (home), Cherie McGinnis (home), Ruth Denno (Lexington Park Rehab), Alice Purdy (home), Donna Kruger (home), Rob Peterson (home), Carren Reed (home), Allyn Lockner (Brewster Health Care), Kathy Cheatham (home), Vera Pearce (home), Blake Hopper (home), Richard Carlson (Cindy Lear's cousin), Steve Holloman (neighbor friend of Chris & Cindy Lear), Aneka Lilya (LaDonna Little's sister-in-law), Frank Phillips (Bonnie's son), Barbara Aubert (friend of Nancy Vaughn), Janine Wagner (Donna Kruger's sister), Manny Ramos (Shirley Perry's nephew), Leuita Meyer (Verla Buch's sister-in-law), Don Kaphingst (Margaret Stewart's brother), Heidi Mark (Bill & Joyce's daughter), Loren Johannes (friend of Erv & Ann Sanders), Jayne Cool (friend of the Lubers), Anita Freeman (neighbor friend of Nancy & Ken Sherbert), Robert Jones (friend of Sylvia Levings), June Fisher (friend of Marvin Wingert), Gloria & Dennis Lyon (Barb Collins' aunt & uncle), Charline Matheny (friend of Patti Klein), Cheryl Koch (Kathy's sister-in-law), Linda Falchek (friend of Wendy Sanders), Linda Meyer (Verla Buch's sister-in-law), Drew Hartz (Steve & Kathy Couch's son-in-law), Dan Fraleigh (Sherrie Petersen's brother-in-law), Velda Jacobs (Eileen Caspers' aunt), Lenette Kottas (Eileen Caspers' mother), John Browne (Penny & Marvin Boleski's brother-in-law), Katelynn Herring (Jeanie Schuler's great-niece).

✠ IN THE FIRST PLACE THIS WEEK ✠

Children's Day Out Preschool (CDO) schedule: M, T, W & T 9am-3pm Friday 9-11:30 am

Sunday, January 28

FOURTH EPIPHANY

10:00 a.m. – Worship Service (Sanctuary)

10:10 a.m. – Pre-K thru 5th Grade Sunday School

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Monday, January 29

1:00 p.m. – Staff Meeting

7:00 p.m. – Prose & Cons Book Group (202)

7:00 p.m. – Boy Scout Troop 175 (PH)

Tuesday, January 30

6:00 p.m. – Solar Panel Discussion Meeting (S)

Wednesday, January 31

9:00 a.m. – What-Sew-Ever

Thursday, February 1

6:15 p.m. – Bell Choir Rehearsal

7:00 p.m. – Vocal Choir Rehearsal

Friday, February 2

Pastor Jenny's Day Off

10:00 a.m. – Coffee & Lectionary (202)

Saturday, February 3

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – BSA in Parish Hall

5:00 p.m. – Worship Service (Chapel)

Sunday, February 4

FIFTH EPIPHANY

SCOUT SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. – Worship Service (Sanctuary)

10:10 a.m. – Pre-K thru 5th Grade Sunday School

11:30 a.m. – Children, Youth & Family Ministry (L)

11:30 a.m. – Property Committee (202)

11:30 a.m. – Pre-Bowl Super Party and Chili Cook-off (PH)

6:00 p.m. – Pastor Jenny at Arbor Court Worship

LESSONS FEBRUARY 3 & 4

Isaiah 40:21-31

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Mark 1:29-39

LAY MINISTERS 1/28	4th EPIPHANY	10:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister		Ann McConkey
Lector		Denny Payne
Acolyte		Bloom Tork
Communion Assistants		Joyce Koenig, Char Taggart
Greeters		Barb Collins, Leslie Malone
Ushers		Randy Debenham, Thomas & Ben Einck
Council Member		Robert Hanna
Sunday School Leaders		Laura Garner, Bob Wollin
Coffee Host		Char Taggart, Pat Booth
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess		Chris & Cindy Lear
Saturday Lector		Joyce Mark
Altar Guild Setup/Clean up	Ann McConkey, Jeanie Schuler, Karen Wollin, Nancy Besta	
Tech Team	John Hanna, Austin Jackson	
Stephen Minister on Call	Carolyn Olson	

LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEK

LAY MINISTERS 2/4	5th EPIPHANY	10:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister		Robert Hanna
Lector		Bonnie Phillips
Acolyte		Katie Krumins
Communion Assistants		Scott & Melanie Schultz
Greeters		Kathy Couch, LaVerne Engelhardt
Ushers		Diane Dukat, Kevin Eaton
Council Members		LaVerne Engelhardt, Nancy Johnson
Sunday School Leaders		Barb Collins, Karon Gambrell
Coffee Hosts		Steve & Kathy Couch
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess		Randy Debenham, Barb Collins
Saturday Lector		Sherrie Petersen
Altar Guild Setup/Clean up		Barb Collins, Kathy Couch, Karen Wollin, Nancy Besta
Tech Team		Jenn Betz, Stephen Blank
Stephen Minister on Call		Lydia Peterson

PARISH NOTICES

CARE FOR CREATION

Winter is a time of rest and renewal for the earth and for God’s creatures, including us. How does winter reflect the Sabbath? How can you invite the practice of Sabbath into your life this season?



EARTH FIRST RESCHEDULED meeting for the congregation on **Tuesday, January 30 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary regarding First Lutheran moving in the direction of **installing solar panels**. Guest speakers will be Mr. Clyde Schwanke from Southern Hills Mennonite Church and Mr. Bill Wood from Cromwell Environmental. Please come out to learn about the benefits of solar energy. Bring your questions and concerns! We hope you will plan on attending to learn how we at First can continue being good stewards of God’s creation! If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Couch at 570-449-5021 or couch1093@gmail.com.



The **BOOK STUDY GROUP** will begin their new study of “**Encounters with Jesus**” by **Timothy Keller** the week of **February 5th**. The Monday afternoon session will meet in the church library at 1:00 on February 5th, 19th, March 4th and 18th. The Friday evening session will meet at 7:00 on zoom starting February 9th, 23rd, March 8th, and 22nd. The first order of books has been handed out, so if you would like to join in, please contact the church office, or Joyce Koenig at 501-781-5692 or koenig1942@hotmail.com. Or if you choose, you may order your book from Amazon. The first session will discuss the first three chapters of the book. Tim Keller is a very accessible author, and this book has many insights using the Gospel of John. So please join us as we encounter Jesus.

PRE-BOWL SUPER PARTY AND CHILI COOK-OFF
WHEN: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4
WHERE: PARISH HALL
TIME: IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OUR SERVICE
DRESS: COME ADORNED IN YOUR FAVORITE TEAM
WHAT TO BRING: YOUR FAVORITE GAME SNACK



CHILI COOK-OFF
ARE YOU GAME ENOUGH TO PARTICIPATE?
WE WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:
VISUAL, AROMA, TASTE, TEXTURE, SPICE LEVEL
PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED

If you are interested in participating in the Chili Cook-Off, please complete the form below or call/email
Kathy Couch at 570-449-5021 or couch1093@gmail.com
FORM CAN BE FOUND IN THE NAVE LOUNGE ON THE COFFEE TABLE.



DOORSTEP'S "SOUPERBOWL SUNDAY" **FEBRUARY 11th**

Bring soup and crackers to help stock Doorstep's pantry!



LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY on February 14th.

Join us for worship on Ash Wednesday with a **service of imposition of ashes and communion at 7:00 p.m.** both in person and on Facebook Livestream and YouTube Livestream. We will also be offering a **Drive Thru Imposition of Ashes in the South Parking Lot at Noon on February 14th.** During the drive thru, a scripture will be read, ashes will be marked on your forehead, and a prayer will be spoken. Let us come with penitential hearts as we enter into the season of Lent.

MID-WEEK LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES

will continue the following week on **Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.**

Come early for a **LIGHT LENTEN SUPPER** before worship beginning at **5:30 p.m.**

LENT 2024 THEME: HOLY LAMENT

This series explores various kinds of lament found in scripture. Each week we will consider what it means to sit with our grief rather than try to push it aside. We will discover that many faithful believers have wrestled with grief, sorrow, and questions for God about why the innocent suffer. This series understands lament as one of the more faithful things we can do. When we approach God with honesty and humility, and we admit that some things are too big for our hearts to bear, we will find there is not a disapproving God but one who weeps with us. We will find a God who can take our grief and disappointment and transform them into holy joy and renewed hope. We will learn, ultimately, that Jesus' death on the cross—the place to which the season of Lent leads us—is the reason we never mourn as those without hope.

LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELCA WORLD HUNGER APPEAL

On February 18th we will begin our church's annual World Hunger Appeal during the season of Lent. We invite individuals and families to take home one or two hunger banks (found in the Nave Lounge) to use to collect funds over the course of the next seven weeks of the Lenten season. We will have an **INGATHERING CEREMONY** where we bring the filled banks back to church on **Sunday, April 7th**. We pray that this will be a meaningful spiritual practice of generosity for you this Lent.

Starting February 22nd - A **LIGHT LENTEN SUPPER** will be served each Thursday beginning at 5:30 until 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. (Please see the host schedule below.) A free will offering will be taken. Suggested cost of the meals equal \$3 per person, \$1.50 for children under 12, and \$10 per family. Any proceeds given above the cost of food will be donated to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Make your own PBJ sandwich will be available and anyone with special dietary needs is welcome to bring a "brown bag" meal. Come, bring a friend and fellowship with your friends at First, and then stay to continue our Lenten journey to the cross and empty tomb, with worship at 7:00 p.m.

2024 LIGHT LENTEN SUPPER HOST SCHEDULE

February 22	February 29	March 7
Stewardship	Memorial	Choirs
Finance	Stephen Ministry	Earth First
CYFM	Parish Life	Altar Guild
March 14	March 21	March 28
Worship	Library	Adult Learning
Property	Mutual Ministry	Endowment
W-ELCA	Council	Witness

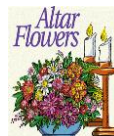
PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING US HAVE FRESH FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR IN 2024.

OPEN 2024 DATES FOR BOTH VASES (unless indicated otherwise) ARE:

3/31, 4/14 (one vase), 4/21 (one vase), 4/28, 6/30 (one vase), 7/14 (one vase), 7/28, 8/18,
8/25 (one vase), 12/29.

Please call the church office at (785) 272-5302 or Jeanie Schuler 785-845-7964 if you have questions.

PLEASE CONSIDER SIGNING UP TO SERVE AS COFFEE HOST.



Teaching in Words and Actions

Jesus' teaching in the synagogue surprises, shakes, and even shocks the people of Capernaum who have gathered for the weekly celebration of the sabbath. His proclamation is different from what they are accustomed to hearing. Mark doesn't tell us *what* Jesus taught this particular day, but all the gospel writers describe his message as consistently one of compassion, peace, hope, and love. Clearly, listeners heard something they found surprising in Jesus' words.

In addition, Jesus' teaching goes *beyond* words; he lives out his message in transforming and liberating actions, as we see in his healing of the man with an unclean spirit. The people sense an authority in Jesus only found in one whose words and deeds match—one who moves beyond theory to practice. It's like learning from a physician who regularly practices medicine, a theologian who pastors a parish, a coach who plays the sport personally. In the synagogue, when Jesus unexpectedly practices what he has been preaching, it's so new to his audience that they find it frightening and life-giving all at once.

At first, the healing miracle Jesus performs in today's reading may seem distant from the preoccupations of our contemporary society. This kind of exorcism may be uncommon for us in mainline Christian churches, but we know well that various troubles have a grip on our existence and our being. On the one hand, we experience our own "unclean spirits" such as despair, jealousy, hatred, or guilt. On the other hand, we regularly encounter the "unclean spirits" of our society: intolerance, selfishness, indifference, materialism, or contempt. But even in the moments when we are divided, disoriented, and destabilized, Jesus speaks surprising, wondrous words that challenge and heal us, so we can be restored to the life God intends us to enjoy and share with others.