

*Jesus
was in the
wilderness
forty days*

MARK 1:13

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

Organist

Director of Music

Director of Handbell Choirs

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Bookkeeper

Missionaries in Russia

Missionaries for Ripe For Harvest World Outreach

All Members of First

Pastor Jenny Jackson

Julie Lamott

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

A LENTEN EUCHARIST

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

FEBRUARY 17 & 18, 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 “Ein’ Feste Burg ist unser Gott” (“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”)

(Luther / arr. J. N. Hanff, 1663-1711)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CHIMES

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

504 GATHERING SONG “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus.

C: **Amen.**

P: Held in God’s mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Holy God,

C: **we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.**

P: Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through † Jesus Christ.

C: **Amen.**

GREETING

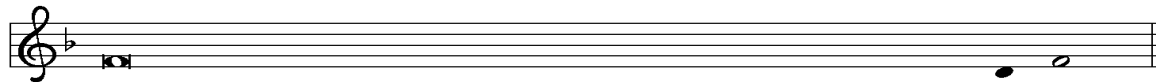
P: The grace of Jesus Christ, the mercy of the Holy One, and the Spirit of the living God be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

KYRIE



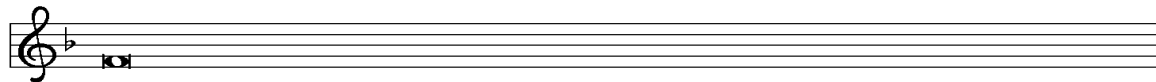
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



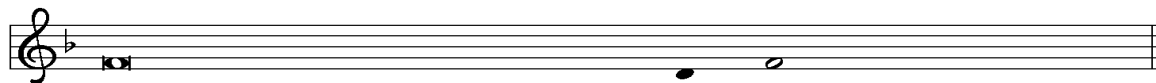
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



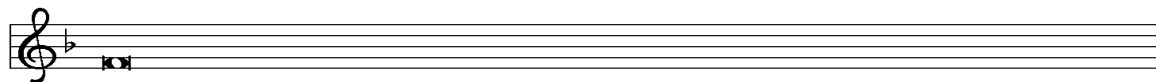
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



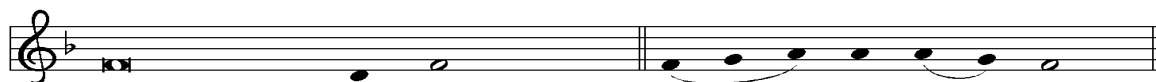
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



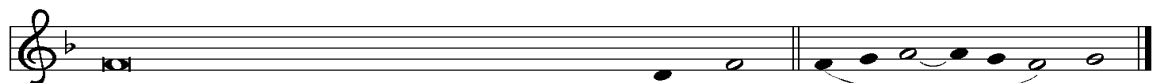
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Congregation shall sit.

EXTINGUISHING OF THE FIRST LENTEN CANDLE

A SOMBER SEASON

A: During the weeks before Christmas, we celebrate the anticipation of the coming of the Christ child with candles. One by one during Advent, we light blue candles of Peace, Hope, Joy and Love,

C: all in preparation for the beginning of Christ's life on earth. All of this culminates at Christmas when the white Christ candle is lit.

A: That represents the light of Jesus Christ shining in the world, living in our midst, coming forth to save us, and inviting us to its warmth. That is a joyous season.

C: Today we are in another season – the season of Lent.

A: Lent is the season before Easter. It is a somber season. It is a time of preparation for the coming of Christ's Passion Week.

C: During Lent, we tune in to the dark days that get darker, and end in Christ's death. They are days of rejection and suffering, conflict and betrayal, and end with the extinguishing of the light of the Christ candle that was lit at Christmas.

A: That light will be rekindled and lit again in each of us, but in these coming weeks, let us tune in to the darkening days of Lent, as we, one by one, extinguish the candles set before us, until on Good Friday, the flame on the Christ candle dies.

(The First Purple Candle is Extinguished.)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD

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

NOISY OFFERING and CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

FIRST READING: Genesis 9:8-17

Today's reading is the conclusion to the flood story. Because of human sin, God destroys the earth by flood, saving only Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet divine destruction gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation, God blesses humanity and establishes a covenant with all creatures.

⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹"As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." ¹²God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." ¹⁷God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 25 "Lord, I Gladly Trust"

D G D A

1 LORD, I glad - ly trust in you: let me not be
 2 In your hands I place my past: all my sins you
 3 Teach me what is true and good; let me hear and
 4 When my trou - bles mul - ti - ply you a - lone can

A7 D G D

put to shame. As I look up toward your throne
 know so well. Your for - give - ness, LORD, I need,
 un - der - stand! In the choic - es, I must make
 bring me through: so with all your saints I say,

Esus E7 A D

make your gra - cious pro - mise known: God my ref - uge
 for my guilt is great in - deed; ev - en great - er
 show my heart the way to take, so that I may
 "Be my strength and shield to - day." Since I know you

G D Bm Em D/A A D

and my hope, your pro - tect - ive care I claim.
 is your love—mer - cy more than I can tell.
 al - ways tread on the path which you have planned.
 hear my prayer, LORD, I glad - ly trust in you.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This tune in a higher key: p. 346.

Words: Martin Leckebusch © 2006 Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

Music (REDHEAD 76 | 7.7.7.7.7.): Richard Redhead, 1853, P.D.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:18-22

As God acted through Christ's suffering and death to bring us to God, so God acts through baptism to save us from a sinful existence. This spiritual cleansing marks our new life in Christ.

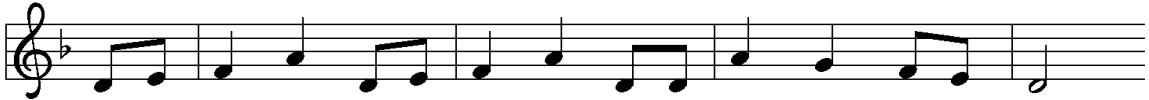
¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

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

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

GOSPEL: Mark 1:9-15

The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news."

P: This is the Gospel of Our Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation shall sit.

SERMON

517 HYMN OF THE DAY “*Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word*”

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: Trusting in God’s promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A brief silence.

A: God our truth, the ark of your church has room for many expressions of faith. We give thanks for voices that challenge and awaken your people. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God our maker, you remember your covenant with the earth and its inhabitants. Rescue communities and creatures hurting from natural disasters. Preserve species and habitats endangered by human carelessness and disregard. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God our light, you know our weakness. Free all who govern from the temptations of power. Sustain all who work for human rights in every nation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God our help, you care for your beloved children. Comfort all who are grieving, ill, afraid, in pain, or in despair. Feed hungry people living in food deserts. Protect any at risk from exploitation and abuse. Comfort those who are sick or healing especially 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. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: We lift up in prayer our siblings in Christ across the Central States Synod, especially the people and ministry of St. Paul Lutheran Church, (Valley Falls, KS); St. Mark Lutheran Church, (Waterville, KS); St. Paul Lutheran Church (West Plains, MO); and Oaks Indian Mission, (Oaks, OK). May God continue to lead people in working together for the sake of the Gospel. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God our home, you gather your people. Grant us health and safety as we assemble. Keep us mindful of any who are homebound, hospitalized, convalescing, or traveling. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God our hope, you promise eternal life to your beloved children. We remember with gratitude those who have lived and died in faith. Grant that we may also dwell with you in everlasting peace. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

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 “Come, Peace of God”

(S. N. Callaway, b. 1955)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal.

C: Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

PREFACE

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.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: It is right, it is good, and it is a joy, to give thanks to you, God of mystery and miracle.

When there was only darkness, you made light. When we cried out to you from captivity, you claimed us as your own. When we forgot our love for you, you did not forget us, sending your prophets to turn us around and renewing your promises with a bow in the sky, the parting of the sea, and your own Son. And so we praise you, tuning our voices to the angels’ songs, joining all those who sing on earth and in heaven.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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

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

hea - ven and earth are full, — full — of your glo - ry, Ho -

san - na in the high - est. 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THE CONSECRATION

P: Holy God, we thank you for Jesus: for his teaching and healing, his challenging and feeding, his living and dying and rising, that we might be raised with him, and all the world made new.

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.

With thanksgiving we take this bread and wine, gifts of the good earth, offering ourselves as a living sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

C: Dying you destroyed death; rising you restored life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.

P: Pour out your Holy Spirit on your people gathered here and on these gifts of bread and wine. Through the power of your Spirit unite us with Christ and with one another as we work and wait in hope, confident in that day when Christ will come to make all things new, and we will feast together at his heavenly table.

All glory and honor are yours, Holy God, through Christ and in the unity of the Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

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 food and drink for the journey. Take and be filled.

Congregation shall sit.

LAMB OF GOD

(Tune: "Ah Holy Jesus")

Jesus, the Lamb of God, have mercy on us!

Jesus who bore our sins, have mercy on us!

Jesus, Redeemer of the world, have mercy!

Give us Your Peace, Lord!

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY "Ave Verum" ("Jesu, Word of God") (W. A. Mozart, 1756-1791)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

C: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life. Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need.

C: Amen.

SENDING

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

BLESSING

P: Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and † give you peace.

C: Amen.

319 SENDING SONG "O Lord, throughout These Forty Days"

DISMISSAL

A: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: Thanks be to God.

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PLEASE JOIN US after worship for cake in the Nave Lounge to celebrate **Janice Conrad’s 91st Birthday.**

THE ETERNAL CANDLE FOR FEBRUARY is given by Nancy Sherbert in memory of her parents,
Jess & Lois Lykins and her grandmother, Mary Levett.



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

Sue Wild (home), 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), Kathy Cheatham (home), Vera Pearce (home), Blake Hopper (home), Brian Fuller (Mark’s brother), Richard Carlson (Cindy Lear’s cousin), Steve Holloman (neighbor friend of Chris & Cindy Lear), Frank Phillips (Bonnie’s son), Barbara Aubert (friend of Nancy Vaughn), 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).



LAY MINISTERS 2/18	FIRST LENT	10:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister		Diane Dukat
Lector		Scott Schultz
Acolyte		Will Hitch
Lenten Candle Extinguishers	Council Members – Scott Schultz, Jenn Betz	
Communion Assistants	John Hanna	
Greeters	Einck Family, Char Taggart	
Ushers	Scott Bangert, Bill Barker	
Council Member	Jenn Betz	
Sunday School Leaders	Marsha Serk, Holly Serk	
Coffee Hosts	Joan & Bill Barker	
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess	Chris & Cindy Lear	
Saturday Lector	Tina Lewis	
Altar Guild Setup/Clean up	Karen Wollin, Dana Nelsen, Nancy Besta, Karon Gambrill	
Tech Team	Austin Jackson, Stephen Blank	
Stephen Minister on Call	Patti Klein	

LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEK

LAY MINISTERS 2/25	SECOND LENT	10:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister		Connor Montague
Lector		Rhonda Dealey
Acolyte		
Lenten Candle Extinguishers	Council Members – Robert Hanna, Laura Garner	
Communion Assistants	Barb Collins, Allie Montague	
Greeters	Ann Sanders, JoAnn Stanley	
Ushers	Robert Hanna, Linda Harold	
Council Member	Jenn Betz	
Sunday School Leaders	Laura Garner, Bob Wollin	
Coffee Hosts	Alan & Anne Hageman	
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess	Alan Hageman, Leslie Malone	
Saturday Lector	Joyce Mark	
Altar Guild Setup/Clean up	Ann McConkey, Jeanie Schuler, Karen Wollin, Nancy Besta, Karon Gambrill	
Tech Team	Stephen Blank, Austin Jackson	
Stephen Minister on Call	Teresa Smith	

‡ 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, February 18

FIRST LENT

10:00 a.m. – Worship Service (Sanctuary)
10:10 a.m. – Pre-K thru 5th Grade Sunday School

Monday, February 19

PRESIDENT'S DAY

1:00 p.m. – Staff Meeting
1:00 p.m. – Book Study “Encounters with Jesus” (L)
7:00 p.m. – Boy Scout Troop 175 (PH)

Tuesday, February 20

10:15 a.m. & 12:45 p.m. – CDO Chapel
6:00 p.m. – Cub Scout Den Meetings
7:00 p.m. – Adult Learning Committee (Z)

Wednesday, February 21

9:00 a.m. – What-Sew-Ever
10:15 a.m. – CDO Chapel
5:30 p.m. – Caring for Kids 1st Meeting (L)
6:00 p.m. – Confirmation Class
7:00 p.m. – Earth First Committee (202)

Thursday, February 22

5:30 p.m. – Lenten Supper (PH)
6:15 p.m. – Bell Choir Rehearsal
7:00 p.m. – Lenten Midweek Worship Service
7:00 p.m. – Den Meeting
7:40 p.m. – Vocal Choir Rehearsal

Friday, February 23

Pastor Jenny at Spiritual Retreat thru the 24th
10:00 a.m. – Coffee & Lectionary (202)
7:00 p.m. – Book Study “Encounters with Jesus” (Z)

Saturday, February 24

5:00 p.m. – Worship Service (Chapel)

Sunday, February 25 SECOND LENT

10:00 a.m. – Worship Service (Sanctuary)
10:10 a.m. – Pre-K thru 5th Grade Sunday School

LESSONS FEBRUARY 24 & 25

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25 Mark 8:31-38

PARISH NOTICES



LENTEN WREATH

During Advent, as we approach Christmas, we light a candle each Sunday in expectation of the birth of Jesus, “the light of the world.” During Lent, as we approach Good Friday, the day Jesus died and the light of the world was temporarily extinguished, we will extinguish a candle from our Lenten wreath. Join in the responses that are spoken each week as we prepare ourselves for the most important events in all history.

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.

MID-WEEK LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Beginning February 22nd.

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.

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

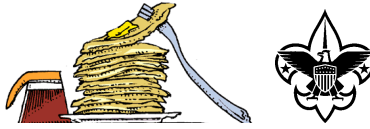
How Beloved You Are!

Jesus' journey to the cross and resurrection begins with his baptism. As the church journeys with Jesus through Lent and toward Easter, we each remember our own baptism, and our life in Christ is renewed.

At the Jordan River, God stops at nothing to declare Jesus beloved. Not even the sky can cloud the message; God tears open the heavens and proclaims it loud and clear. Now each time we dip our hands into the font or trace the sign of the cross over our bodies, we remember this promise anew: "You are a beloved child of God." Nothing can separate you from God's love.

Immediately after baptism, Jesus must contend with Satan and wild beasts in the wilderness. Then, before Jesus' ministry begins, John is arrested. The Gospel of Mark doesn't give the fact more than a passing mention at this point in the story, but John's arrest and subsequent death make for a trauma that comes at a crucial moment in Jesus' life. How was Jesus able to begin his ministry after all he had been through? And how are we, who have experienced temptation, torment, or trauma, to journey on?

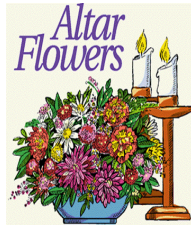
The journey is not easy for Jesus, and neither will it be for us. But it's amazing what is possible when you know just how beloved you are. How long must the voice of God have echoed in Jesus' mind after that baptism day! Perhaps the angels whispered in his ear as they waited on him: "You are beloved. With you God is well pleased." Every Sunday, we return to the waters because we can never have too many reminders. When times get tough, we can trust in the promises of God made to us in baptism. This is a flood that saves us. These waters bring new life out of death. God's love will stop at nothing. Today, remember just how beloved you are!



Please support **Scouts BSA Troop 175** by attending our **ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER** on **Saturday, March 2, 2024, from 8:00 to 11:30 AM**. **TICKETS IN ADVANCE are \$5.00 per person and \$6.00 at the door** (children under 10 will eat free with a paid adult). All proceeds from this event support our Scouts and Troop programs. Contact Brady Palmberg at 785-640-6376 with questions.

LUTHER COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Join us on **Saturday, March 16 at 7:00 p.m.** at First Lutheran Church (1234 SW Fairlawn Road, Topeka) for a concert by the **Luther College Symphony Orchestra on tour from Decorah, Iowa**. You won't want to miss the fine performance by this ensemble made up of students from a variety of academic disciplines under the direction of Dr. Daniel Baldwin. The program includes works by Bernstein, Fauré, Mussorgsky, Wagner, and Moncayo. No tickets are necessary to attend the performance; **freewill donations** will be collected in support of the orchestra and their travel expenses. **LFACT needs help in housing these students. If you can help, please contact Linda Anderson at 785-221-5513.**



ALTAR FLOWERS are absent during the season of Lent, and what a joy it is for them to **return on EASTER Sunday, March 31, 2024**. Who would like to sponsor flowers for the most special of days during Holy Week? Please contact Jeanie Schuler or the church office if interested.

**PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING US HAVE FRESH FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR IN 2024.
ONLY NINE (9) DATES LEFT**

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),
8/18, 8/25 (one vase), 9/29.

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



DOORSTEP
Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Monday – Friday from 9am – 2pm
1119 SW 10th Avenue, South Door
785-357-5341

MARCH IS FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH'S DOORSTEP MONTH to be one of four churches responsible for furnishing the “lion's share” of food and to supply workers in the clothing room. If you can volunteer your time on Monday, March 4th or any Tuesday in March, please contact Anita Nelson at 785-354-8734. Thanks!



MARCH MADNESS

Yes, it's almost that time again, both in the NCAA and at FLC. We will again sponsor a food drive, with **FANS OF KU, K-STATE, WASHBURN AND BETHANY COMPETING** to see who can donate the greater quantity of foodstuffs for Doorstep. **ITEMS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED BY DOORSTEP ARE:** Oatmeal, Dry Cereal, Tuna, Macaroni N Cheese, Pinto Beans, Spaghetti Sauce, Powdered Milk, Evaporated Milk, Canned Fruit, Canned Soups, Peanut Butter/Jelly and Egg Noodles. **Tubs for collection of donations will be located in the Nave Lounge throughout the month of March (be sure to look for the logo of the team you're supporting).** If you're unable to shop for items for this drive, **monetary donations** will be gladly accepted, and the shopping will be done for you! If you don't designate a team to support, your donation will be divided equally between them.