First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Reverend Tracy S. Megli

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ALL ARE WELCOME!



Blessing of the Animals

Forest Orchard Park - 12th & Rockford

November 8, 2026

9:30 am

Sunday Morning Worship
November 8, 2026

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Mission Statement

First Lutheran church **strives to inspire hope**
for a wounded world;

Gathers in worship
that both **uplifts** and **challenges**;

And **builds life-affirming relationships**
inside and outside the walls of our building.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, First Lutheran Church
welcomes all because God welcomes all,
and we recognize that our differences are gifts to our communal life.

Prelude *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow* *Arr: Clayton J. Foor*

Please stand when the (*) indicates standing. Know the communion of Saints, both living & departed, stand for you if you should choose to remain seated for any reason.

Welcome All

*Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.
Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

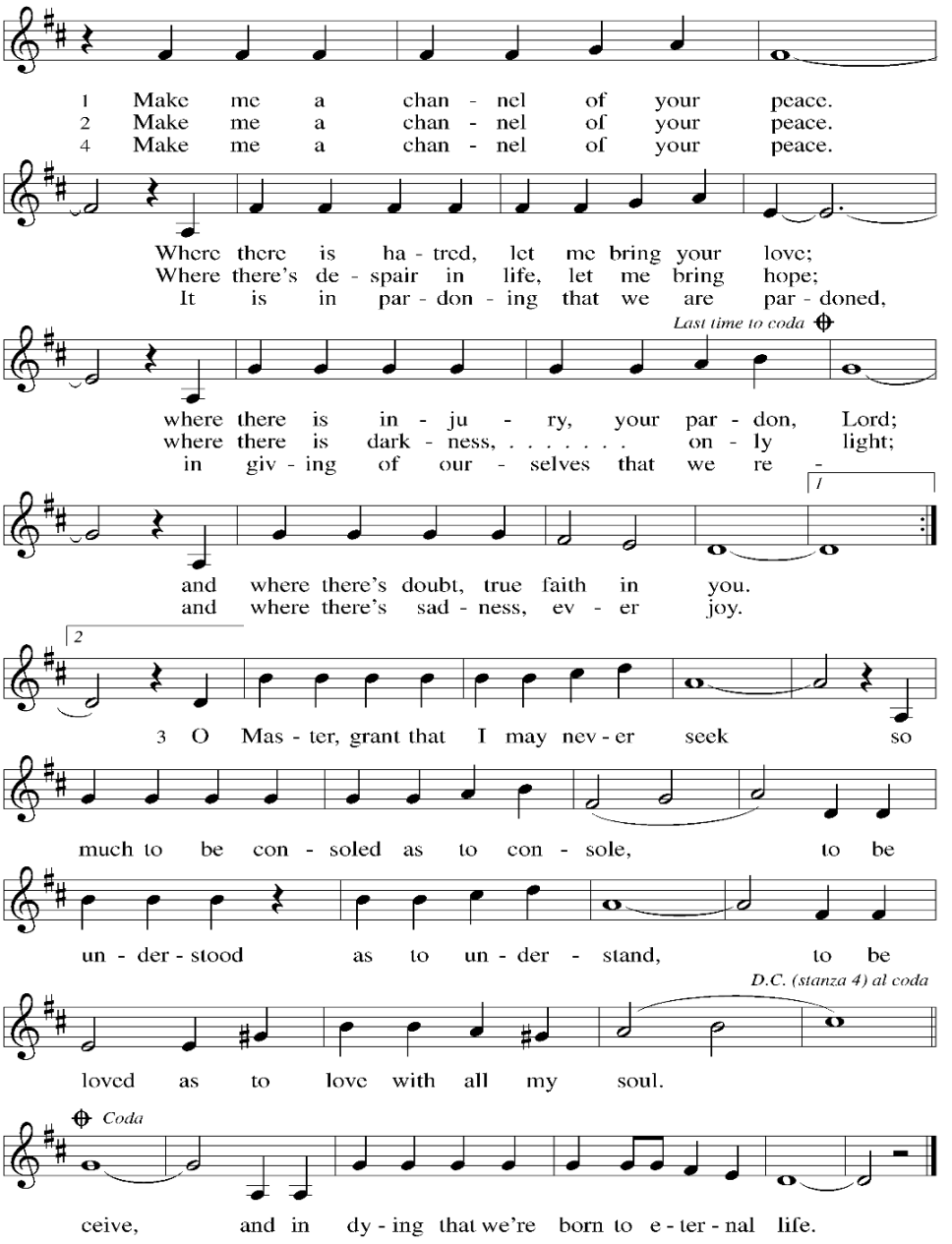
Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.**

**Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
Amen.

*The Gathering Song

Prayer of Saint Francis



Text: Sebastian Temple
Music: PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS, Sebastian Temple

Text and music © 1967 OCP Publications

*The Pastoral Greeting

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

A: And also with you.

*The Peace

P: God makes peace within us.

A: Let us claim it.

P: God makes peace between us.

A: Let us share it.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we welcome all because God welcomes all, and we recognize that our differences are gifts to our communal life.

The Scripture Genesis 1:1, 20-28, 31a

1 When God began to create the heavens and the earth,

20 And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let
birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” 21 So God created the great
sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the
waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good.
22 God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas,
and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 And there was evening and there was
morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle
and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so.
25 God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind
and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was
good.

26 Then God said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness,
and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air
and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every
creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

27 So God created humans in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

31 God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

R: Word of God; Word of Life.
A: Thanks be to God.

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Matthew.
A: Glory to you, O Lord.

*The Reading of the Gospel Matthew 6:25-33

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?
31 Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ 32 For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

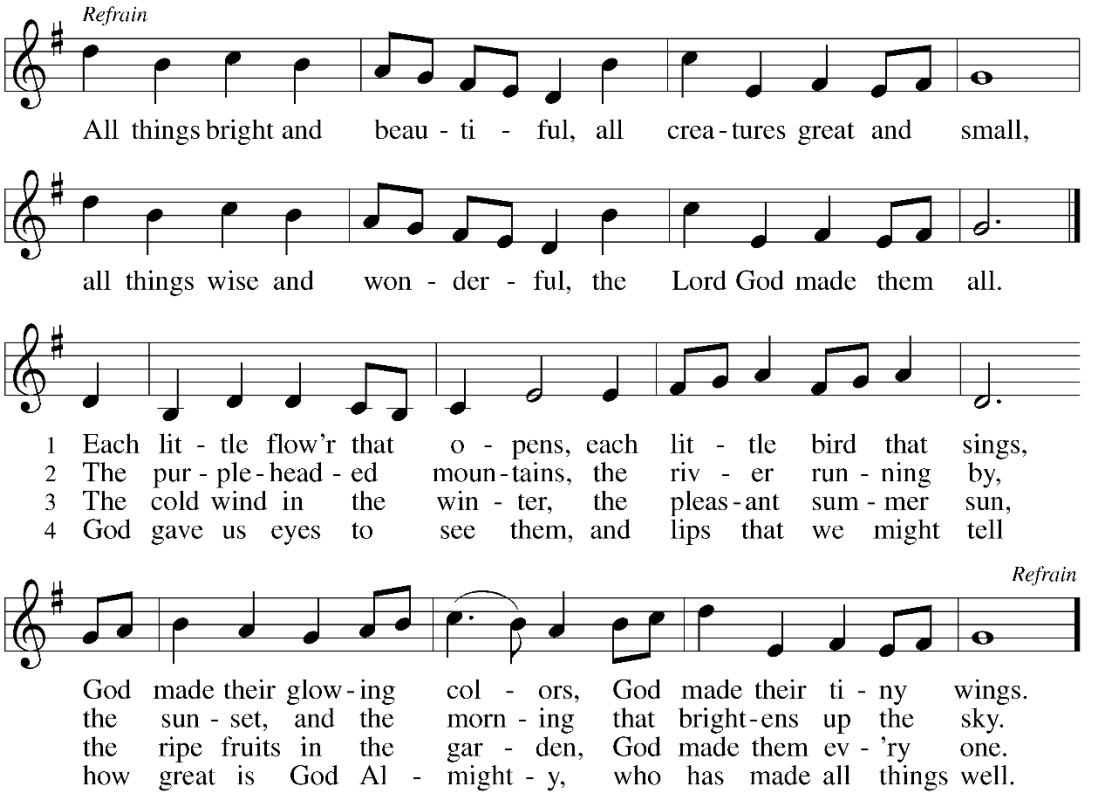
P: The Gospel of our Lord.

A: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Homily

We observe a brief silence for reflection

*Hymn Of The Day *All Things Bright & Beautiful*



Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, alt.
Music: ROYAL OAK, English tune, 17th cent., adapt. Martin Shaw, 1875–1958

Please be seated

The Prayers of the People

L: Let us give thanks to God our Creator for all the gifts so freely bestowed upon us for the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea;

A: We thank you, Lord!

L: For the richness of the mountains, plains, and rivers;

A: We thank you, Lord!

L: For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life;

A: We thank you, Lord!

L: For the songs of bird and the loveliness of flowers and trees;

A: We thank you, Lord!

L: For the trust you have shown in giving into our care these, our pets;

A: We thank you, Lord!

L: That we may love and honor all of your creation, O God;

A: We thank you, Lord!

*The Blessing

L: Almighty and everlasting God, Creator of all things and giver of all life, let your blessing be upon all these animals. May our relationships with them mirror your love and our care for them be an example of your bountiful mercy. Grant the animals health and peace. Strengthen them in their serving of love, healing and companionship.

The ministers circulate through the congregation, ask the name of the animal, place his/her hand on the animal's head (if appropriate) and bless the animal.

[Insert name], may you be forever blessed by the God who create you and may you and your humans enjoy life and friendship together with our God.

A: Amen.

L: O sweet maker of all, we ask your blessing on every creature gathered here today, the large and the small. May they live peacefully in praise of you. Bless us all to love your creation, and revere its sacredness. We ask this blessing in the name of the one who was, is, and always will be, our Creator, to whom every creature belongs.

A: Amen.

*The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

A: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

A: We lift them to the Lord.

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

A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is right and good, whenever we gather around tables, to give thanks to you, Loving God. For our of holy dust you formed us and all creatures and you gave us breath and life. You created us for relationship with you and with your world, but we sometimes turn our backs. Turn us back around, O God, and help us see that we all belong, and that we are all children of your steadfast love.

And so, with all the saints and angels, all creatures great and small, we offer you our praise.

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above, you heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!
Amen.

*The Words of Institution

P: While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave to the disciples and said “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them and said, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new and everlasting covenant, which is poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: Pour out your Spirit on all those gathered today and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, so that WE may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

Through him, with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, forever and ever.

A: Amen.

*Lord's Prayer

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

The Celebration of Holy Communion

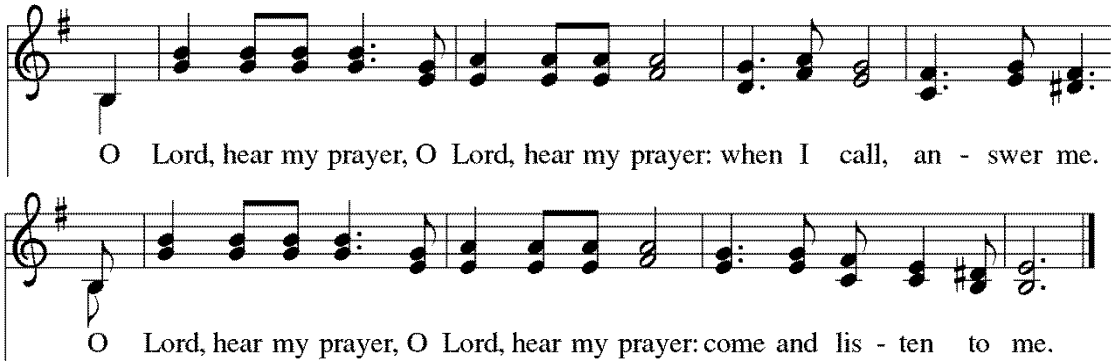
The Invitation to Communion

P: Christ invites you to this table.
All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

Please come forward to the altar and receive communion by intinction. Receive the (all gluten-free) bread and dip into the wine or the white grape juice and then take and eat. To receive a blessing, simply cross your arms over your chest.

Communion Music *O Lord Hear My Prayer*

repeat until all have communed



Text: Psalm 102:1–2; Taizé Community, adapt.
Music: HEAR MY PRAYER, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994
Text and music © 1982, 1991 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent, 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638.
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*The Table Blessing

P: God of grace and mercy, in this holy meal you have fed us with wisdom, forgiveness, and grace, and we are full. By your Spirit send us out to become what we have received–new life in Christ–for the world.

A: Amen

*The Prayer After Communion

P: Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

A: Amen.

Please be seated

Community Updates

*The Blessing

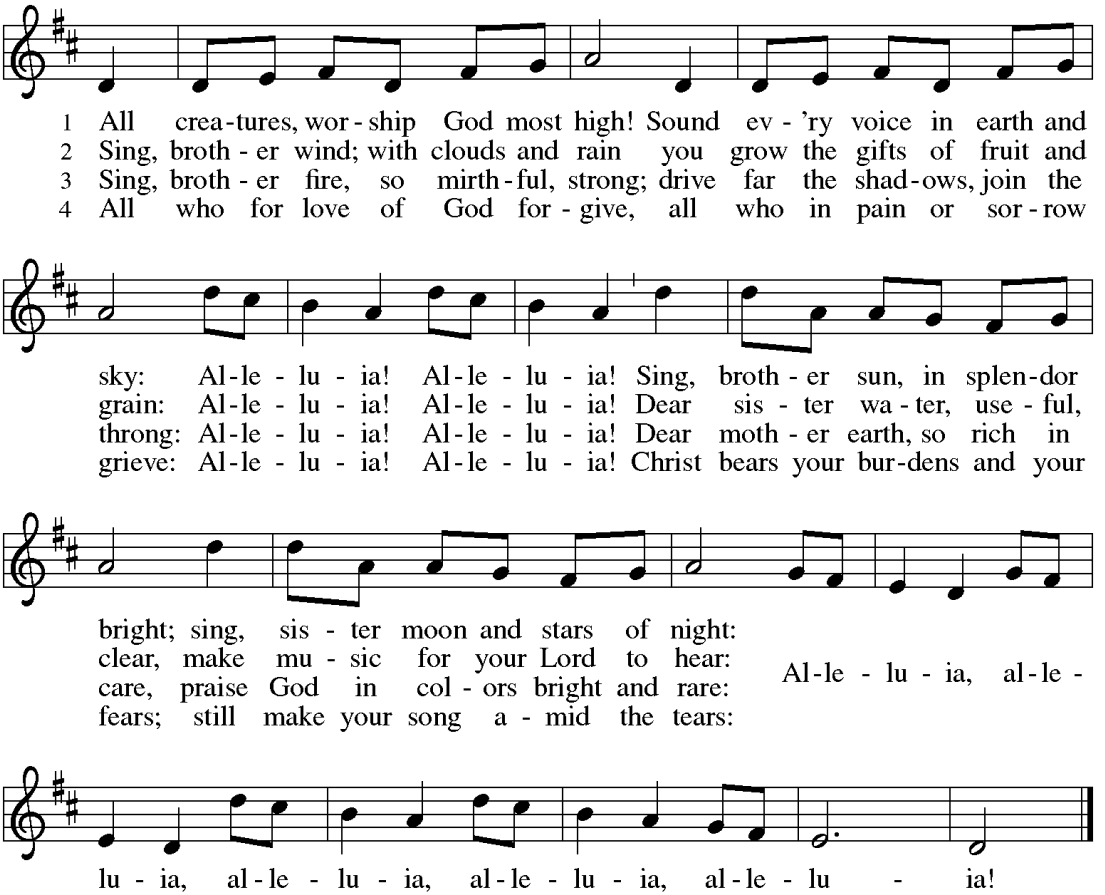
A: May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you: wherever he may send you; may he guide you through the wilderness: protect you through the storm; may he bring you home rejoicing: at the wonders he has shown you; may he bring you home rejoicing: once again into our doors.

P: The Father, † the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

All: Amen.

*The Sending Song *ELW 835*

All Creatures, Worship God Most High!



5 And you, most gentle sister death,
waiting to hush our final breath:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
fair is the night that leads us home.
Alleluia.

6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
and worship God with humble heart:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
Alleluia.

Text: Francis of Assisi, 1182–1226; tr. composite
Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623
Text © 1997 Augsburg Fortress

*Dismissal

P: Go out into God's world. Live in peace with one another.

A: We go in peace, serving Christ and loving our animal kin. Thanks be to God.

Worship Assistants

Reader & Communion Assistant: *Rona Erickson*

Crucifer: *Robert Ohlde* Usher(s): *Robert Ohlde*

Music Director: *Clayton Foor*

The eternal candle for October is given by Joel & Rona Erickson, to the glory of God, in honor of their 53rd Wedding Anniversary & in Thanksgiving for our First Lutheran family.

The Altar Flowers are given by Shirley Bumpas, to the glory of God, and in honor of her granddaughter, Autumn & Ryan's Wedding.

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