

He is
faithful
and just
to forgive
I John 1:9



April 11, 2021
Second Sunday of Easter
9:30 AM Worship

First Lutheran Church
709 5th Ave. – P.O. Box 218
Washburn, North Dakota 58577
www.flcwashburn.com

AS WE GATHER

(We tend to look for things to make faith easier. Signs, wonders, or just little hints here and there would help. But the disciples had all these things and heard Jesus promise His resurrection, and still they gathered behind the locked doors of their fears. What we do have is Christ, His Word that bestows and sustains our faith, and His Holy Sacrament wherein He feeds us with His body and blood. Though we have not seen with our eyes, we see with faith and join with doubting Thomas to confess, "My Lord and my God!")

PRELUDE AND BELLS

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have

mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

HYMN “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!”

Good Christian Friends,
Rejoice and Sing!

144

1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice and sing! Now is the
 2 The Lord of life is ris'n this day; Bring flow'rs of
 3 Praise we in songs of vic - to - ry That love, that
 4 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, And sing to -

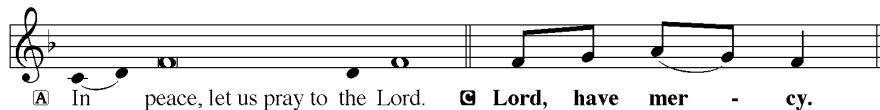
tri - umph of our King! To all the world glad news we bring:
 song to strew his way; Let all the world re - joice and say:
 life which can - not die, And sing with hearts up - lift - ed high:
 day with one ac - cord, The life laid down, the life re - stored:

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

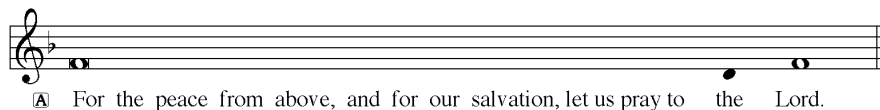
P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

KYRIE



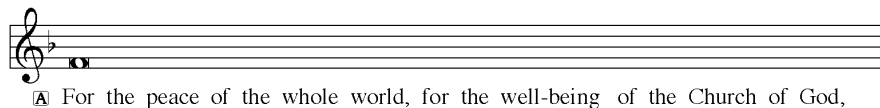
♩ In peace, let us pray to the Lord. ♪ Lord, have mer - cy.



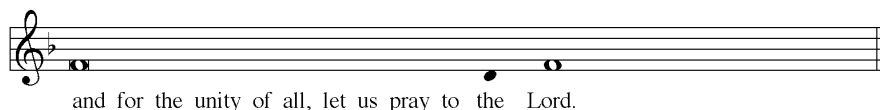
♩ For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



♪ Lord, have mer - cy.



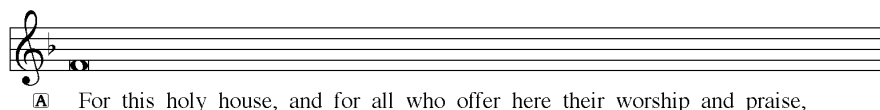
♩ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



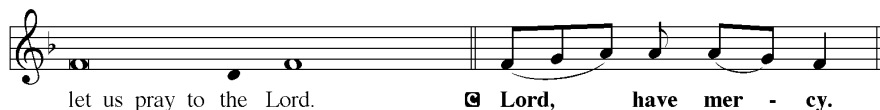
♩ and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



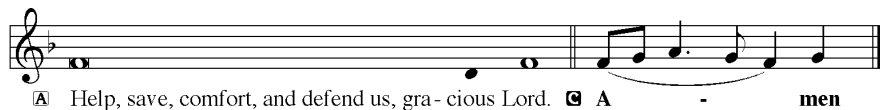
♪ Lord, have mer - cy.



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



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

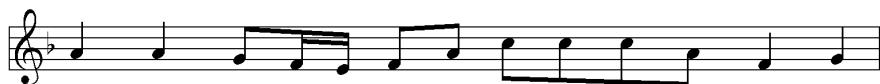


♩ Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. ♪ A - men

HYMN OF PRAISE



☐ Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his 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

SALUTATION



♩ The Lord be with you. ♪ And al - so with you.

P: Let us pray:

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Read in Unison)

Gracious God, through your Son's resurrected presence you transform us from frightened, self-absorbed people into a community marked by peace, forgiveness, and mercy. Guide us to faithfully be signs to the world of your abundant grace and love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READINGActs 4:32-25

(The unity of the Church finds its chief characteristic in giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus in preaching. The power of preaching comes from God — not the eloquence of an orator. Without great grace being upon this early community of Christians, the preaching would be ineffectual, little would have been shared with others, and they would have been a divided people, not the Church. God does wonders by his grace; we cannot do much without his good will toward us.)

³²Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

PSALM (Read in unison).....Psalm 148
(Let all of creation praise its maker. This is only right, for first of all, creation owes the creator a debt of gratitude and praise for its being. More than that, this same creator God has raised up the horn of his people — that great delivering power who is God himself. (2 Samuel 22:1-2). The people who are near to him take refuge in his power, for he is a very strong fortress.)

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

**2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts!**

**3 Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!**

**4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!**

**5 Let them praise the name of the Lord!
For he commanded and they were created.**

**6 And he established them forever and ever;
he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.**

**7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
you great sea creatures and all deeps,**

**8 fire and hail, snow and mist,
stormy wind fulfilling his word!**

**9 Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!**

**10 Beasts and all livestock,
creeping things and flying birds!**

**11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!**

**12 Young men and maidens together,
old men and children!**

**13 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.**

**14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him.**

Praise the Lord!

SECOND READING1 John 1:1--2:2

(Here are the words that call us to confession. But what is it, besides the call itself, that compels us to confess? The Lord who calls us into fellowship with himself is all light. There is no absolutely no darkness in him. Therefore, if we claim to be his friends (John 15:15) but we practice darkness, we are discovered to be liars: "The truth is not in us." Consequently, all that we poor sinners can do, so that we are not participating in a pattern of darkness, is interrupt the darkness with light. Through confession, we shine light on what would be total darkness. We admit our sin so that we may be forgiven and cleansed. In confession, we receive the word of righteousness that forces out the unrighteousness and darkness that would otherwise be the only dark tone of our lives.)

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life —
²the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us —
³that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. ⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

¹My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ²He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

ALLELUIA

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 20th chapter.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL READINGJohn 20:19-31
(Imagine the wonder of that moment when the disciples were gathered together in fear, and Jesus appeared among them. He came to give them the thing they needed most in that hour: peace — his peace — himself. Then he sent them out to deliver his peace to others. He gave them his authority to forgive sins, an act which brings great peace. He also gave them the inspired word to write so that we may believe Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. Now, imagine that he has just as much appeared to you through that written word. You, too, have been offered Christ and sent with his peace and forgiveness for others.)

¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.” ²⁴Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless

I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.”²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

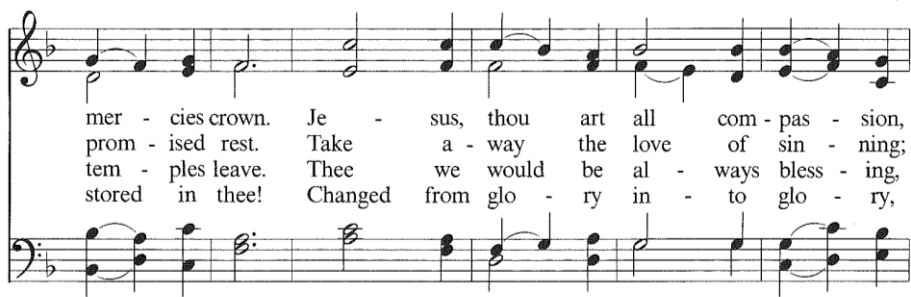
HYMN **“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”**
CHRISTIAN HOPE

315 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

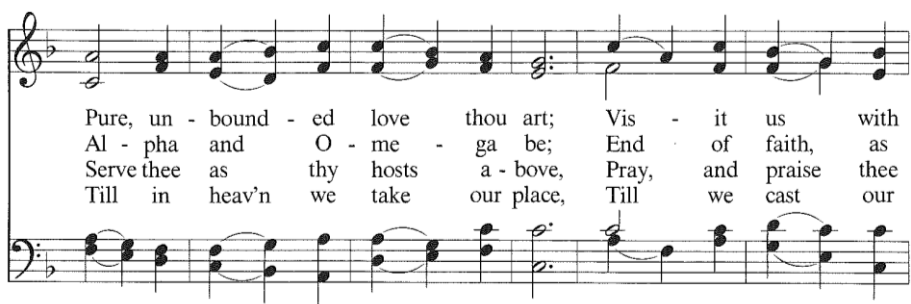
1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to ev - 'ry trou - bled
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; Let us all thy life re -
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, Pure and spot - less let us



down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, All thy faith - ful
breast; Let us all in thee in - her - it; Let us find thy
ceive; Sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, Nev - er - more thy
be; Let us see thy great sal - va - tion Per - fect - ly re -



mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



Pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; Vis - it us with
Al - pha and O - me - ga be; End of faith, as
Serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, Pray, and praise thee
Till in heav'n we take our place, Till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, En - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
its be - gin - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
crowns be - fore thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise!

HYMN "Lord of Light"

STEWARDSHIP

405

Lord of Light

1 Lord of light, your name out-shin-ing All the stars and
 2 By the toil of faith-ful work-ers In some far out-
 3 Grant that knowl-edge, still in-creas-ing, At your feet may
 4 By the prayers of faith-ful watch-ers, Nev-er si-lent

suns of space, Use our tal-ents in your king-dom
 ly-ing field, By the cour-age where the ra-diance
 low-ly kneel; With your grace our tri-umphs hal-low,
 day or night; By the cross of Je-sus, bring-ing

As the ser-vants of your grace; Use us to ful-
 Of the cross is still re-vealed, By the vic-to-
 With your char-i-ty our zeal; Lift the na-tions
 Peace to all and heal-ing light; By the love that

fill your pur - pose In the gift of Christ your Son:
ries of meek - ness, Through re - proach and suf - f'ring won:
from the shad - ows To the glad - ness of the sun:
pass - es knowl - edge, Mak - ing all your chil - dren one:

Refrain

Fa - ther, as in high - est heav - en, So on earth your will be done.

© Text: Howell E. Lewis, 1860–1953, alt.
© Tune: Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–

ABBOTT'S LEIGH
87 87 D

THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and

apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

SHARING OF THE PEACE

(Place your hand over your heart and turn to your neighbor sharing the peace in this manner. No hand shaking.)

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

OFFERING PRAYER (Read in unison)

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth.

Day by day you shower us with blessings.

As you have raised us to new life in Christ,

give us glad and generous hearts,

ready to praise you and to respond to those in need,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

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, for ever and ever. Amen

HYMN "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

PRaise, ADORATION

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

543

1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
 2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly
 3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -
 4 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me a -

a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is your
 reign - ing And, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -
 fend you; Sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall
 dore him! All that has life and breath, come now with

health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear Now to his
 lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen All that is
 dai - ly at - tend you. Pon - der a - new What the Al -
 prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men Sound from his

tem - ple draw near, Join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
 need - ful has been Sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?
 might - y can do If with his love he be - friend you.
 peo - ple a - gain. Glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

BENEDICTION *Psalm 32:10*

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✕ give you peace

Numbers 6:24–26

In the name of the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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Today’s Worship Leaders & Volunteers – Thank You!

PASTOR Pastor Chuck Mann
ACOLYTE Alex Retterath
READER Peggy Moran
ORGANIST LeAnn Richard
USHERS/GREETERS Alton & Brenda Krebsbach
ALTAR GUILD..... Maybell Job & Claudette Ness
SERVICE GROUP COORDINATORS Randy & Gwen Hall

Our Mission

“Working hand in hand to know Christ and make Christ known through Worship, Christian Education, Evangelism, Fellowship, Caring Ministries, and Service.”

Welcome to all who have come to worship.

Welcome as we gather on the second Sunday of the Easter season. Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Visitors

We welcome all visitors to First Lutheran today.

Nursery

The nursery, located beside the narthex, is available for use for any parent feeling the need to use it during worship services with their child.

Prayer Requests

Family of Phyllis (Wahl) LaPora on her death, Donna Gunderson, Mary Ann Monsebroten – Sister to Jackie Olson, Weldon Wagner – Brother to Arden Wagner, Cindy Thiel, Haley Beaudry – Brother to Mac Beaudry, Kathy Solomonson, Josiah Johnson – Brother to Steph Mann, Shauntaye Kopecky – Kurle family member, Mary Schulz, Ross Lorentzen, Gwen DeMontigny, Kayla Boger – Family member of Steve & Peggy Wollmuth, Keith Hammerbeck – Family friend of the Kugler's, Deborah Davenport – Mother of Laura Gardner's friend, Virgie Emineth, Cindy Delmonico – Mother to Melissa Kugler, Glenn Weist, Ruby from Pine Ridge, Claire Boucher – Friends of Aaron & Lexie Solomonson newborn, Jamie Baumann, Taylor Gardner, Harold Holtz, Elaine Renfrow – Mother to Lynette Sondrol, Sandi Femling – Cousin to Melanie Beckman, Laren Holzengel, Harlow Tatum – Daughter to Brea (Gutknecht) Tatum, Ruth Lund – Mother to Doddie Kuntz, John Krebsbach – Brother to Peggy Wollmuth, Arlo Omoth – Brother to Jeneen Loe, Bob Miller, Rodney Jaeger

Pastoral Care

Please call Pastor Chuck if you or a loved one are in the hospital or know you will be going to the hospital. The church does not usually get informed of your stay by any of the hospitals even if you are registered under our congregation's name. We want to make sure you get pastoral care. Thank you!

Baptism

Baptized yesterday, April 3rd, was Sophia Jean Marie Hanson and Bradley Calvin Hanson, children of Devin Hanson & Krissy Dietrich. Sophia was born November 9, 2016 and her sponsors are Skyler Rohrich and Brianna Bauer. Bradley was born September 23, 2020 and his sponsors are Braydee Hanson and Sierra Dietrich. We welcome Sophia and Bradley as our newest members of First Lutheran.

Thank you for your giving

Thursday, April 1st, Attendance – 167

Facebook Online Viewing – 105

General Fund & Plate Giving - \$301.00

Friday, April 2nd, Attendance – 79

Facebook Online Viewing – 123

No offering taken

Sunday, April 4th

7:30 AM Attendance – 35

Facebook Online Viewing – 59

9:00 AM Attendance – 225

Facebook Online Viewing - 187

General Fund & Plate Giving - \$8,921.00

Bible Study

Bible Study led by Cathy Sheldon began a new study this morning at 8:30 am. This will be a three-week study on “The Attitude of the Beatitudes – How to Live Like Kings” by Michael Youssef. More information is in the April newsletter.

Church Council

Church Council will meet this Tuesday, April 13th, at 7:00 pm.

Deborah Bible Study

Deborah Bible Study will meet this Thursday, April 15th, at 9:30 am. Barbara Brewster and Marlys Knell host. Study will be Episode 2, Lesson 3 and film.

Movie Night

This Thursday, April 15th, is movie night at 7:00 pm. Showing will be “Ma & Pa Kettle”. Join us in the sanctuary for some laughs!

Newsletter Deadline

Please have all articles for the May newsletter to the church office by noon this Friday, April 16th.

Mother's Day Tea

Women, young and old at heart! Join us on Sunday, April 25th, at 2:00 pm for our Mother's Day Tea. The program is "Once Upon an Apron". If you have a favorite apron, we would love for you to bring it to the tea to wear and share your story behind the apron. Bring a friend or more with you. Jill Wiese will be our guest.

Hearing Assist

First Lutheran is in the process of getting a hearing assist system to be used during the worship services. If you feel you could benefit from this, please let Jeannette know in the church office so we have an idea of how many units to order.

Pie With Pastor

Going through April 18th, the Sunday School classes will be collecting supplies for the Lutheran World Relief Kits. The class that collects the most supplies will win a pie party with Pastor Chuck! Here's what they are collecting:

- * Light-weight bath towels (Between 20x40" & 52x27")
Dark colors are recommended
- * Bath-size bars of soap equaling 8-9 oz.
- * Adult size toothbrushes
- * Metal nail clippers

Donations can be placed in the box in their Sunday School room.

Christ in Our Home and Our Daily Bread

The April/May/June edition of *Christ in Our Home* and the March/April/May edition of *Our Daily Bread* are in the magazine racks in the narthex. Pick up a copy of each today to use with your daily devotions.

Thank You

THANKS to the FLC Church Council, FLCW, Evangelism Committee, Men's Bible Study group, and an anonymous party, all registration fees will be covered for FLC campers to Camp of the Cross Ministries this summer. Please let Peggy Moran know by May 24, 2021, if you have campers registered so the funds can be sent to the camp before the camp season begins.

LBW & WOV Hymnals

We will be ordering more LBW (green) and WOV (blue) hymnals. As of the printing of this bulletin we are looking at approximately 45 more LBW at a cost of \$32 per book and approximately 32 WOV at a cost of \$15.75 per book or a total of \$1,934.00. If you would like to help purchase any of these hymnals please talk to Jeannette in the church office. We may have a chance to purchase some from another church but how many and price is yet to be determined. ***LBW books on the cart in the narthex are free for the taking.***

THIS WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

TODAY	8:30 AM	Bible Study Led by Cathy Sheldon
	9:30 AM	Worship
	10:45 AM	Sunday School
		Bible Study Led by Alexis Solomonson
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting Al-Anon Meeting
MON.	10:00 AM	Chat & Sew Quilting
TUES.	8:00 AM	Men's Bible Study
	10:00 AM	Mommy's Group
	7:00 PM	Church Council Meeting
WED.	9:30 AM	Friendship Bible Study
	6:15 PM	Confirmation
	6:45 PM	Bell Choir
	7:15 PM	FLY
	7:30 PM	Choir
THURS.	9:30 AM	Deborah Bible Study
	7:00 PM	Movie Night
FRI.	Noon	Newsletter Deadline
SUNDAY	8:30 AM	Bible Study Led by Cathy Sheldon
	9:30 AM	Worship w/Holy Communion
	10:45 AM	Sunday School
		Bible Study Led by Alexis Solomonson
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting
	7:00 PM	Al-Anon Meeting

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

April 11, 2021 — Easter 2

*“...Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”
- John 20:19b -*

It is Easter evening. Jesus has been raised from the dead. He has broken forth from the tomb. A couple of the disciples were at the tomb previously and saw things firsthand. They came back to the other disciples and reported what they saw. However, the other disciples did not believe what they heard about Jesus rising from the dead. Perhaps this was just too good to be true? Maybe it was a reaction to grief? Just a crazy dream? It seemed way too strange to be believed.

Where are the disciples now? They are hunkered down behind closed doors hiding like frightened rabbits. They were the ones who had witnessed all of Jesus’ work, his miracles, his very words and presence, and where are they? They are behind locked doors, gripped with fear. We know what death, defeat, and disappointment can do to us. We try some new venture and fail at it. When that happens, we become fearful and think that we just don’t have what it takes to succeed. When a loved one dies we have a tendency to think, “What is going to become of me?” Death, disappointment, and defeat all lead to fear. The disciples are gripped by fear. They are thinking, “What will become of us? Will those same murderous authorities do to us as they did to Jesus? We hoped Jesus would free us from the tyranny of the Romans, but now look what has happened.”

Now there is nothing left, only fear. And it was to these fearful disciples that Jesus shows up. He miraculously slips through the locked doors. He reassures them with, “Peace be with you.” He breathes the Holy Spirit upon them. How is it that these fearful, disheartened, disappointed disciples become courageous and empowered to proclaim the Good News to the whole world? Jesus. The risen Christ found a way to get through to them. He appeared to them, stood among them, and blessed them. These frightened followers were transformed into believing, active disciples.

You might be feeling fear and disappointment, but remember that when you are about to give up hope, you have a future. Whenever you are gripped with paralyzing fear, it’s then that Jesus comes to you, reassures you, and breathes new life into you. That’s our hope you see, that Jesus comes to us! Amen.