



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 23, 2025

10:00 AM

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

4515 Dobie Road

Okemos, MI 48864

517-349-0620

Pastor Megan Floyd
Administrative Assistant.....Kalea Sanford
Music Director Debra Borton-McDonough
Organist/Pianist Bruce Williams
Sound Technicians Cody Boyan & Raymond Herek
Church email faith@faithlutheranokemos.org
Website www.faithlutheranokemos.org
Facebook Page facebook.com/faithlutheranokemos

WIFI: Faith Lutheran; Password: LutheranFaith

WELCOME STATEMENT

We, at Faith Lutheran Church, welcome you as God’s beloved child, “for in Christ Jesus... [we] are all children of God through faith.” (Galatians 3:26). No matter your age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, marital status, neurodivergent status, faith background, political leanings, or mental, intellectual or physical ability – you are welcomed here just as you are. In this church, we commit to pursue gender and racial equity in all that we do, and to support one another as chosen family, being parents and siblings for each other regardless of who we have as biological family (Mark 3:31-35). For we are all one in Christ Jesus and rely on the unconditional nature of God’s love and grace to be our help and guide as we strive to serve our world.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Mercy. Mercy. Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is fractured and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of the life-giving Spirit. It is a reflection of God’s glory revealed in Christ.

PRELUDE

“Every Time I Feel the Spirit”

arr. Patricia Sanders

Faith Bells

VERSE OF THE DAY

[Jesus said:] “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you
-Luke 6:27

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
our creator,
our protector,
our wellspring of life.

Amen.

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,
you speak blessing and compassion into the world.
Forgive us for the ways we act
with judgment, cruelty, or indifference.
We ignore the needs of our neighbors;
we resist your call to oppose injustice;
we give in to scarcity and fear;
we assume the worst about one another.
Cleanse us from our faults
and release us from their grasp.
Show us your lovingkindness.
Restore our hearts and repair your world,
that we may live in Christ's ways.
Amen.

God proclaims these words of assurance:
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.
I have called you by name. You are mine."
In ✝ Christ, you are forgiven.
In the Spirit, you are made free.
Refreshed by the waters of mercy,
live anew as beloved children of God.
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN- Lord of Glory, You Have Brought Us (ELW 707)



1 Lord of glo - ry, you have bought us with your life - blood
 2 Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to give you glad - ly, free - ly,
 3 Won - drous hon - or you have giv - en to our hum - blest
 4 Lord of glo - ry, you have bought us with your life - blood



as the price, nev - er grudg - ing for the lost ones that tre -
 of your own. With the sun - shine of your good - ness melt our
 char - i - ty in your own mys - te - rious sen - tence, "You have
 as the price, nev - er grudg - ing for the lost ones that tre -



men - dous sac - ri - fice; and with that have free - ly giv - en
 thank - less hearts of stone till our cold and self - ish na - tures,
 done it all to me." Na - ked, sick, in pris - on, hun - gry—
 men - dous sac - ri - fice. Give us faith to trust you bold - ly,



bles - sings count - less as the sand to the un - thank - ful
 warmed by you, at length be - lieve that mete hap - py
 in the least, your face we view, say - ing by your
 hope, to stay our souls on you: but, oh, best of



and the e - vil with your own un - spar - ing hand.
 and more bless - ed 'tis to give than to re - ceive.
 poor and need - y, "Give as I have giv'n to you."
 all your grac - es, with your love our love re - new.

GREETING

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

CANTICLE OF PRAISE - Great is the Lord (WP 53)

C Dm G/B C

Great is the Lord, he is ho - ly and just, by his

F/A G F C/E Dm⁷ C C Dm

pow - er we trust in his love. Great is the Lord, he is

G/B C F/A G

faith - ful and true, by his mer - cy he proves he is

F C/E Dm⁷ C B \flat /C F/C B \flat /C F C/E Dm⁷ C

love. Great is the Lord, and wor - thy of glo - ry.

B \flat /C F/C B \flat /C G/C C B \flat /C F/C B \flat /C

Great is the Lord, and wor - thy of praise. Great is the Lord, now

D G E Am Dm G^{sus} G

lift up your voice, now lift up your voice: Great is the

Am Am⁷/G Dm G^{sus} G C C^{sus} C

Lord! Great is the Lord!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The assembly will be seated.

FIRST READING: Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Many years after being sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, Joseph reveals himself to them. Now the second-in-command in Egypt, Joseph reassures his brothers that God has used their evil intentions for good to preserve life during a devastating famine, and Joseph forgives them.

³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’ ” ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

- ¹ Do not be provoked by evildoers;
do not be jealous of those who do wrong.
- ² **For they shall soon wither like the grass,
and like the green grass fade away.**
- ³ Put your trust in the LORD and do good;
dwell in the land and find safe pasture.
- ⁴ **Take delight in the LORD,
who shall give you your heart's desire.**
- ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD,
and see what God will do.
- ⁶ **The LORD will make your vindication as clear as the light
and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.**
- ⁷ Be still before the LORD and wait patiently.
Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds in evil schemes.
- ⁸ **Refrain from anger, leave rage alone;
do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.**
- ⁹ For evildoers shall be cut off,
but those who hope in the LORD shall possess the land.
- ¹⁰ **In a little while the wicked shall be no more;
even if you search out their place, they will not be there.**
- ¹¹ But the lowly shall possess the land;
they will delight in abundance of peace.
- ³⁹ **But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O LORD;
you are their stronghold in time of trouble.**
- ⁴⁰ You, O LORD, will help them and rescue them;
you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

In the Apostles' Creed, we speak of the "resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Using the metaphor of a planted seed and the story of Adam, Paul preaches passionately about the mystery of following Christ's perfect life into eternity.

³⁵ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” ³⁶ Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

⁴² So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

⁵⁰ What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON (Noisy Offering for Parish House)



Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

GOSPEL: Luke 6:27-38

Jesus continues to address a crowd of his disciples. He invites his followers to shower radical love, blessing, forgiveness, generosity, and trust even on enemies and outsiders. Living in harmony with God's intent brings the reward of overflowing blessing.

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] ²⁷ “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

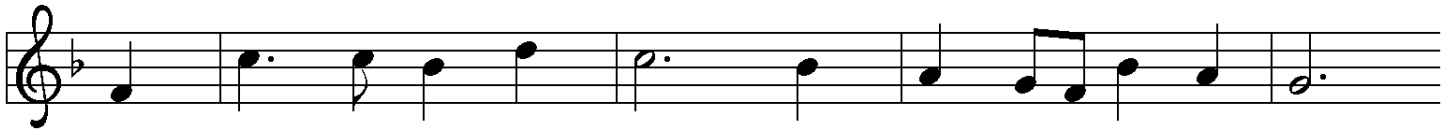
³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly will be seated.

SERMON

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY – Oh, Praise the Gracious Power (ELW 651, VS 1,3,5,7)



- 1 Oh, praise the gra - cious pow'r that tum - bles walls of fear
2 Oh, praise per - sis - tent truth that o - pens fist - ed minds
3 Oh, praise in - clu - sive love, en - cir - cling ev - 'ry race,
4 Oh, praise the word of faith that claims us as God's own,
5 Oh, praise the tide of grace that laps at ev - 'ry shore



and gath - ers in one house of faith all strang - ers far and near:
and eas - es from their anx - ious clutch the prej - u - dice that blinds:
ob - liv - i - ous to gen - der, wealth, to so - cial rank or place:
a liv - ing tem - ple built on Christ, our rock and cor - ner - stone:
with vi - sions of a world at peace, no lon - ger bled by war:

Refrain



We praise you, Christ! Your cross has made us one!

- 6 Oh, praise the pow'r, the truth,
the love, the word, the tide.
Yet more than these, oh, praise their source,
praise Christ the crucified: *Refrain*
- 7 Oh, praise the living Christ
with faith's bright songful voice!
Announce the gospel to the world
and with these words rejoice: *Refrain*

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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

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

“Mercy”

Craig Courtney

Chancel Choir



OFFERING RESPONSE- As the Grains of Wheat (ELW 465)

Refrain



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in-to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.

1 As this cup of bless - ing is shared with - in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when

Refrain

may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

LITURGICAL HAND WASHING

Pastor and assisting ministers sanitize and wash their hands

I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds. – Psalm 26:6-7

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens,
and your abundance to the depths of the seas.

Bless what we offer to your service:
our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.

Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity,
now and always. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

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

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

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kin[g]dom 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 kin[g]dom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The joy of the Lord is our strength.
Come, eat this meal of gladness.

All are invited to come to the table to receive what the Lord offers. If, however, you would prefer not to receive communion, you may come to the table for a blessing.

COMMUNION SONG – Thy Word Is A Lamp Unto My Feet (WP 144)

Refrain



Thy word is a lamp un-to my feet and a light un-to my path.



1 When I feel a-fraid, think I've lost my way, still you're there right be -



side me, and noth-ing will I fear as long as you are near.



Please be near me to the end.



2 I will not for-get your love for me, and yet my heart for-ev-er is



wan-der-ing. Je-sus, be my guide and hold me to your side, and



I will love you to the end.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

“Lord, Listen to your Children Praying”

arr. Jack Schrader

Please stand as you are able.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourishing God,
at this table you have refreshed us
with holy gifts of food and drink.
Strengthen us for service,
and send us out to embody your good news
of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.
In the name of Christ we pray,
Amen.

BLESSING

The Spirit of the triune God
✠ bless you with joy,
anoint you with compassion,
and send you in love.
Amen.

SENDING SONG – O Day of Peace (ELW 711)



1 O day of peace that dim-ly shines through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
2 Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the fierce devour the small;



guide us to jus - tice, truth, and love, de-liv-ered from our self - ish schemes.
as beasts and cat - tle calm-ly graze, a lit-tle child shall lead them all.



May swords of hate fall from our hands, our hearts from en - vy find re-lease,
Then en - e - mies shall learn to love, all crea-tures find their true ac - cord;



till by God's grace our war-ring world shall see Christ's prom-ised reign of peace.
the hope of peace shall be ful-filled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Didn’t the Lord Deliver Daniel”

Carlton Inniss

NOTES ON TODAY’S MUSIC

Carlton Inniss was a twentieth century African-American organist and composer who held the Associate certificate from the American Guild of Organists. He served as organist and choir director at Siloam Presbyterian Church in New York City for over 35 years. During much of that time he also taught in the city's public schools.

FLC SCHEDULE

Sunday, February 23

- Sunday School @9am in Sunday School/Youth Room
- Worship Service @ 10:00 am: **7th Sunday after Epiphany**
- Worship Committee Meeting following worship service in Library

Monday, February 24

- Boy Scouts @7pm in Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, February 25

- Bible Study @12pm in Library – Hybrid
- Girl Scouts Meeting @5:30pm in Sunday School/Youth Room

Wednesday, February 26

- Quilters Meet @ 9:30 am
- FLC Staff Meeting @10:15am
- Chancel Choir rehearsal @ 7:30pm

March 2

- Sunday School @9am in Sunday School/Youth Room
 - Worship Service @ 10:00 am: **Last Sunday after Epiphany**
-

FAITH VOLUNTEERS

February 23

Greeter(s): Ken & Ellen Milne
Reader: Megan Nyquist
Lay Assistant: Brenda Kopf
Ushers: Jon & Elaine Harrison
Altar Care: Cecilia Kramer
Sunday School: John McCracken
Coffee Hour: The Herezas
Counters: Jack Dingledine/Kathy Mace
Acolyte: Owen Thompson

March 2

Greeter(s): Chris & Jean Lewis
Reader: Jamie Royalty
Lay Assistant: Ryan Thompson
Ushers: Ellen Holste & Todd Robinson
Altar Care: Heidi Bowers
Sunday School: Brenda Kopf/Alexa Warwick
Coffee Hour: The Boyans
Counters: Matt Schnizlein
Acolyte:

For safety reasons, please do not allow your children to wander unsupervised past the coat racks or downstairs during the church service.

Faith Lutheran Church Prayer List

We invite you to hold these people in your prayers each day this week.

We pray that your healing and life will be with all longing for sustainable housing, secure employment, access to medical care, and overall health and wellness, especially **Samantha**, Chad, Susan, Helen, Marla, Gene, Trudy, Harry, Lois, Mara, Helen, Marilyn, Todd, Eric, Allyson, Rex, Katy, Ledith, Grant, Rick, Stella, and Joyce

We pray for those who are grieving, including the family and friends of **Tina**, , Michael Shoemaker's family, and Michelle's family.

We pray for all those in military service, especially those connected to our community: Lani, Jon, Landon, Hannah, Melody and Adam, Joe, Reuben, Lane, and Aiden.

We pray for the larger church, especially our synod prayer partner... Zion Lutheran Church in Comstock Park, and their pastor, Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas

****New additions to our prayers are listed in bold. Please contact the church office or Pastor Megan to be added to the prayer list.***

Prayer Partners

We are also participating in this activity and would love for you to add your signature. The letter is located on the table under the bulletin board entitled Prayer Partners.