**Worship Plan for Sunday, March 9, 2025** **\* First Sunday in Lent**

**Introduction to the day**

These forty days called Lent are like no other. It is our opportune time to return to the God who rescues, to receive the gifts of God’s grace, to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the wonder of God’s love in Jesus, and to resist temptation at every turn. This is no small pilgrimage on which we have just embarked. It is a struggle Jesus knew. It is a struggle Jesus shares. The nearness of the Lord, in bread and wine, water and word, will uphold and sustain us.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: Journeying through the Wilderness**

The wilderness has captured the imaginations of artists, adventurers, and spiritual seekers for thousands of years. It can be a place of profound self-discovery, exploration, beauty, and solitude. It is a place of few distractions: no commerce, no schedule, no business as usual. The wilderness can be a freeing place that opens us up to experience life in new and profound ways.

However, the wilderness is also disorienting and lonely. The landscape can be brutal and unforgiving. Wilderness wanderers can easily find themselves lost, exhausted, and dirty. The unbearable heat of the day, the uncomfortable cold of the nights, and the lack of food, water, or shade can bring people to their breaking point. The wilderness has been a place of exile and punishment, and a place where people’s strength, determination, and faith are put to the test.

The complexities of the wilderness set the stage for today’s gospel story, in which we get a glimpse of who Jesus is and who he is called to be. In the wilderness, we see the depth of Jesus’ faith. Jesus is not swayed by the allure of power, control, authority, or physical comfort. He does not buy into the tempter’s lies. Even in the disorientation and isolation of the wilderness, Jesus trusts in the Spirit, who has led him to this place and who gives him the strength to live into his call throughout his journey.

We are at the beginning of our own journey, a Lenten season of metaphorical wilderness wandering. The good news is that we do not go alone. The Spirit goes before us, behind us, beside us, and within us. Along this journey, the many voices of the tempter may try to lure us in with power, control, authority, or comfort. And yet, our trust and our identities lie with the One who already defeated the tempter. We already have all we need. In Christ, we are already loved, forgiven, and made whole, no matter where our journeys take us.

**Processional**

**AM: Welcome**

Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church where grace and love abound. It’s a joy to be with you all this morning! A special welcome to those of you here for the first time, to those joining us online, and to our guest pastor, Pr. Rich Ajer. During this season of Lent, we focus on our Savior’s journey to the cross and the supreme sacrifice he made there for all of us. As we follow the path Jesus walked, we trust in God’s faithfulness and guidance - in our continued search for a permanent pastor, and in all areas of our ministry to and for God’s people. Join in as we journey to the cross together. All are welcome!

**AM: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The altar flowers were provided by the Sinclairs in celebration of Roderick's birthday.

Our Lent Soup & Suppers are starting! This Wednesday and every Wednesday during Lent, join us at 5:00 for Soup and Supper...be fed in body and soul! Please sign up in the Narthex, but even if you don't sign up, ALL are welcome to attend!

Beyond Question, part of the ELCA Book of Faith series, is a transformative journey through Lent. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus uses questions to change the lives and deepen the discipleship of those who follow Him. Beginning on Thursday, March 6, at 7:00 P.M. and continuing every Thursday throughout this Lenten Zoom series, we will open Scripture and encounter Jesus and His transformative questions. Contact Pastor Ken at hopegiver@aol.com for a list of the weekly topics and info on how to join in.

Ladies, the WELCA Spring event is on Saturday, the 22nd at 1:00! Come and bring a friend for snacks, talking and laughing together, learning about Project Linus and to "tie" no-sew fleece blankets to donate! Please sign up in the Narthex.

For the month of March, we are collecting canned chili, grocery bags, and empty egg cartons for the Community Cupboard. Please place donations in the wire basket in the foyer.

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office.

**INSTALLATION**

At this time, I would like to invite forward the new members of the Church Council and Endowment Fund Board for their installation.

P: The Lord be with you.

I have been authorized to install these members who have accepted the call as faithful leaders for the Congregational Church Council of Faith Lutheran Church.

1. Steve Kent: President
2. Bea Olsen: Vice-President
3. Vacant: Treasurer
4. Connie Gibson: Secretary
5. Pat Adams: Council Member
6. Frank Ehrig: Council Member
7. Marlene Rosselli: Council Member
8. Diane Swarts: Council Member

I also have been authorized to install these members, who have accepted the call as faithful leaders for the Endowment Fund Board.

1. Bill Brauer
2. Freddericka Bradshaw
3. Sandy Chandler

**Address and Questions**

A reading from First Peter: Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

In the presence of this assembly will you accept this commission and commit yourselves to this new trust and responsibility, in the confidence that it comes from God?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you carry out this ministry in accordance with the holy scriptures and with the confessions of the Lutheran church and in harmony with the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you endeavor in all things to conduct yourselves as is fitting for an ambassador and servant of Jesus Christ?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be faithful, understanding, and loving as you accompany the people you will serve?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

And let the church say amen:

**A: Amen.**

People of God, will you support these servants of Jesus Christ, sent by God to serve all people with the gospel of hope and salvation? Will you pray for them, help and honor them for their work's sake, and in all things strive to live in peace and unity in Christ?

**C: We will, and we ask God to help us.**

**Prayer**

Let us pray.

Gracious God, as you have called workers to varied tasks in the world and in your church, so you have called these members to this ministry. Grant them joy and a spirit of bold trust, that their work may stir up each of us to a life of fruitful service; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

Almighty God guide, bless, and keep you, that you may be faithful in the ministry to which you have been commissioned.

May the blessings of God go with us, as we engage in active ministry in the church and in the world, to bring wholeness and healing in Christ's name.

May the blessings of God go with us, as we work interdependently with one another and in partnership with God’s children from around the world.

May the blessings of God go with us, as we proclaim to all people the inclusive and all-embracing love and grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And let all of the people of God say:

**All: Amen.**

Please welcome your new Church Council and Endowment Fund Board!

**P: Silence**

Let us take a moment of silence to quiet our hearts and minds and prepare for worship.

**P: Gathering**

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

**P: 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.**

This is the day that the Lord has made,

**let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

**AM: Please turn to hymn 611**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Gathering Song:*I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* (ELW 611)**

**P: Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

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

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive 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.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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.

**Amen.**

**P: Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

**O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

**Children's Chat**

**P: Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**Lector: First Reading:** Deuteronomy 26:1-11

1 When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, 2 you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. 3 You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, “Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.” 4 When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, 5 you shall make this response before the Lord your God: “A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. 6 When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, 7 we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. 8 The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; 9 and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10 So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.” You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. 11 Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**AM: Psalmody:** Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

1 You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty—

2 **you will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my stronghold, my God in whom I put my trust.”**

9 Because you have made the Lord your refuge, and the Most High your habitation,

10 **no evil will befall you, nor shall affliction come near your dwelling.**

11 For God will give the angels charge over you, to guard you in all your ways.

12 **Upon their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.**

13 You will tread upon the lion cub and viper; you will trample down the lion and the serpent.

14 **I will deliver those who cling to me; I will uphold them, because they know my name.**

15 They will call me, and I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble; I will rescue and honor them.

16 **With long life will I satisfy them, and show them my salvation.**

**Amen.**

**Lector: Second Reading:** Romans 10:8b-13

8b “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11 The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13 For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

***Please stand for the gospel***

**Gospel Acclamation (ELW p. 151)**

**Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

**P: Gospel:** Luke 4:1-13

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. 3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” 4 Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’ ” 5 Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” 8 Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ ” 9 Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ 11 and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ” 12 Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” 13 When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**AM: Please turn to hymn 325**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Hymn of the Day:*I Want Jesus to Walk with Me* (ELW 325)**

**AM: Apostle's Creed**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**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.**

***Please be seated for the Prayers of Intercession***

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Gracious God, speak your word anew among your church. Strengthen it to withstand the temptation to turn inward in fear or complacency. Embolden church institutions to turn from self-preservation toward the self-giving love of Jesus. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Mothering God, speak the word of life into wilderness places and fertile fields. Grant wisdom to your people, that we may quell the urge to strip lands of their resources and instead preserve first fruits for future generations. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Almighty God, speak a word of wisdom to people in positions of power: mayors, councils, and tribal leaders, legislators, judges and juries, presidents, and monarchs. Help them discern your voice and follow your guidance, resisting the temptations of the evil one. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Steadfast God, speak words of courage to your people in the wilderness. Protect migrants and refugees on perilous journeys, that they find safe refuge and a portion in the bounty you have given humanity to share. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Loving God, speak gently to all who are alone. Bless lay ministers, home communion teams, and others who attend to those who are overlooked, vulnerable, or lonely, that all find belonging in your love. We pray for all who are ill, especially Lynn Bennett; Arnette Calkins; Sandy Chandler; Vicki Crow; Eleanor Diaz; Doris Hays; Sarge Hunter; Patsy Loughboro; Donna McCain; Jean Miles; Sandra Miller; Thordis Moe; Carol Morris; Michael Myers; Esther Neumen; Marilyn Rieti; the family of Dee Seel; Amy Sinclair; Joyce Stromberg; Diana Ward; the homebound; the emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery or tests. At this time, we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Living God, we give thanks for all the faithful who have crossed the threshold from death to life, especially Rudy Bosinger and Dee Seel. Guide us who are living to learn from their wisdom and follow their example. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

**Amen.**

**P: Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**P: Offering**

Today we remember how the gifts of our time, talent and treasure help to sustain the CHEER Ministry here at Faith. Cheer is the ministry of caring for our members who are unable to attend worship regularly. This care takes the form of visiting, bringing communion, sending cards, and making phone calls. We appreciate all those whose offerings of time, talent and treasures help in this crucial ministry. Why not visit, phone or send a card to someone this week?

**AM: Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**AM: Please turn to hymn 341**

***Please feel free to either listen to our musical offering or sing along***

**Musical Offering:*Now Behold the Lamb* (ELW 341)**

**P: Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue (ELW p. 152)**

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.**

**P: Preface (ELW p. 153)**

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. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. 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 (all sing) (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

**P: Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

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

**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.**

**P: INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

As you are comfortable, you are invited to come forward to receive communion. All of God’s children are welcome to Christ’s table.

Gather at the altar rail to receive the communion elements or if you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. You may commune yourself once you’ve received the communion elements. Please commune the bread first, turn over the vessel and then carefully open the grape juice. A gluten-free option is available upon request. Please deposit empty cups in the provided baskets on your way back to your seat.

If you would like communion brought to you at your seat, indicate by raising your hand for the Assisting Minister to see and they will bring communion to you.

**P: Invitation to Communion**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**During Distribution: *Let Us Break Bread Together* (ELW 471)**

***We Come to the Hungry Feast* (ELW 479)**

***Eat This Bread: Jesus Christ, Bread of Life* (ELW 472)**

**P: Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**AM: Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**P: Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**P: Please turn to hymn 335**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Sending Song:*Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross* (ELW 335)**

**AM: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**AM: Invitation**

The Church Council Members invite guests and visitors to come and meet us in the narthex as you exit so that we can meet and welcome you. All are welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall for cookies, coffee and conversation.

**THIS WEEK AT FAITH**

Monday, the 10th: Strategic Planning meets at 1:00

Tuesday, the 11th: Hymn Planners meet at 10:00; the WELCA Board meets at 12:30; the Outreach team meets at 2:30

Wednesday, the 12th: Mary Circle meets at 10:00; Lent Soup & Study begins at 5:00

Thursday, the 13th: the Cheer team meets at 4:00; Pr. Ken's Lenten Zoom Bible Study begins at 7:00

Friday, the 14th: Al-Anon meets at 10:30; Transition Team meets at 1:00

Sunday, the 16th: Worship begins at 9:30 with Pr. Shane

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