

March 30, 2025

## Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:00am Service with Holy Communion

Pastor Ben Groth, Preaching and Presiding

Matthew Harrison, Director of Music

## Welcome!

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We are so glad you have joined us for worship! If this is your first time here, please fill out the yellow welcome card in the pew and place it in the offering plate if you would like to be contacted by Pastor Ben, would like more information about the church, or would like to sign up for our weekly news email.

**Restrooms:** Our restrooms are located downstairs at the bottom of the stairways at the back of the sanctuary. There are signs about which side has the men's and women's restrooms. There are any-gender solo restrooms in the education wing, one of which has a changing table. Please knock and ensure no one else is inside!

**Care and Prayer:** If you would like to request prayer or speak with Pastor Ben about struggles, joys, or anything else, please feel free to email him at [bgroth@1stlutherannb.org](mailto:bgroth@1stlutherannb.org) or call/text at 860-348-3966.

**Children:** We love having children in worship! At the front of the sanctuary there is a "pray ground" with lots of space to spread out and sit comfortably, some toys, and a great collection of books for different ages. All children and caretakers are welcome to use that space anytime during the service!

**Volunteering:** We have lots of opportunities at First Lutheran to volunteer and serve our community. Our Monday Morning Mingle free meal takes place from 8-9am each Monday, while our free Pasta Dinners take place from 5-6pm each Wednesday. Both of these programs can always use volunteers. If you'd like to help out, or are interested in helping with worship or other things at First Lutheran, please contact Pastor Ben.

**Coffee Hour:** After the service, please join us downstairs for refreshments, and a chance to get to know one another better!

# Gathering

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please stand as able*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us,  
anoint us, and make us new.

**C** Amen.

**P** In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin,  
and receive God's promise of mercy. O God,

**C** **we have wandered far from our home;  
again and again, we lose our way.**

**We turn inward, afraid of the world around us.**

**We forget that you have saved your people before  
and promise to do so again.**


**Do not remember the deeds of our past,  
but turn our faces toward the future,  
where your forgiveness is sure,  
your welcome is clear,  
and your love overflows. Amen.**

**P** Like a hen who gathers her chicks,  
God embraces you in tender care.  
Like manna in the desert,  
God feeds you with surprising mercy.  
Like a loving parent,  
God runs to meet you again this day,  
forgiving your sins for the sake of † Christ,  
leading you from death into life.

**C** Amen.

THE ENTRANCE HYMN # 807

Come, Thou Fount



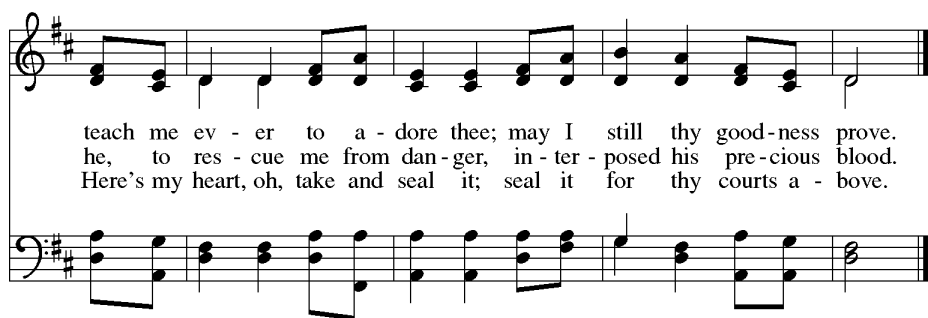
1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless - ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
 2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith - er by thy help I've come";  
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con - strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.  
 and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.  
 let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan - d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end - less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,  
 Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring from the fold of God;  
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good - ness prove.  
 he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.  
 Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

## THE GREETING

- 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.**

## THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** God of compassion,
- C** you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Please be seated*

## Word

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## THE FIRST READING

- A** A reading from Joshua:

Joshua 5:9-12

<sup>9</sup>The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. <sup>10</sup>While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. <sup>11</sup>On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. <sup>12</sup>The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year. The word of the Lord.

- C** **Thanks be to God.**

## THE PSALM 32

Read Responsively

- A** <sup>1</sup>Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,  
and whose sin is put away!
- C** <sup>2</sup>Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,  
and in whose spirit there is no guile!
- A** <sup>3</sup>While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,  
because of my groaning all day long.

- C** <sup>4</sup>For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;  
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.
- A** <sup>5</sup>Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me  
the guilt of my sin.
- C** <sup>6</sup>Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of  
trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.
- A** <sup>7</sup>You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;  
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
- C** <sup>8</sup>"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;  
I will guide you with my eye.
- A** <sup>9</sup>Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;  
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."
- C** <sup>10</sup>Great are the tribulations of the wicked;  
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.
- A** <sup>11</sup>Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;  
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

## THE SECOND READING

- A** A reading from second Corinthians: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

<sup>16</sup>From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup>So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup>that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. <sup>20</sup>So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as able*

## THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lord, Listen to Your Children



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Luke:

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

**P** <sup>1</sup>Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” <sup>3</sup>So he told them this parable: <sup>11b</sup>“There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms

around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate. <sup>25</sup>‘Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ The Gospel of the Lord.

**☩ Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated*

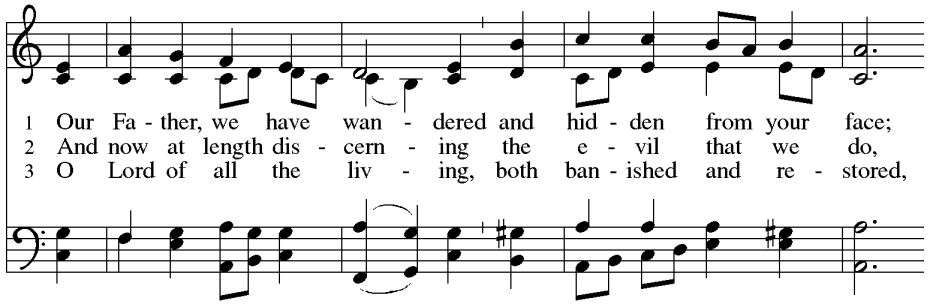
THE SERMON

Pastor Ben Groth

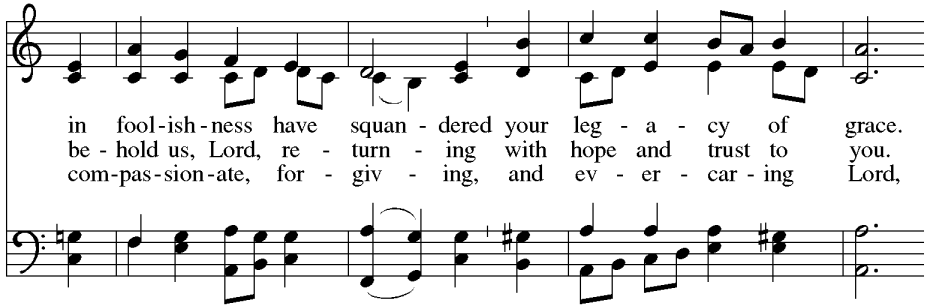
*Please stand as able*

THE HYMN OF THE DAY # 606

Our Father, We Have Wandered



1 Our Fa - ther, we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;  
 2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,  
 3 O Lord of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,



in fool-ish-ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.  
 be - hold us, Lord, re - turn - ing with hope and trust to you.  
 com-pas-sion-ate, for - giv - ing, and ev - er - car - ing Lord,



But now, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we rise with fear and shame,  
 In haste you come to meet us and home re - joic - ing bring,  
 grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.



as, dis - tant but com - pel - ling, we hear you call our name.  
 in glad-ness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.  
 Stretch out your hand in bless - ing, in par - don, and in peace.



## THE APOSTLES' CREED

**P** Let us confess the Christian faith, using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**C** **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.**

## THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

*A brief silence.*

**A** God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ. As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love. God, in your mercy,

**C** **receive our prayer.**

**A** God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth. Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy,

**C** **receive our prayer.**

**A** God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family. Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all. God, in your mercy,

**C** **receive our prayer.**

- A** God of boundless love, receive with open arms any in need of compassion especially Scott and Jane. Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. God, in your mercy,
- C** **receive our prayer.**
- A** God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded. Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all. God, in your mercy,
- C** **receive our prayer.**
- A** God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died especially Myrtle Caswell. We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy,
- C** **receive our prayer.**
- A** 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.
- C** **Amen.**

## THE PEACE

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** **And also with you.**

*You may share with one another a sign of God's peace.*

Peace be with you. **R** **Peace be with you.**

*Please be seated.*

The OFFERING is received as the Lord's Table is prepared.

## OFFERING MUSIC

**The offering is brought to the altar during the offertory response.**

*Please stand as able*

POST OFFERTORY RESPONSE

To All Those With Bread

To all those with bread give hun - ger for jus - tice, and to

all those who hun - ger give bread. To

## THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

- A** Jesus, you are the bread of life  
and the host of this meal.  
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.
- C** Amen.

## Holy Communion

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### THE DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And al - so 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.**

## THE 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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord; God of pow - er and might. — Heav - en and

earth are full of your glo - - - ry. — Ho - san - na in the

high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est! — Blest is the

one who comes — in the name of the Lord. — Ho - san - na in the

high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est! —

## THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

**P** Here the pastor continues with the Eucharistic Prayer.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

SUNG

*mp*

Our God, in hea-ven, ho-ly is your name, your

reign come, your will done, on earth as in hea-ven.

*slower*

Give us to-day our dai-ly bread, and help us for-give, as we have been for-giv-en.

*mf*

In the time of tri-al lead us in-to light, for yours is the kin-dom, and the

po-wer, and the glo-ry, for-e-ver. Our God, in

*f* *mp*

hea-ven, ho-ly is your name, ho-ly is your name.

## THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

**P** All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

*Please be seated*

## LAMB OF GOD



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
 you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
 e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

THE COMMUNION HYMN # 460

Now the Silence



Now the si - lence Now the peace Now the emp - ty hands up - lift - ed



Now the kneel - ing Now the plea Now the Fa - ther's arms in wel - come



Now the hear - ing Now the pow'r Now the ves - sel brimmed for pour - ing



Now the bod - y Now the blood Now the joy - ful cel - e - bra - tion



Now the wed - ding Now the songs Now the heart for - giv - en leap - ing



Now the Spir - it's vis - i - ta - tion Now the Son's e - piph - a - ny



Now the Fa - ther's bless - ing Now Now Now

*Please stand as able*

# Sending

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## THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

## THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

- A** Let us pray.  
 Generous God,  
 at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.  
 As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,  
 now make us one loaf to feed the world;  
 in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.
- C** **Amen.**

## THE BENEDICTION

- P** Beloved in God,  
 God has shown you what is good. What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?  
 May the Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, One God, mother of all, bless you,  
 this day and always,
- C** **Amen.**

## THE SENDING HYMN # 779

Amazing Grace



1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that  
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and  
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I  
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his  
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but  
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that  
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me  
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and  
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found; was blind, but now I see.  
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!  
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.  
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

## THE DISMISSAL

- A** Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

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*Thanks to*  
*Worship Assistant*  
*Nancy Peterson*  
*Communion Assistant*  
*John Halverson*  
*Reader*  
*Joanna Holleck*  
*Ushers*  
*Erasmus and Akira Gunawan*  
*and*  
*Videographer*  
*Eric Nilsson*  
*for volunteering*  
*to be a part of the service this morning*

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*People Power for 4/6/2025*  
*Worship Assistant - Susan Bisaccia*  
*Communion Assistant - Kris Fletcher*  
*Reader - Tom Abucewicz*  
*Ushers - Nancy Peterson, Joanna Holleck*

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# calendar

- March 31** - Monday, 8am - Morning Mingle
- April 1** - Tuesday, 10am - Cleaning Company
- April 1** - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting
- April 1** - Tuesday, 7pm - Executive Meeting
- April 2** - Wednesday, 1pm - Mission/Outreach Meeting
- April 2** - Wednesday, 4:30pm - Worship Service
- April 2** - Wednesday, 5-6pm - Pasta Dinner
- April 2** - Wednesday, 6pm - AA Meeting
- April 2** - Wednesday, 6pm - Choir
- April 4** - Friday, 2pm - Cleaning Company
- April 6** - Sunday, 9:30am - Prayer Group
- April 6** - Sunday, 10am - Worship with Holy Communion
- April 7** - Monday, 8am - Morning Mingle
- April 8** - Tuesday, 10am - Cleaning Company
- April 8** - Tuesday, 4pm - Worship & Arts
- April 8** - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting
- April 9** - Wednesday, 4:30pm - Worship Service
- April 9** - Wednesday, 5-6pm - Pasta Dinner
- April 9** - Wednesday, 6pm - AA Meeting
- April 9** - Wednesday, 6pm - Choir
- April 11** - Friday, 2pm - Cleaning Company
- APRIL 13 - PALM SUNDAY**
- April 13** - Sunday, 9:30am - Prayer Group
- April 13** - Sunday, 10am - Worship with Holy Communion
- April 14** - Monday, 7am - Morning Mingle
- April 15** - Tuesday, 10am - Cleaning Company
- April 15** - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting
- April 15** - Tuesday, 6pm - Bible Study
- April 15** - Tuesday, 7pm - Council Meeting

Monday Morning Mingle 8am-9am  
Wednesday Come-As- You-Are Worship Service 4:30pm  
Wednesday Pasta Dinner 5pm-5:45pm  
Clothing by appointment only. Please call Marianne Farr  
for more information (860)-637-6460

## PRAYER LIST

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*Please note: Prayer names will remain for two weeks unless renewed in the church office. Named in parentheses are those who submitted the names they follow.*

Scott Johnson (Carol McQueeney); Jane Landry (Jane Holmstrom);

The family and friends of Myrtle Caswell.

**Serving in the armed forces:** Kevin Dubois; Wesley Givens (Beverly Walsh); Zack; Millind; Kienen Dyer (Barbara Pond); Shawn Dubois.

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## OUR VISION

First for what is first: Christ, our Lord

First in nurturing youth and families in faith

First with inspiring worship, fellowship and service

First by reaching out to all

First Lutheran Church of the Reformation

*A community of believers in Jesus Christ*

77 Franklin Square, New Britain, Connecticut  
(860) 224-2475 + [www.1stlutherannb.org](http://www.1stlutherannb.org)



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.