



FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH AND SCHOOL

THEN JESUS SAID TO HIS
DISCIPLES, "IF ANYONE WANTS TO
FOLLOW ME, LET HIM DENY
HIMSELF, TAKE UP HIS CROSS, AND
FOLLOW ME.

MATTHEW 16:24

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

AUGUST 30, 2026

Welcome



Worship Series: Unexpected Truths

August 30, 2026

The opening lines of the United States Declaration of Independence boldly assert that certain truths are “self-evident”—truths accessible to human reason and widely recognized by observation of the world. Among these are that all people are created equal and possess unalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The founders appealed to principles they believed reasonable people could recognize simply by reflecting on human nature and justice. These truths were meant to be obvious, clear to the mind, and persuasive in the public square.

Lutherans, however, note that the most important truths revealed in the Bible are not self-evident at all. In fact, they frequently appear surprising or even contrary to human expectations. Scripture teaches that humanity is not naturally good but deeply sinful. It declares that salvation cannot be achieved through human effort but comes entirely by God’s grace. Most unexpected of all is the message that God brings forgiveness and eternal life through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Biblical truth is revealed by God rather than discovered by reason alone. While some truths may seem obvious to human judgment, the truths of the Bible are often unexpected.

Today’s Focus: Cross Comes Before Crown

Some churches teach that if a person follows God, God responds by granting prosperity and peace, as would only be expected. Today we see how that is nonsense. The Bible explains that if we are part of the Church of God, we will have bear crosses. Believers suffer in this world, sometimes just because they are believers.

Why bother? We carry our crosses in gratitude for Jesus carrying his cross, one too heavy for us because it was weighted down with our sin. We carry our crosses because we know that in those moments of struggle, we are forced to turn to Christ and rely on his strength. This is the unexpected path, the one Jesus himself walked: the cross comes before the crown.

Opening Hymn

867 Afflicted Saint, to Christ Draw Near



1 Af - flict - ed saint, to Christ draw near, your Sav - ior's
 2 Your faith is weak, your foes are strong, and if the
 3 Should per - se - cu - tion rage and flame, still trust in
 4 When called to bear your weight - y cross, or sore af -



gra - cious prom - ise hear; his faith - ful Word you can be -
 con - flict should be long, the Lord will make the tempt - er
 your Re - deem - er's name. In fi - ery tri - als you shall
 flic - tion, pain, or loss, or deep dis - tress, or pov - er -



lieve, that as your days your strength shall be. v. 2
 flee, that as your days your strength shall be. Refrain
 see that as your days your strength shall be. Refrain
 ty, still as your days your strength shall be. Refrain



So, sing with joy, af - flict - ed one; the bat - tle's fierce, but the



vic - t'ry's won! God shall sup - ply all that you need;



yes, as your days your strength shall be.

Text (sts. 1-4): John Fawcett, 1740-1817, alt.; (Ref): Constance Dever, b. 1960
 Tune: Constance Dever, b. 1960
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In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Confession

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the $\dagger$ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy





For the peace from a - bove and for our sal - va - tion,
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace of the whole world, for the well - be - ing
of the Church of God, and for the un - i - ty of all,
let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



For this ho - ly house and for all who of - fer here their
wor - ship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

Glory to God in the Highest



Glo - ry to God in the high - est 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. Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his



peo - ple on earth.

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, re - ceive our prayer.



Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on



earth. 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.



Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo-ple on earth.



Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God.

Tune: Kermit G. Moldenhauer
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The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, your Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption. Grant us courage to take up our cross daily and follow him wherever he leads; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading

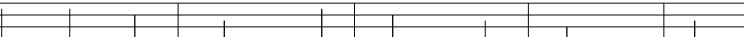
Jeremiah 15:15–21

When Jeremiah complained about carrying his cross, the Lord called on him to repent and promised salvation.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 31



1 I trust, O LORD, your ho - ly name; O let me
 2 Bow down your gra - cious ear to me and hear my
 3 You are my strength, my shield, my rock, my for - tress
 4 With you, O LORD, I cast my lot; O faith - ful
 5 All hon - or, praise, and maj - es - ty to Fa - ther,

Gospel Acclamation

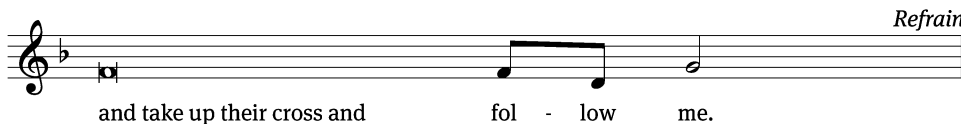
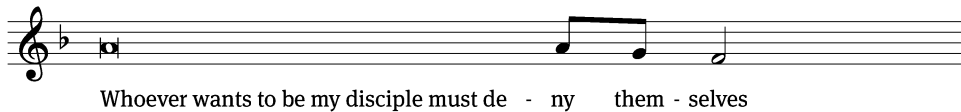
Mark 8:34



Refrain



Tone



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Gospel

Matthew 16:21–26

Jesus calls his Church to walk in his path. First comes the cross, then comes the crown.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day

694 Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken



1 Je - sus, I my cross have tak - en, all to leave and
 2 Let the world de - spise and leave me; they have left my
 3 Go, then, earth - ly fame and trea - sure! Come, dis - as - ter,
 4 Haste, my soul, from grace to glo - ry, armed by faith and



fol - low you; des - ti - tute, de-spised, for - sak - en, you on
 Sav - ior, too. Hu - man hearts and looks de - ceive me; you are
 scorn, and pain! In your ser - vice pain is plea - sure, with your
 winged by prayer; all but heav'n is tran - si - to - ry, God's own



earth once suf - fered, too. Per - ish ev - 'ry fond am - bi - tion,
 not, like them, un - true. And, since you have smiled up - on me,
 fa - vor loss is gain. I have called you Ab - ba, Fa - ther;
 hand shall guide you there. Soon shall end this earth - ly sto - ry,



all I've ev - er hoped or known; yet how rich is
 God of wis - dom, love, and might, foes may hate and
 you my all in all shall be. Storms may howl, and
 swift shall pass the pil - grim days, hope soon change to



my con - di - tion, God and heav'n are still my own!
 friends may shun me; show your face, and all is bright.
 clouds may gath - er, all must work for good to me.
 heav'n - ly glo - ry, faith to sight and prayer to praise.

Text: Henry Francis Lyte, 1793–1847, abr., alt.
 Tune: Rowland H. Pritchard, 1811–1887
 Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

Offering

Hymn

812 Christ, the Sure and Steady Anchor



- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|------|-----|-----------|-----------|---------|-----|
| 1 | Christ, the | sure | and | stead - y | an - chor | in | the |
| 2 | Christ, the | sure | and | stead - y | an - chor | while | the |
| 3 | Christ, the | sure | and | stead - y | an - chor | through | the |
| 4 | Christ, the | sure | and | stead - y | an - chor | as | we |



fu - ry of the storm— when the winds of doubt blow
tem - pest ra - ges on— when temp - ta - tion claims the
floods of un - be - lief— hope - less, some - how, O my
face the wave of death— when these trials give way to



through me and my sails have all been torn,
bat - tle and it seems the night has won,
soul now, lift your eyes to Cal - va - ry.
glo - ry and we draw our fi - nal breath,



in the suf - f'ring, in the sor - row, when my
deep - er still then goes the an - chor, though I
This my bal - last of as - sur - ance, see his
we will cross that great ho - ri - zon, clouds be -
Christ, the shore of our sal - va - tion, ev - er



sink - ing hopes are few, I will hold fast to the
just - ly stand ac - cused; I will hold fast to the
love for - ev - er proved; I will hold fast to the
hind and life se - cure, and the calm will be the
faith - ful, ev - er true— we will hold fast to the



an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.
an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.
an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.
bet - ter, for the storms that we en - dure.
an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.

4th stanza repeat italics

Text: Matt Boswell, b. 1979; Matt Papa, b. 1983

Tune: Matt Boswell, b. 1979; Matt Papa, b. 1983

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Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

Closing Hymn

889 Jerusalem the Golden



- 1 Je - ru - sa - lem the gold - en, with milk and hon - ey blest—
- 2 O sweet and bless - ed coun - try, the home of God's e - lect!
- 3 The Christ is ev - er with them, the day-light is se - rene;



the sight of it re - fresh - es the wea - ry and op - pressed.
O sweet and bless - ed coun - try that ea - ger hearts ex - pect,
the pas - tures of the bless - ed are ev - er rich and green.

I know not, oh, I know not what joys a - wait us there,
 where they who with their lead - er have con - quered in the fight
 There is the throne of Da - vid, and there, from care re - leased,
 what ra - dian - cy of glo - ry, what bliss be - yond com - pare:
 for - ev - er and for - ev - er are clad in robes of white:
 the shout of them that tri - umph, the song of them that feast.
 to sing the hymn un - end - ing with all the mar - tyr throng,
 in mer - cy, Je - sus, bring us to that dear land of rest
 To God en - throned in glo - ry the Church's voic - es blend,
 a - midst the halls of Zi - on re - sound - ing full with song.
 where sings the host of heav - en your glo - rious name to bless.
 the Lamb for - ev - er bless - ed, the Light that knows no end.

Text: Bernard of Cluny, 12th cent., abr.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
 Tune: Gustav Holst, 1874–1934
 Text and tune: Public domain

SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE TODAY

Presiding Minister: Pastor Derek Bartelt

Accompanist: Robert Joseph | **Elder:** Paul Nehlen

Altar Guild: Jan Lazzaroni | **Projectionist:** Helen Hacht

Acknowledgments

Setting Four from Christian Worship

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JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

SUNDAYS

Worship | 9:00am

1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

Worship with Lord's Supper | 6:30pm

OUR STAFF

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OUR MISSION

As a family of believers, the mission of First Evangelical Lutheran Church is to glorify God by growing in the faith of our Savior Jesus Christ and by sharing the good news of His Word with others.

OUR INVITATION

It is a privilege for us to share with you the assurance Jesus offers about how imperfect people like us can enjoy a right relationship with our holy Creator.

Our church services are designed to be Christ-centered worship and include three main elements: God speaks to us in His Word, we respond with praises and prayers, and we encourage each other.

We are eager to have you learn more about the Triune God and about our church. If you are looking for a spiritual family in which you can be at home, please speak with our pastor.