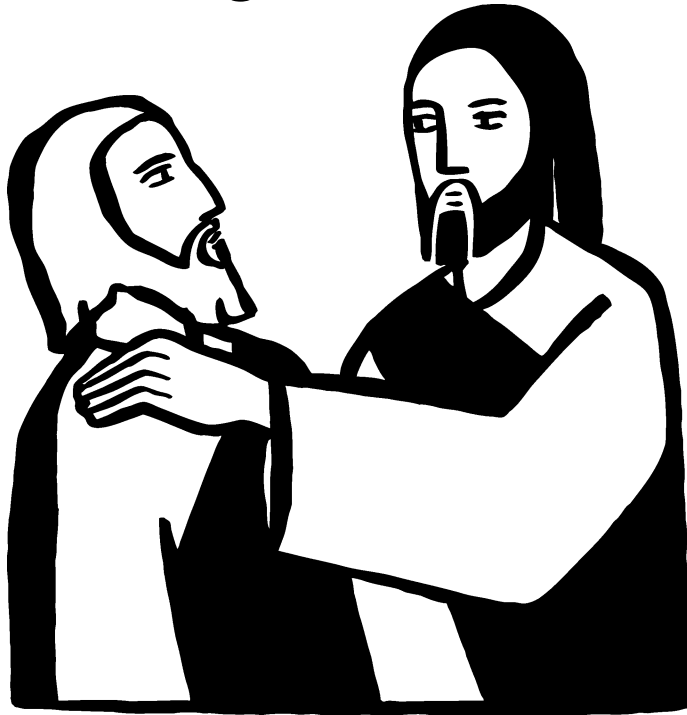




13th Sunday After Pentecost

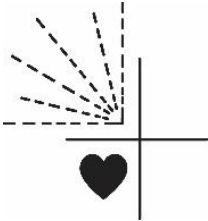
August 23, 2026



Mission Statement

*Living God's love through our devotion to
service, worship, and one another.*

WELCOME TO FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH



First Lutheran Church has been serving Strongsville, Ohio for nearly 70 years, ministering to its members and friends and supporting community, as well as regional and world ministries.

First Lutheran is a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The ELCA pursues God's work in the world with 3 million members in more than 8700 congregations across the United States and in the Caribbean region. The ELCA works with Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, Global Refuge, Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches, schools and colleges, seminaries, camps, and ecumenical and interreligious companions, as well as numerous global church partners and organizations across the world.

We invite you to our website, firstchurchalive.org for more information about First Church.

In addition, we also invite you to download our app by searching for FLC Strongsville in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

And please don't forget to scan the QR code to view our Connections Page where you will quickly find all of our current news and ministry sign-ups.



GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Lento”

David Gooding

Andrew Kingman

CALL TO WORSHIP

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose compassion endures forever.

C Amen

P Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Compassionate God,

C we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

P Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God’s love.

C Amen

SONG

“I Believe”

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen

WORD

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek the Lord.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn
and to the quarry from which you were dug.
Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah, who bore you,
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.
For the Lord will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the Lord;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation,
for a teaching will go out from me
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
I will bring near my deliverance swiftly;
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,

and for my arm they hope.
Lift up your eyes to the heavens
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats,
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND LESSON

Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

ELW #596 (VS. 1 & 3)

“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 16th Chapter

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

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SHARING TIME

SERMON

One Group – Many Gifts

HYMN OF THE DAY

“We All Are One in Mission”

ELW #576

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Please scan the QR code for the option to give online.



MUSIC

“Lento”

David Gooding

Andrew Kingman

Create in Me

Offering Song

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

The first system of music features a treble and bass staff in B-flat major (two flats). The melody in the treble staff begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff has a half note D5, followed by quarter notes C5, Bb4, and A4. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment.

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff has a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment.

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

The fourth system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff has a half note D5, followed by quarter notes C5, Bb4, and A4. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment.

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

The fifth system concludes the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff has a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL TO “OUR FATHER”

Altar flowers are given by the Krueger Family in celebration of Gary Kovach's birthday and the Shorts Family in celebration of Maureen and Ron's 50th Wedding Anniversary.

THE 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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

SENDING

BLESSING

P Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ✠ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.
C Amen

SONG

“Free to Dance”

DISMISSAL

P Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Intrada”

David Gooding

Andrew Kingman

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WELCOME TO THE TIME AFTER PENTECOST

In the ELCA, the Time After Pentecost is the long, green season of the church year (often called "Ordinary Time"). Rather than a break from the action, it is viewed as a period of being "sent out" by the Spirit to live out the Gospel in our daily lives, routines, and communities.

Based on the appointed scripture passages during these weeks of the post-Pentecost season, the ELCA emphasizes several core themes:

- **Living Out the Spirit's Fire:** Having celebrated the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, this season focuses on actively sharing God's love, seeking justice, and serving neighbors. The fire of the Spirit is meant to guide daily Christian practices, not just Sunday worship.
- **Empathy and Unity:** ELCA reflections on this period emphasize that the Spirit was sent to push the church out of its comfort zones. It is a time to break down human estrangement, build connections with people who are different from us, and advocate for the common good.
- **Ordinary as Sacred:** The word "ordinary" comes from the word "ordinal" (counting). The season is an invitation to see the sacred in our everyday, ordinary routines. It focuses on gradual, sustained spiritual growth over 27 weeks as we learn to follow Jesus in real life.

Overall, it is a time for us to see Pentecost as a call to include, seek understanding and broaden circles, to see what we can do individually and, in our churches, and communities. A time for us to be builders, preparers, tenders, nurturers, stewards and protectors.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

First Lutheran Church Staff

Rev. Kathleen L. Kluck

Zack Richards	Music Director
Andrea Cassidy	Contemporary Band Leader
David Gooding	Organist
Justin Lauschin	AV Specialist
Brenda Jacob	Controller
Vanessa Smith Whitford	Office Manager
Barb Nalette	Talents Coordinator
Gloria Reichert	KIDS HOPE USA, Director
Madi Snyder	KIDS HOPE NEXT USA, Director

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June Zakrajsek	Dawn Zima
Ken Holda	Tom Newbould
Lindee Flater	Janet Kaiser
Margaret Bewie	Ellen Kolman
Ron Uline	Kathleen Kluck
Brenda Jacob	

MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS

Ellen Kolman	Beth Hartman
Mary Walters	Carolyn Roman
Sandy Treudler	Linda Browning
Pat Sauernheimer	Maureen Shorts
Monika Mueller	Ryan Hartman
Gayle Kovach	Kathleen Kluck

19419 Royalton Road Strongsville, OH 44136 | firstchurchalive.org
440.238.7890 | firstchurchalive@hotmail.com