

First English Lutheran Church
February 22, 2026 | First Sunday in Lent
Word & Eucharist | 10:00 am | Onsite & Online



God Loves. We Love.
Everyone!
Dios Ama. Amamos.
Todos!

3001 Whitis Avenue
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512.478.1933 church

EVERYONE IS WELCOME. THIS MEANS YOU.

Welcome to First English Lutheran Church. We are a congregation of the Southwestern Texas Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). You are invited to fully participate in a community of faith and friendship that gathers for worship, relationship building, personal growth, and service in the community and the world. Following the example of Christ, this congregation welcomes you exactly as you are.

Worship is at the heart of the Christian life. It is in worship that we encounter God, express our adoration, define our identity, and are formed and transformed as the people of God. As we are gathered together, we receive the Word of God, give thanks, and are sent to be living, active images of divine love.

FELC is committed to the work of racial equity, justice, and advocating for marginalized groups. We welcome people in all places on the journey of faith and life. We celebrate differences in age, appearance, economic status, ethnic origin, nationality, race, family configuration, marital or relationship status, political leaning, religious background, and those who are differently abled physically or mentally. Since 1989, FELC has openly welcomed persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions to full participation in the church and society. For more on our welcome and life, visit www.felcaustin.org.

As we gather, we acknowledge the presence of God's people living on this land long before European conquest. These lands and waters have sustained the Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Jumanos, Lipan Apache, Sana, Tonkawa, and other indigenous peoples for thousands of years. Gathering today to worship on ancestral homelands, we acknowledge and honor our indigenous sisters, siblings, and brothers who continue to care for the land and water and call this land home.

All Gender Restrooms, with infant changing tables, are located in the hallway off of the sanctuary near the fellowship hall. **Hearing assistance devices** are available for the sanctuary, with two options: an earpiece, or a hearing loop for those who use hearing aids; please connect with an usher for a hearing assistance device. **Seat cushions**, for use on our wood pews, are available from an usher.

First English Lutheran Church broadcasts its services and events and records them for distribution via the internet. Your attendance at a service or event constitutes your consent to be included in any filming, photographing, audio recording, or broadcast and for any other use in whole or in part, including publicity. If you prefer to avoid being filmed, please participate from the back pews on the side aisles.

On Ash Wednesday we began our journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. This Sunday's gospel story tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at Easter. This focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of Lent as we hunger for God's mercy.

✚ GATHERING ✚

Lent 1, Year A

We offer responses and acclamations printed in bold. Hymns and Songs are found in the red worship book.

As everyone gathers, we are seated and chant the appointed psalm for today.

Gathering Psalm

Psalm 32:1-7,10,11



¹Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,
and whose sin is | put away!

²**Happy are they to whom the Lord im- | putes no guilt,**
and in whose spirit there | is no guile!

³While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,
because of my groaning | all day long.

⁴**For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;**
my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."
Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.

⁶**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble;**
when the great waters overflow they | shall not reach them.

⁷You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.

¹⁰**Great are the tribulations | of the wicked;**
but mercy embraces those who trust | in the Lord.

¹¹**Be glad you righteous and rejoice | in the Lord;**
shout for joy all who are | true of heart.

We stand, as able.

Hymn

Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church | ELW 321

Text: thomas Ho. Cain, 1931-2003

Music: OLD 124TH, Trente quatre pseaumes de David, Geneva, 1551

Confession & Forgiveness of Sin

Blessed be God, Father, [☩] Son, and Holy Spirit.

God's mercy endures forever. Amen.

Let us draw near to God who draws near to us in mercy, asking for a new mind and a new heart to love.

Quiet is kept for reflection and self-examination.

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

Richard Hillert, 1923-2010; Psalm 51:10-12

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

God comes to you again and again, gifting you a new heart and a new spirit, and gathers you under wings of rest and peace. You are not alone. In the name of [☩]Jesus, all your sin is truly forgiven. The Spirit of God journeys with us and teaches us how to live in love. **Amen.**

Greeting & Prayer of the Day

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit are with you now.

And also with you.

Lord God our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Be seated.

Welcome to Worship & Community

If this is one of your first times with First English, please use this QR code. We are grateful for the opportunity to connect more.



WORD

Anthem

The Crown

Text: Thomas Shepherd, 1665-1739; Music: Leland Saterem, 1913-2007

Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me.
O precious cross, O glorious crown. O resurrection day!
When Christ the Lord from heaven comes down
And bears my soul away.

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” ^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

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

A Time of Wisdom & Wonder

Second Reading

Romans 5:12-19

¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come. ¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man’s trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of the one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹ For just as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.

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

We stand to welcome Christ in the gospel.

Gospel Acclamation

Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960, based on Romans 8:38-39



Noth-ing in all cre - a - tion can sep-a-rate us from the love of God.



Noth-ing in all cre - a - tion can sep-a-rate us from the love of God.

*The Gospel is announced, responding with: **Glory to you, O Lord.***

Holy Gospel

Matthew 4:1-11

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” ⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

This is the gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

Sermon

We remain seated as we sing.

Hymn of the Day

Faith Begins By Letting Go



1 Faith be - gins by let - ting go, giv - ing up what had seemed sure,
2 Faith en - dures by hold - ing on, keep - ing mem - 'ry's roots a - live
3 Faith ma - tures by reach - ing out, stretch - ing minds, en - larg - ing hearts,



tak - ing risks and press-ing on, though the way feels less se - cure:
so that hope may bear its fruit; prom - ise - fed, our souls will thrive,
shar-ing strug - gles, liv - ing prayer, bind - ing up the bro - ken parts;



pil - grim - age both right and odd, trust - ing all our life to God.
not through mer - it we pos - sess but by God's great faith - ful - ness.
till we find the com-mon-place ripe with wit - ness to God's grace.



Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: RATISBON, J. G. Werner, *Choralbuch*, 1815

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We incorporate our communal and personal prayers and intercessions through the text of this anthem.

Anthem

Dear blessed creator, dear mother, dear Savior,
Dear father, dear brother, dear holy other,
Dear sibling, dear baby, dear patiently waiting,
Dear sad and confused, dear stuck and abused.

Dear end of your rope, dear worn out and broke,
Dear go it alone, dear running from home,
Dear righteously angry, forsaken by family,
Dear jaded and quiet, dear tough and defiant.

I pray that I'm heard, and I pray that this works.

I pray if a prayer has been used as a sword
Against you and your heart,
Against you and your word,
I pray that this prayer is a plowshare of sorts
That it might break you open
It might help you grow.

I pray that your body gets all that it needs
And if you don't want healing
I just pray for peace
I pray that your burden gets lighter each day,
I pray the mean voice in your head goes away,
I pray that you honor the grief as it comes.
I pray you can feel all the life in your lungs,
I pray that if you go all day being brave.
That you can go home, go to bed feeling safe.
I pray you're forgiven. I pray you forgive.
I pray you set boundaries and openly live.
I pray that you feel you are worth never leaving.
I pray that you know I will always believe you.

I pray that you're heard, and I pray that this works.

We stand, as able.

Sharing the Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

Everyone returns to their places.

Plowshare Prayer Spencer LaJoyce

Amen on behalf of the last and the least,
On behalf of the anxious, depressed and unseen.
Amen for the workers, the hungry, the houseless,
Amen for the lonely and recently spouseless,

Amen for the queers and their closeted peers,
Amen for the bullied who hold in their tears,
Amen for the mothers of little Black sons,
Amen for the kids who grow up scared of guns,

Amen for the addicts, ashamed and hungover,
Amen for the calloused, the wisened, the sober,
Amen for ones who want life to be over,
Amen for the leaders who lose their composure,

And amen for the parents who just lost their baby,
Amen for chronically ill and disabled,
Amen for the children down at the border,
Amen for the victims of our law and order.

I pray that you're heard, and I pray that this works.

I pray if a prayer has been used as a sword,
Against you and your heart,
Against you and your word,
I pray that this prayer is a plowshare of sorts.

The exchange of peace within the gathered community is an ancient Christian practice. Gentle signs of reconciliation and love renew and build relationships prior to coming to Christ's table for Eucharist.

MEAL

Birthday Blessing

Gracious God, our times are in your care. **Bless your people as they live another year of grace. May they grow in wisdom and joy, and strengthen their trust in your abiding goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Welcome to Communion & Offering

We reflect on our stewardship of the gifts of God entrusted to us for the mission of the church and the care of those in need. God welcomes our generosity. Financial gifts may be shared through the offering plate or online at www.felcaustin.org/information/giving.

We stand as bread, wine, and other gifts are presented and the meal is prepared.

Offering Song

What Does the Lord Require?



1 What does the Lord re - quire for praise and of - fer - ing?
2 Rul - ers of earth, give ear! Should you not jus - tice know?
3 Still down the ag - es ring the proph - et's stern com-mands:
4 How shall our life ful - fill God's law so hard and high?



What sac - ri - fice, de - sire or trib - ute bid you bring?
Will God your plead - ing hear while crime and cru - elty grow?
to mer - chant, work - er, king, he brings God's high com-mands:
Let Christ en - due our will with grace to for - ti - fy.



Do just - ly, love mer - cy, walk hum - bly with your God.
Do just - ly, love mer - cy, walk hum - bly with your God.
do just - ly, love mer - cy, walk hum - bly with your God.
Then just - ly, in mer - cy, we'll hum - bly walk with God.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984, alt., para. Micah 6:6-8

Music: SHARPTHORNE, Erik Routley, 1917–1982

Words © 1988, Oxford University Press

Music © 1969, Hope Publishing Co.

Offering Prayer

All things come from you, O God, **and we give back to you the gifts that come from you.**
Bless us, O Lord God, and all your gifts, which we receive and share from your bounty;
through Christ our Lord. **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.**

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, merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; You call your people to cleanse our hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift and invitation of baptism, we continue in the fullness of your grace; 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:

Sanctus

Thomas Pavlechko, b. 1962

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. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy, mighty, and merciful God . . . do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim together the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Merciful God, pour out upon us the Spirit of your love,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food and blessing,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ; ☩ to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, in the church and in the world, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Jesus, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**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.**

Breaking the Bread

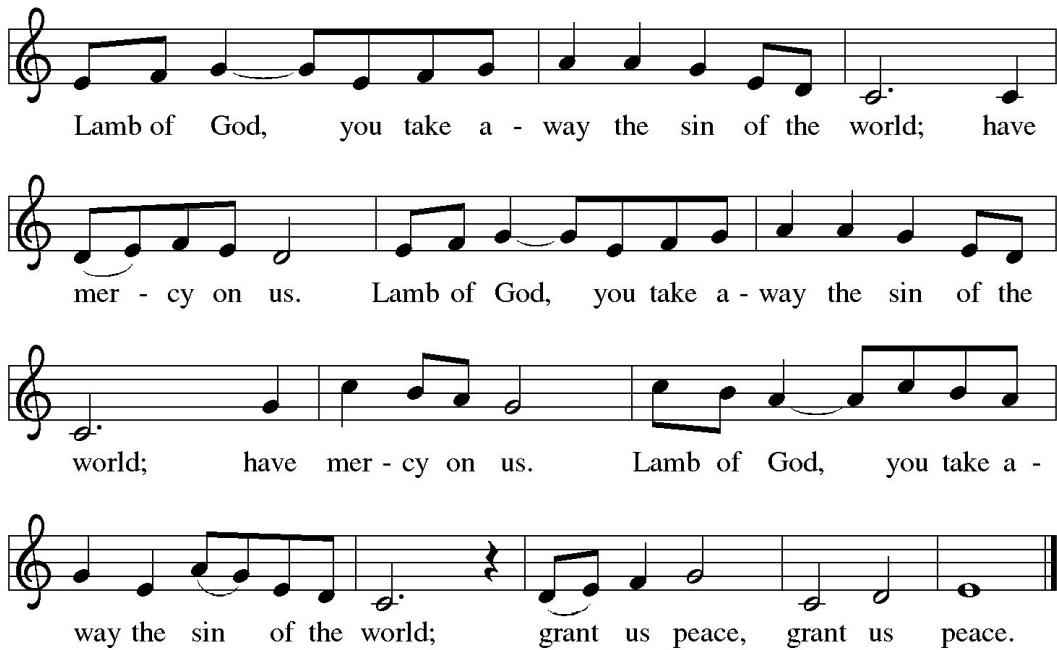
We break this bread to be the body of Christ.

We will love one another as Christ loves us.

Be seated.

Agnus Dei

Robert Buckley Farlee, b. 1950



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Invitation to Communion & Blessing

God, in Christ, fully welcomes people of every age to this Meal, which is known by many names: the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, the Mass, the Sacrament, the Eucharist. We encourage you to participate in ways that are meaningful for you.

Ushers will direct you by the center aisle to a station to receive bread in your hand for you to eat, then proceed to a station and receive a small cup, where wine will be poured and consumed. Gluten-free wafers/ grape juice are available upon request. If you desire not to receive bread or wine, you are invited to a station where a minister will offer a prayer of blessing. Then, return to your seat by a side aisle. We join in prayer, meditation, and music.

If you desire communion or a blessing at your place, let an usher or minister know.

Communion Music

Christ, Be Our Light! | ELW 715

Music: CHRIST, BE OUT LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell

Text: Bernadette Farrell

We remain seated as we offer our thanks.

Prayer after Communion

Dear Jesus, in this meal of grace you have blessed and nourished us with your real presence. We thank you, and we pray that your life-giving hope may be known through us in a world of beauty and need. **Amen.**

✚ SENDING ✚

Announcements

Meal Prayer

We stand as we receive God's blessing and protection.

God's Blessing

based on Numbers 6:24-26

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.**

We sing the refrain as we are sent to serve.

Sending Song

Christ, Be Our Light!

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Dismissal to Mission

As we rest in the love of God, let us live and serve as Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Hospitality

Join together in the Fellowship Hall.

WELCOME TO FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Visit felcaustin.org to learn more about the FELC welcome, worship, music, community life, learning, engagement, racial justice, and reconciliation ministries. To subscribe to a weekly email Newsletter or connect with the staff or ministry leaders, contact office@felcaustin.org.

ANNUAL MEETING | TODAY | Noon

Meet in the Fellowship Hall for Hospitality and lunch. The meeting will convene at Noon.

MINISTERS SERVING IN LEARNING & LITURGY | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Ministers | All God's People |
| Altar Care | Barbara Wiederaenders |
| Assisting Minister | Shannon Aguirre |
| Building Open/Close | Charlie Boas |
| Faith Formation | Leigh Northcutt-Benson, Pastor Anamae Storbeck |
| Lector | Nancy Neuse |
| Livestream Minister | JP Northcutt-Benson |
| Music Ministers | FELC Choir; Cantor Bryan Rust; Ajit D'Sa, JD Aguirre, Shannon Aguirre, Nikki Northcutt, Leigh Northcutt-Benson, Katie Rode, guitar and vocals; |
| Presiding Minister | Pastor Katie Rode |
| Ushers | Terry Porter |

THE SEASON OF LENT

What is Lent? Lent is an old English term for “spring.” In the annual cycle of the church’s liturgy and spiritual formation, it is the time of year for preparation for new life at Easter, the celebration of the resurrection, so the connection to the season of spring is appropriate. Lent is a more solemn season than Christmas or Easter and it is not a time of excessive negativity, but a time of growing trust in God’s power to renew our lives.

When does Lent begin? Lent always begins on Ash Wednesday, 40 days before Easter, excluding Sundays, connecting it to Jesus’ 40 days and the Israelites 40 years in the wilderness, both times of preparation and renewal.

Why do we receive ashes on Ash Wednesday? The ashes and the whole season of Lent are a time to refocus on our relationship with God and that relationship starts with a dependence on God for our very existence. Ashes are a sign of mortality and renewal.

What are some practices during Lent? The traditional ancient spiritual practices for Lent are prayer, fasting (forgoing certain foods for a time of refocus), and almsgiving (giving to the poor). The themes of Lent are wilderness time, repentance (meaning a turning around of one’s life), following Jesus in the way of the cross, and preparation for baptism or renewal of baptism at the Easter Vigil. The Vigil is the Saturday night service before Easter Day, the most celebratory liturgy in church tradition, and the primary time for baptisms and confirmations.

Are Sundays part of Lent? Sundays are Sundays in Lent and take on a different character than other days because Sunday is always a celebration of the resurrection of Christ.

Why don’t we use “alleluia” during Lent? Lent serves as a reminder that we do not yet experience the reign of God in its fullness. We live in the hope of the resurrection. Alleluia is a Hebrew word of praise and exhilaration. The omission of the alleluia is one symbolic way to enter into the spirit of renewal.

What is the significance of the color purple during Lent? The color purple is an additional symbol of penance. The Scriptures tell us that a purple garment was placed on Jesus during his passion as a mockery. It is fitting that the color be maintained during the days in which we focus on the need for the love of God.

What determines the date of Easter and when Lent begins? The Council of Nicaea (CE 325) set the date of Easter as the Sunday following the 14th day of the paschal full moon, which is the full moon whose 14th day falls on or after the vernal (spring) equinox. That was the date of Passover in the Jewish calendar, and the Last Supper (Holy Thursday) occurred on the Passover. Therefore, Easter was the Sunday after Passover.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES DURING LENT

In the season of Lent, Pastor Katie shares some spiritual practices that can be nourishing in this time of repentance and returning to God:

Sabbath from Social Media - An intentional break or rest from that style of input to allow more focused time to return to God's intentions in your life daily.

Sacred Pause - A scheduled time each day for 10-15 minutes of prayer, meditation, or breathing practice focused on God's presence with you.

Intentional Listening - Hone your listening skills with family and friends with intention focused on hearing their words, the meaning within them, and where they might be sharing Good News or need to hear it.

Engage Creation - Return to God is visible and tangible in God's creation. Spend time in God's creation.

WORSHIP IN LENT

SUNDAYS IN LENT | FEBRUARY 22; MARCH 1, 8, 15, 22

Faith Formation (9AM) Worship (10AM)

Hospitality (11:15AM)

Onsite & YouTube livestream

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT | FEBRUARY 25; MARCH 4, 11, 18, 25 | 7 PM

A service of quiet reflection in the FELC sanctuary with the liturgy of Holden Evening Prayer.

Onsite & YouTube livestream

PRAYER CONCERNS & JOYS

As a community of faith, we pray for:

all living with addiction, loneliness, cancer, grief, & with spiritual, health, & employment needs;
Pastor Bob Karli & family, on the death of Bob's brother-in-law, Mark Lester;
with thanksgiving, the life & work of Rev. Jesse Jackson & comfort to those who love & mourn him;
Susan Morales, for God's peace and healing;
Leon Noren for healing;
Monica Lund, for traveling mercies;
FELC congregation, council, & our mission & ministry as we approach our Annual Meeting;
ministries, leadership, and volunteers for Austin City Lutherans;
benevolence ministry partners and their leaders: Micah 6 Food Ministries, LuMin, Global Refuge,
& Casa Marianella;
citizens & leaders of, immigrants, & refugees to the United States;
places experiencing violence, war, oppression, disaster, conflict & recovery;
those who advocate for healing, safety, justice, inclusion, peace & equity.

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