



THE MESSENGER

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEST SEATTLE
(206) 935-6530 www.flcws.org MARCH 2026

Pastor's Page — Life Giving Encounters

This is the year of Matthew which means that most of our Gospel readings are from Matthew. However, during Lent, we take a break from Matthew. Most of our Gospel readings come from John. They are powerful readings and each of them details an encounter with Jesus.

Nicodemus is the inquirer who, in the midst of his conversation with Jesus, wonders how he could possibly be born a second time. The Samaritan woman speaks to the one who is living water. Jesus restores sight to the man born blind. Finally, Lazarus is raised from the dead.

In each and every encounter the person whom Jesus encounters is changed.

It is no wonder that these very stories were used to instruct adult candidates for baptism in the early centuries of the church. They provide a lens through which we can see something of the baptized life as a journey with Jesus who changes our lives inside out. Following Jesus is more than a moral principle. It is actually life! More than following Jesus, we abide in Jesus. John's Gospel emphasizes this more than the other Gospel narratives.

These stories from the Gospel of John helped those preparing for baptism to see that Christ lives and gives us new birth, quenches our deepest thirst, restores our sight and vision, and raises us from the dead.

Lent is the time to prepare adults for baptism. It is also the time when those of us who are baptized are renewed in faith. Perhaps these scriptures will help us pray and help us remember that the God to whom we pray is in the business of perennially changing our lives.

It would be useful to use these scriptures as a source of reflection – what are our predicaments around being “born again?” What am I thirsting for? Where are we who claim to see truly blind? What tomb do we find ourselves climbing into again and again? Can we trust Jesus to abandon that tomb?

Lent is a time to be open to the movement of God in our lives. Take the time to dwell a little deeper into the things of God. It is time well spent and it leads to the glorious feast of Easter. Christ is risen and promises to raise us as well.

Peace,
Pastor Hansen

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

“Oh Lord, throughout these forty days you prayed and kept the fast. Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past”

LBW Hymn #99

We are now in the season of Lent, during this time Christians are encouraged to pray, read scripture, and exercise self-discipline through fasting. When those outside of church ask why I try to give up foods (chips & cupcakes) or behaviors (Instagram & Facebook) I tell them that it is to help make me more outward focused than inward, to think about others more than myself. Instead of spending money on treats for me, I could give it to a food bank, and instead of spending time on social media I could spend that time in prayer and meditation. I encourage you to join me in this during Lent if you can.

A new council year began in February, and new members have joined one of three committees. Those committees are; Budget, Finance & Facilities - Chair, Peter Douglass; Parish Ministry & Education - Chair, Gina Allen; Extended Ministry - Chair, Steve Jeske. If anyone is interested in working with any of those Committees please talk to the Committee Chair.

As we welcome our new council members, I would like to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to our outgoing members: Dale Korsmo, Mathew Kahn, Marianne Peterson, Tyler Schorn, and Steve Liang. Thank you so much for all your service to the council and to the church. To our new council members, I am excited to work together. I look forward to the positive, rewarding, and fulfilling contributions you will bring to our council.

I am looking forward to serving as President of the Council. I hope that my gifts will be of use, and that I will learn from this experience as well. If anyone has a desire to talk with me about anything, please use my new email - kathrine@flcws.org.

In Service,

Kathrine Young
CouncilPresident

Next Council Meeting and links:

Tuesday, March 10, 2026: In-Person/Hybrid

Video link:

<https://meet.google.com/ffb-rdss-xqm>

Or dial:

(US) [+1 502-622-8042](tel:+15026228042) PIN: 222 331 072#

MARCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: Join us in the lounge every Sunday after the service. This is a wonderful time to visit with one another and to welcome visitors and guests.

CHAPEL SERVICE: Every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. in the Chapel there is a spoken Holy Communion service. On festival Sundays the chapel service does not occur and those who attend are encouraged to join the rest of the congregation at the 10:30 service. The next festival is the Transfiguration of Our Lord, February 15.

FOOD BANK COLLECTION: The West Seattle Food Bank box and all collections are in room C. Suggestions for March are canned meats, chilies and stews. Any non-perishable foods, personal products, or grocery gift cards are welcome. Your much needed donations go to the West Seattle Food Bank, Compass Housing Alliance, Mary's Place, and Westside Neighbors (American Legion Hall Shelter).

CHOIR REHEARSAL Thursday, 7:00 pm. All are welcome. If you are interested in joining *Deo Gloria Cantores*, contact Dana Robinson: dmrobsn@gmail.com

WEEKLY FLCWS EMAIL: FLCWS began sending out a weekly email in December. All members and friends of First with email addresses on file will receive the weekly news on Fridays. In addition to news, the email includes scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday, and Pastor's reflections. If you're not sure if we have your current email, or you would like a friend or family member to be included, send it in, or write it down on the *Count Me In* form.

DINNER TEAMS NEEDED! Churches in West Seattle are preparing meals for our homeless friends in partnership with Westside Neighbors Shelter. FLCWS is participating by helping to provide meals at least monthly as a dinner team. Our next dinner will be in March. If you are interested in this ministry, please check the appropriate box on the *Count Me In* form.

WEST SEATTLE THRIFTWAY gives back 1% of sales from receipts turned in to the WS Food Bank! Drop your receipts in the envelope on the Extended Ministry bulletin board outside Room C. Every receipt makes a difference to those in need.

AVAILABLE ON THE OFFICE COUNTER:

- *Lord Make us Instruments of Your Peace*, by Nancy Monelli (donation requested)
- Pastor Hansen's Lenten Book
- Quarterly devotionals: *Christ in Our Home*, and the *St. James Devotional*. These are also available in the narthex.

ADULT FORMATION: *LIVING IN AND OUT OF GOD'S SHALOM* This weekly class leads participants into a deeper understanding of God's shalom – the gift of the peace and wholeness of his divine kingdom. During this course there will be a time to discover and take part in exercises that connect prayer to daily living and provide a deeper understanding of God's love and ways we are called to share that love with others. This series takes place after coffee fellowship at 11:45 in Rooms C & D, and be led by Nancy Monelli from Oasis Ministries, from her recent book, *Lord Make Us Instruments of Your Peace* based on the Prayer of St. Francis.

STEWARDSHIP

It was Gina Allen's rotation on the Council to post the Stewardship Article. While she is out of town tending to family, we have pulled moving paragraphs some of Gina's previous articles:

I felt inspired to write a stewardship article after hearing Pastor Hanson's sermon based on the Bible verse from Mark 12:41-44. Stewardship refers to the idea that everything we have, including our money, is a gift from God and should be managed responsibly and generously, with the focus not on the amount given but on the heart behind the giving. However, in these Bible verses, we learn of the poor widow who gave a small amount but it was all that she had, which demonstrated a greater commitment than the wealthy who gave large sums from their abundance. We are not owners of our possessions but stewards. We are entrusted with managing them wisely and responsibly for God's purposes. We know too that stewardship applies to all aspects of life, including our time, talents, and resources, which should first be used to serve God. May we all feel inspired by the poor woman who gave all that she had.

...The Bible speaks more about money and possessions than almost any other topic. Jesus talked often and openly about our relationship with money. My perception of tithing changed dramatically once I experienced how giving makes you want to give more. We all have months and years of financial struggle at different times of our lives. But I have experienced that the tighter that I've tried to hold money close are the times when I seem to have less to give. However, when one gives "the first fruits", amazingly, there is still enough for daily life. The more you give, the more you will have. It is a miracle. Stewardship also includes sharing your time and talents. We often don't know what our own capabilities are unless we try new things and commit ourselves to helping where the help is needed. We all are capable of growing and learning, no matter our age. Many hands make light work.

First Lutheran Church of West Seattle is grateful to be a recipient of Thrivent Choice Dollars Grant Funds. If you are a Thrivent member, you can designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to First Lutheran Church of West Seattle.

thrivent

-Gina Allen
Church Council



✠ PARISH PRAYERS ✠

Remember in prayer before God those whom He has made your brothers and sisters through baptism.

Pray for members and friends of our congregation that God will bless and strengthen them in these days: Shirley Graham, Don Minter and children, and Michael Thompson. Gina Allen & Family

Pray for the homebound that the light of Christ may give them joy: Joan Olson, Jeanine Lingle, Robert Schorn, CJ Christian, Melanie Johnson, Peter Morrison and Nora Vanhala.

Pray for Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry, Synod Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee, our pastor Bryon Hansen, our sacristan Dean Hard, our organist and choirmaster Dana Robinson, and all who faithfully assist with worship. May they be strengthened in faith, love and the holy office to which they have been called. Pray for our church council: Kathrine Young, David King, Peter Douglass, Sonja Clemente, Gina Allen, William Croghan, Brandon Greenwood, Steve Jeske, David Juhl, and Jeremy Keizur, that God will guide and strengthen them in their work.

Pray that God would give us hearts to find joy in service and faithful stewardship. Pray that God would work within us to become a good steward of our time, talents, and finances. Pray to strengthen our commitment to stewardship in our congregation.

Pray in gratitude for the lives of those who have passed, and pray for those who grieve.

Pray for the hungry, ignored, abused, unemployed, addicted, homeless, and unbelievers. Pray God will show mercy to these people, and for all in Christ's church to see and help those who are in distress.

Pray for our country, that we will abandon bullying tactics and steward a just and merciful immigration policy.

Pray for our leaders, that they may govern with wisdom, justice, mercy, and compassion.

Pray for people around the world who suffer from the effects of war, terrorism, natural disasters, disease, poverty, and abuse, especially the people of Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Afghanistan, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon, Sudan and Nigeria. All immigrants and asylum seekers, and all who live in fear.

Pray that God will bless us through the lives of the saints: Thomas Aquinas, Teacher (1274); George Herbert, Hymnwriter (1633) Harriet Tubman (1913) & Sojourner Truth (1883) Renewers of Society; Patrick, Bishop & Missionary to Ireland (461); Joseph, Guardian of Jesus; Oscar Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, Martyr (1980); John Donne, Priest & Poet (1631)

Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.



From the Bishop:

March 2026

We are living in times that would have felt unimaginable just a few years ago. We are surrounded by neighbors who are worried about sending their kids to school, seeking medical help, or gathering for worship – afraid of what might happen. We are also surrounded by neighbors who are anxious about people from other countries or people of different religions – uncertain about a changing world and unsure where they belong. Many people are afraid. And this fear, in all its forms, is shrinking our world.

Fear pulls us inward. It isolates us from one another. It tempts us to retreat into suspicion and guardedness rather than reaching out toward one another. It makes it harder to see one another as fully human. It becomes almost impossible to say that we are all beloved of God and all neighbors with one another. Truly, as followers of Jesus, we are called to a new way: a way of connection, courage, and community.

During this time of Lent, as children of God, let us practice these new ways through the disciplines of prayer, fasting, and charity (the traditional disciplines of Lent).

Prayer: Let us pray together for this world. Let us read scripture together and attend mid-week Lenten services. Let us light candles each night. Let us listen to one another's fears and longings. Let us gather on street corners and sing. Let us gather in churches and homes – and even in front of federal buildings. Prayer grounds us so we remember who we are and whose we are. Let us gather in prayer this Lent.

Fasting: You are welcome to give up luxuries during Lent – but fasting also invites us to examine what consumes us and what we consume in return. What are we holding onto that causes us not to see our neighbor? What holds our attention more tightly than the people right in front of us? This Lent let us choose practices that connect us rather than separate us. Let us fast from doomscrolling and performative outrage and instead read thoughtfully and be genuine in our allyship. Let us make space for joy, for creativity. Let us not only fast from junk food but let us prepare good, nourishing meals for those who are without. Let us fast expansively this Lent.

Charity: This is not simply about writing a check (though sometimes this is a faithful use of resources). Charity is also showing up. Let us share time, attention, and care. Let us reduce our focus on hoarding wealth or possessions and instead practice love for our neighbors in tangible ways. Let us use our voices for those who have been silenced. Let us help redistribute wealth so that those who are without receive what they need. And let us stand in solidarity with communities who are vulnerable. Charity makes visible Christ's love we proclaim. Let us show the love of God and neighbor through charity this Lent.

These practices alone cannot change the world – but we believe in One who is already changing this world. And so, as we practice these disciplines, we also live in the promise that the Holy Spirit is alive and active in this world. And that even in this fearful time, death does not have the final word. Through Jesus, God is always bringing hope out of despair, community out of isolation, life out of death. As people shaped by the promise of the resurrection, may we dare to live differently – to pray boldly, to fast with freedom, to give generously. May the Holy Spirit strengthen us during these forty days and beyond. And may our lives bear witness to the new life God is already creating among us.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee | bishop@lutheransnw.org



From the VEEP:

“Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.” (Luke 18:1)

My congregation loves the Holden Evening Prayer service. We use it for special evening services, but also during Sunday morning worship. It is beautiful and uplifting. Every time we use it, however, I am reminded of a misunderstanding one of my children had about the prayers. Never having had any experience with incense (they were quite little), they thought the song said, “Let my prayers rise up like insects.” Insects they had lots of experience with - they had seen gnats and mosquitoes swarming about

and rising up into the air, so this made perfect sense to them. I didn’t realize what they were singing until they were singing it in the car after church. Of course, I had to stop them and explain the error, but in reality, I kind of like their imagery - not one prayer wafting lazily up to God, but dozens or more tiny little prayers buzzing about the Godhead.

It reminds me of the parable of the persistent widow in Luke, chapter 1. Jesus tells the story of the widow who kept coming to the judge to ask for justice against her accuser. The judge was not a righteous man and was inclined to ignore her. However, she does not back down. She keeps bothering him and wears him down until he finally gives in and gives her the justice she seeks. Her persistence pays off. In this same way, Jesus says, we should pray all the time, over and over and not lose heart because God is just and so will grant justice to those who cry to him day and night. Let our prayers rise up like a swarm of insects, too numerous to ignore.

What I love about this parable is that Jesus tells us it is okay to make nuisances of ourselves. We don’t have to worry about annoying God with our prayers; we are actually told to pray always - unceasingly. We don’t need to be afraid of praying too much or in some wrong way. Just keep praying. Make a joyful noise to the lord. Make lamentations. Plead. Praise. Question. Be a gnat, a mosquito, a locust, a wasp, a butterfly - just keep praying.

Keep praying and don’t lose heart. Sometimes that second part is really hard to do. Every morning when I wake up, I’m afraid to check out the daily news. So much of it is bad: floods, earthquakes, droughts, volcanic eruptions, wars, gun violence, bigotry, corruption, persecution, inflation, government agents killing citizens in the streets - the list just goes on and on. It can seem like all that praying is getting us nowhere, that God is impervious - wearing super strong DEET or something - but I have faith that is not true. God hears us and does not swat us away. However, we are also called to act in addition to prayer. We pray for justice but we must also act for justice, however scary and dangerous that might be. We can be as persistent in our actions as we are in our prayers. Volunteer to help in food pantries, donate to disaster relief, show up in support of immigrants, call/write/email/visit your lawmakers, join rallies and vigils, support local schools and libraries - there are many ways to make our presence seen and felt. Let not only our prayers, but let *us* rise up like insects pestering our way to justice.

Here’s what I or the synod council have been up to in February:

- The Synod Policy Review Team met on February. Among other policies, we reviewed a new policy for crisis communications.
- The Synod Executive Committee met on February 12. Among other agenda items we made an appointment to the Personnel Committee.
- The Seminary Debt Reduction Committee met to review application and make grants.

Kay Edgerton, Vice President of the NW Washington Synod veep@lutheransnw.org

Concerts at First Lutheran Church of West Seattle

Music Northwest presents

J.S. Bach Festival of Keyboard Works

May 17, 2026 at 3pm

Dana Robinson, organ

Jane Harty, piano

Assisted by

Intermezzo String Quartet

Program:

Keyboard Concerto in A Major, BWV 1055

Sinfonias, BWV 772-801 (selected)

“Aus tiefer Not schrei’ ich zu dir,” BWV 687, arr. by G. Kurtag

“Gottes Zeit is die allerbeste Zeit,” BWV 106: Sonatina, arr. by G. Kurtag
Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 582

Homage to the Invisible Listeners:

New Music inspired by Soren Kierkegaard

November 15, 2026 at 3pm

Megan Renae Parker, soprano

Darrell Jordan, baritone

EUROPA Ensemble:

Mara Finkelstein, cello

Jane Harty, piano

Program:

Jacob Beranek: “To the Invisible Listener”

Text by Rev. Ronald Marshall and Alyssa Stadlander

Paul Salerni: “Homage to Soren Kierkegaard”

Text by Dana Gioia

Heather Gilligan: “The voice which quivers with pain and still proclaims joy”

Text by Soren Kierkegaard; World Premiere

Lenten Adult Formation

Following Coffee Fellowship
Each Sunday in Lent



Living In And Out of God's Shalom
-Led by Nancy Monelli

This experience, based on Nancy's book, *Lord, Make Us Instruments of Your Peace*, will help provide an experience of prayer and action. If you wish to acquire a book, they are available on the counter near the lounge. Donations are welcome.

SOLI DEO GLORIA CONCERT SERIES

CELEBRATING THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NOACK ORGAN

IN HONOR OF ANDREW J. KING, 1950-2024

Organist/Cantor, First Lutheran Church of West Seattle, 1974-2024



Sunday, April 19, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

Recital by **Nathan Laube**, Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham, UK



Sunday, September 27, 2026, 3:00 p.m. 50th Anniversary Concert

Dana Robinson, Choirmaster/Organist at First Lutheran
With **Tekla Cunningham** & Chamber Group of Period Instruments
And **Paul Tegels**, Choirmaster/Organist at Christ Church, Tacoma



Saturday, November 7, 2026, 3:00 p.m.

Recital by **Michael Kleinschmidt**, Canon for Cathedral Music, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Seattle



Sunday, February 7, 2027, 3:00 p.m.

Recital by **Anne Laver**, Setnor School of Music, Syracuse University



First Lutheran Church of West Seattle

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206-935-6530 ❖ admin@flcws.org



Holy Week—March 29–April 5

Palm/Passion Sunday + March 29, 10:30 a.m.

Today is a day of contrasts. We begin our worship in triumphant praise of the one who entered Jerusalem as king. Then, in the Passion reading from Matthew we hear how these shouts of “Hosanna!” became shouts of “Crucify him!” This opens us up to Holy Week and days of reflection on the passion of Jesus.

Chrism Mass + March 31, 11:00 a.m.

First will be hosting the Chrism Mass on Tuesday of Holy Week. This annual service gathers the bishops and ordained pastors and deacons together for a reaffirmation of ordination vows and the blessing of chrism, the oil used at baptism. This is a joint service of the Northwest Washington Synod ELCA and the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia.

The Three Days

In the Christian year, three days stand out above all the rest. Anciently known as the “Triduum,” these three days are considered one liturgy that begins on Maundy Thursday and reaches its climax at the Easter Vigil.

Maundy Thursday + April 2nd, 7:00 p.m.

The Triduum begins this evening by remembering Jesus’ last supper with his disciples which became the institution of the Lord’s Supper celebrated at every Eucharist. Tonight we hear Jesus’ command to love one another and partake in the feast of love. The altar is ceremoniously stripped and we leave in silence ...

Good Friday + April 3rd, Noon and 7:00 p.m.

The Three Days continues on this day. The evening service of Tenebrae includes the Passion reading from John’s Gospel, the service of light and darkness, the bidding prayers, and adoration of the cross. The Noon service will be a similar liturgy without Tenebrae. Again, we leave in silence without a final blessing ...

Easter Vigil + April 4th, 7:00 p.m.

This is the night of nights! We begin with the lighting of the Paschal Candle, and then hear the story of salvation unfold in the scripture readings, renew our baptismal vows, and celebrate the Eucharist. The Triduum is complete. We celebrate the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection and our participation in this mystery through the gift of baptism.

Easter Sunday + April 5th, 10:30 a.m.

The celebration of the Vigil spills over into Easter Sunday with the celebration of the Resurrection. All stops are pulled as we rejoice with the news of Christ’s resurrection.

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March 2026



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4105 California Avenue S.W.
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