

March 14, 2021
Fourth Sunday in Lent



AGAIN & AGAIN - God Loves Us First. Jesus invited Nicodemus to be born anew. Then we are reminded love is where God begins & ends. For God so loved us. This love is a gift we do nothing to deserve — God does. Can love be first for us too?

RINGING OF BELL

PRELUDE *Here Is Love*
O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Before we were born,
ALL: Before we took our first breath,
L: Before the week started,
ALL: Before the year started,
L: Before we said, “I love you,”
ALL: Before we said, “I’m sorry,”
L: Before we figured out who we really are,
ALL: Before we figured out who we want to be,
L: Before it all –
ALL: God loved us.
L: Unconditionally and freely,
ALL: Fully and honestly –
L: God loved us.
ALL: Again and again, this is where our story begins.
L: Let us worship God

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: God of Love,
ALL: We forget the beginning of the story –
that we were made from love, to be love, to give love.

**Instead of rooting our narrative in the goodness refrain of creation,
we skip ahead and find our worth at the fall,
with Cain and Abel, lost in the wilderness.
We forget that first there was you, and you are love.
We forget that out of that love you created us.
We forget that from the very first day, you loved first.
We forget because a love like that doesn't make sense to us.
Forgive our low self-esteem.
Forgive our resistance to love ourselves.
Forgive our hesitation to trust that even we could be made good.
And forgive our tendency to pass that doubt on –
from generation to generation.
Write a new beginning for us
that roots our confidence in your unending love.**

L: Family of faith, no matter what we do, where we go,
or what we tell ourselves- God is love, and God is loving us.

ALL: **Again and again, we are claimed, held, forgiven, and cared for.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself –
thanks be to God. Amen!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: God of the here and now –

ALL: **We have heard the words, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only son,” time and time again. We have read them on billboards, heard them in worship, and seen them on signs. And yet we know, there is a difference between hearing those words in passing and truly, deeply listening. We long to hear your truth. We long to know your love. Open our hearts and minds. We are listening. Amen.**

READING: EPHESIANS 2:1-10

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the

gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

GOSPEL READING: JOHN 3:14-21

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

MESSAGE

MUSIC: *How Beautiful* Tanya Short

*How beautiful the hands that served
the wine and the bread and the sons of the earth
How beautiful the feet that walked
the long dusty roads and the hill to the cross
How beautiful is the body of Christ*

*How beautiful the heart that bled
That took all my sin and bore it instead
How beautiful the tender eyes
That choose to forgive and never despise
How beautiful is the body of Christ*

*And as he lay down his life
We offer this sacrifice
That we will live just as he died
Willing to pay the price
How beautiful the feet that bring
The sound of good news and the love of the King*

*How beautiful the hands that serve
The wine and the bread and the sons of the Earth
How beautiful, how beautiful
How beautiful is the body of Christ*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: All

We believe God is love – unconditional, constant love.

We believe this love exists for all, choosing each and every one of us, day after day, again and again and again.

We believe that God’s love is like a river. Rivers cannot help but flow toward the sea; God’s love cannot help but move toward us. We are swimming in it.

We believe that God loved first. We believe that God breathed life into dust. We believe that God said, “This is good.” And because we believe that God loved first, we strive to build lives that reflect God’s love. May we begin again here. Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE – OFFERING OF GIFTS

PRAYERS & LORD’S PRAYER

BENEDICTION & DISMISSAL

L: As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God’s goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God’s grace.
And may this be your rhythm-

**All: Again and again and again,
until God’s promised day.**

RINGING OF BELL

L: In the name of the God, the Beloved, and the Holy Spirit,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Give Thanks*

PARTICIPANTS

PASTORS: Julie Rogness ASSISTANT: Ben Short
PIANIST: Annette Thunhorst SOLOIST: Tanya Short
TECH CREW: Jim Braaten, Steve Johnson, Bill Lewis, Dan Rogness, Holly Aldorfer, Heidi Haugen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TEXTS: USED WITH PERMISSION: *Again and Again* – A SANCTIFIED ART by Sarah Are © 2020 | sanctifiedart.org.

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PRELUDE ¹: *Here Is Love*, Tune/PUBLIC DOMAIN: JESUS ONLY by Robert Lowry; piano arr. by Tracey Craig McKibbin, c. 2018 Lorenz Publishing Co.

PRELUDE ²: *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus* – PUBLIC DOMAIN, arr. Abt

SONG: *How Beautiful*, by Twila Paris, CCLI Song # 443594, c. 1990 Ariose Music | Mountain Spring Music

PO: *Give Thanks*, by Henry Smith, CCLI Song # 20285 c. 1978 Integrity's Hosanna! Music

CONNECTIONS

WEBSITE: fickenyon.org FACEBOOK: **First Evangelical Lutheran Kenyon MN**

OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL: <https://www.youtube.com/c/FirstEvangelicalLutheranChurchKenyon>

Pastor E-Mail: firstpastorkenyon@gmail.com Pastor Phone: 952-994-1201

Church E-Mail: firstlutherankenyon@gmail.com Church Office Phone: 789-5261

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Sid Strandemo, Faye Marcuson, Ron Grose, Barb Schaller, Lila Cole, Eloyce Berg, Rhana Olson, Cora Lee Monroe, Danny Van Epps, Sherman Benson, LaVonne Underdahl, Les Johnson (father of Steve Johnson), Alice Dale (aunt of Colleen Estrem), and the family of Lynn Fromm (sister of Ed Fletcher).

CALENDAR

Sun/Mar 14	9 am	WORSHIP - In-Person** & Live-Streamed (*50% capacity, with masks & social distancing)
Sun/Mar 14	10 am	5th Gr Class/First Communion
Sun/Mar 14	7 pm	AA
Wed/Mar 17	----	Lenten Devotion 4 – <i>Becoming Someone New</i>
Wed/Mar 17	7:30 pm	Council
Thur/Mar 18	7 pm	AA
Sun/Mar 21	9 am	WORSHIP - In-Person** & Live-Streamed

Available Now - APR-MAY-JUN *Christ In Our Home*

See Countertop Basket at rear of church OR Tote Container Outside handicapped entrance

Easter Plants



If you would like a plant in church for Easter in Honor/Memory of a loved one, please purchase your own and deliver it to the church. To be listed in the Easter bulletin, please provide the information requested below... leave in the offering plate or bring/send to the church office before deadline... **BULLETIN DEADLINE IS—Friday, March 26!**

In Honor/Memory of _____

Given By _____

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
309 Forest St., Kenyon, MN 55946

Sunday, March 14
Worship Bulletin

