



# *St. John's Lutheran Church*

1000 Bluff St., Beloit, WI 53511  
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**“Sharing the good news of forgiveness and eternal life  
through Jesus Christ.”**

*May 2, 2021*

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or dispose of it in our recycling bin.  
Thank you.*

✠ **Special thanks today to Pastor Rick Sears of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Janesville for leading our Worship service this morning.**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**Acts 8:26–40**

**1 John 4:1–21)**

**John 15:1–8**

***Jesus Christ Is the True Vine Who Bears Much Fruit in Us***

“*God is love,*” and He has manifested Himself to us by sending “*his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him*” (1 John 4:9, 16). By the ministry of the Gospel, “*he has given us of his Spirit,*” so that we also believe and confess “*that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.*” In this way, we “*abide in him and he in us,*” and we “*love one another*” (1 John 4:2, 7, 13). Such divine love is exemplified in Philip’s preaching of “*the good news about Jesus*” to the Ethiopian eunuch. And when “*they came to some water,*” the eunuch was baptized into the very Gospel that Philip had preached (Acts 8:35–38). That Ethiopian was thereby grafted into “*the true vine,*” Jesus Christ (John 15:1), just as we are. Already we are clean because of the Word that Christ has spoken to us and by the washing of water with His Word. We now abide in Him by faith in His forgiveness. As He abides in us, both body and soul, with His own body and His blood, He “*bears much fruit*” in us (John 15:3–5).

**Silent Preservice Meditation and Prayer**

*Blessed Lord, you have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and the comfort of your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

**Music for Reflection**

**Announcements**

**Gathering Hymn**

**809 Great Is Thy Faithfulness**

- 1 Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.  
Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be. Refrain
  
- ref Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!
  
- 2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. Refrain
  
- 3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain

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**Confession and Forgiveness**

*Stand*

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**C** **who made heaven and earth.**

**P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?  
**C** **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

**P** Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

*Kneel/Stand*

**C** **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

*Stand*

### **Service of the Word**

**Lord, Have Mercy (Kyrie)**

*LSB 204*

**C** **Lord, have mercy;  
Christ, have mercy;  
Lord, have mercy.**

**Gloria in Excelsis**

*LSB 204*

**C** **1 To God on high be glory  
And peace to all the earth;  
Goodwill from God in heaven  
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!  
We praise and bless You, Father;  
Your holy name, we sing—  
Our thanks for Your great glory,  
Lord God, our heav'nly King.**

**2 To You, O sole-begotten,  
The Father's Son, we pray;  
O Lamb of God, our Savior,  
You take our sins away.  
Have mercy on us, Jesus;  
Receive our heartfelt cry,  
Where You in pow'r are seated  
At God's right hand on high—**

**3 For You alone are holy;  
You only are the Lord.  
Forever and forever,  
Be worshiped and adored;  
You with the Holy Spirit  
Alone are Lord Most High,  
In God the Father's glory.  
"Amen!" our glad reply.**

## Salutation and Prayer of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray.

O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

*Sit*

## Old Testament Reading

**Acts 8:26–40**

<sup>26</sup>Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is an isolated area.) <sup>27</sup>So he got up and went. And there was a man, an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship. <sup>28</sup>He was on his way home, sitting in his chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah.

<sup>29</sup>The Spirit told Philip, “Go over there and stay close to that chariot.” <sup>30</sup>Philip ran up to it and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet.

Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

<sup>31</sup>The man replied, “How can I unless someone explains it to me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

<sup>32</sup>Now the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading was this:

He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,  
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he does not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who will talk about his generation?

For his life is taken from the earth.

<sup>34</sup>The eunuch said to Philip, “I ask you, who is the prophet talking about—himself or someone else?” <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak. Starting with that very passage of Scripture, he told him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>As they were traveling along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What is there to prevent me from being baptized?”

<sup>38</sup>He ordered the chariot to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>When they stepped up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away. The eunuch did not see him anymore, but went on his way rejoicing.

<sup>40</sup>Philip, however, found himself at Azotus. And as he went from place to place, he preached the gospel in all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## New Testament/Epistle

**1 John 4:1--21**

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup>This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, <sup>3</sup>and every spirit who does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and is already in the world. <sup>4</sup>You are from God, dear children, and you have overcome the false prophets, because the one in you is greater than the one in the world. <sup>5</sup>They are from the world. That is why they speak from a worldly perspective and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup>We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. That is how we can distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>The one who does not love has not known God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>This is how God’s love for us was revealed: God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we may live through him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another.

<sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and his love has been brought to its goal in us. <sup>13</sup>This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>If anyone confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. <sup>16</sup>We also have come to know and trust the love that God has for us.

God is love. Whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. <sup>17</sup>In this way his love has been brought to its goal among us, so that we may have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are just like Jesus. <sup>18</sup>There is no fear in love, but complete love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who continues to be afraid has not been brought to the goal in love.

<sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar. For how can anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, love God, whom he has not seen? <sup>21</sup>This then is the command we have from him: The one who loves God should also love his brother.

- P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

## **Anthem**

*Stand*

## **Alleluia and Verse**

- C** **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**
- C** **These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**
- C** **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## **Holy Gospel**

*John 15:1–8*

- P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.
- C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup>Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he is going to cut off. And he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will bear more fruit.

<sup>3</sup>"You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Remain in me, and I am going to remain in you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Likewise, you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup>"I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him is the one who bears much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers. Such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this: that you continue to bear much fruit and prove to be my disciples."

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **Nicene Creed**

- C** **I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,**

**being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life + of the world to come. Amen.**

*Sit*

### **Message Hymn**

#### **474 Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen**

- 1 Alleluia!  
Jesus is risen!  
Trumpets resounding in glorious light!  
Splendor, the Lamb,  
Heaven forever!  
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight! Refrain
- ref Jesus is risen and we shall arise:  
Give God the glory! Alleluia!
- 2 Walking the way,  
Christ in the center  
Telling the story to open our eyes;  
Breaking our bread,  
Giving us glory:  
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise. Refrain
- 3 Jesus the vine,  
We are the branches;  
Life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;  
Heaven to earth,  
Christ to the people,  
Gift of the future now flowing to me. Refrain
- 4 Weeping, be gone;  
Sorrow, be silent:  
Death put asunder, and Easter is bright.  
Cherubim sing:  
"O grave, be open!"  
Clothe us in wonder, adorn us in light. Refrain

5 City of God,  
Easter forever,  
Golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,  
River of life,  
Saints and archangels,  
Sing with creation to God the I AM! Refrain

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## **Children's Message**

### **Message**

*Stand*

### **Prayers of the Church**

**P.** Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

*Brief silence*

**P.** Heavenly Father, You have grafted us onto the vine of Your Son. Prune us and cut off from us all sin and dead works, that we may always draw life from Your Son and produce the fruits of faith and good works. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C. hear our prayer.**

**P.** Father and Teacher of all truth, guide teachers and catechumens in Your Word, that they may increase in understanding, faith and love for Christ, the Lamb led to the slaughter in our place and risen from the dead. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C. hear our prayer.**

**P.** Almighty God, give health and guidance to our president and all in authority, that they may serve honorably and in accord with Your good order. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C. hear our prayer.**

**P.** Merciful God, You hear and answer Your children in their hour of need. Hear our prayers on behalf of those whom we have named on our prayer list and those we now name in the thoughts of our hearts . . . . . Grant that they would bear their crosses with faith, ever looking to You, and so fix their hearts where true joy is found. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C. hear our prayer.**

**P.** O God, You are love and always reveal Your love through Your Son. Grant that all who come to Your feast of love may worthily eat of Christ's body and blood, so that whoever abides in this love forever abides in You, and You in him. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C. hear our prayer.**

**P.** Heavenly Father, You are gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Hear and answer our prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, and Your saints shall bless You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C. Amen.**

### **Blessing (Benediction)**

*LSB 234*

**P.** The grace of our Lord  $\dagger$  Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C. Amen.**

*(Internet livestreaming ends here)*

*Sit*

**Offering**

## Service of the Sacrament

*Stand*

### **Preface**

*LSB 208*

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** **We lift them to the Lord.**

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

### **Holy, Holy, Holy (Sanctus)**

*LSB 208*

**C** **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;  
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.  
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;  
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

### **Lord's Prayer**

**C** **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.**

### **The Words of Our Lord**

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\dagger$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\dagger$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

### **Peace of the Lord (Pax Domini)**

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** **Amen.**



**Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)    LSB 210**

**☩ 1 O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.**

**2 O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,  
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.**

*Sit*

**Receiving the Lord's Supper**

*The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first and then distribute them to those who come to receive, saying:*

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

**Amen.**

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.

**Amen.**

*In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:*

**☩** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ☩ in peace.

**☩ Amen.**

*Stand*

**Song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)**

**LSB 211**

**☩ 1 O Lord, now let Your servant  
Depart in heav'nly peace,  
For I have seen the glory  
Of Your redeeming grace:  
A light to lead the Gentiles  
Unto Your holy hill,  
The glory of Your people,  
Your chosen Israel.**

**2 All glory to the Father,  
All glory to the Son,  
All glory to the Spirit,  
Forever Three in One;  
For as in the beginning,  
Is now, shall ever be,  
God's triune name resounding  
Through all eternity.**

**Post-Communion Prayer**

**☩** Let us pray.

O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

**Blessing (Benedicamus)**

*LSB 212*

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

**Blessing (Benediction)**

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**C Amen.**

**Closing Hymn**

**801 How Great Thou Art**

1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder  
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed; Refrain

ref Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander,  
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; Refrain

3 But when I think that God, His Son not sparing,  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in—  
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing  
He bled and died to take away my sin; Refrain

4 When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
And there proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!" Refrain

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**Music for Reflection**

**Acknowledgments**

Divine Service, Setting Four from Lutheran Service Book

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**For announcements, please see this week's Communicator**

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### **Communion Practices of this Congregation**

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at St. John's every Sunday in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord Jesus gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder. In addition to the members of this congregation, visitors from our sister LCMS congregations and other Lutheran denominations with whom we enjoy altar fellowship are invited to join us at the Lord's Table. For further study, please see Matthew 5:23; 10:32; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

# THE SPIRIT

WHO LIVES IN YOU  
IS GREATER THAN THE  
SPIRIT THAT LIVES  
IN THE WORLD.

1 JOHN 4:4