

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



May 9, 2021

10:00 a.m.

*WE WELCOME OLIVIA AHYOUNG,
GUEST MUSICIAN.*

INTRODUCTION

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

PRELUDE



+ GATHERING +

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P Alleluia! Christ is risen

Congregation (C) Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P We thank you, risen Christ, for these waters where you make us new, leading us from death to life, from tears to joy. We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth, like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls, like cups of cool water shared with strangers. Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear. Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness. Send us companions on our journey as we share your life. Make us one, risen Christ. Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life. To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

C Amen.



1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings,
 3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love;
 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring



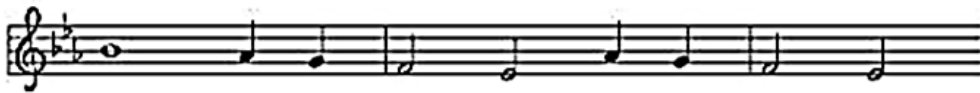
in praise of love that still a - bounds: "Christ has
 there - fore our heart with rap - ture sings: "Christ has
 set heart and will on things a - bove that we
 and with the heav'n - ly bless - ed sing: "Christ has



tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Sing, choirs of
 tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Now still he
 con - quer through your tri - umph; grant grace suf -
 tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!" Be to the



an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song of glo - ry
 comes to give us life and by his pres - ence stills all
 fi - cient for life's day that by our lives we tru - ly
 Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest, most ho - ly



here: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 strife. "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 say: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Paul Z. Strudach, 1876-1947, *alt.*

Musik: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchenlieder*, Köln, 1623

Text © 1958, *Servant Book and Hymnal*, Adrian, Augsburg Fortress.

GREETING

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

C And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. | Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb

who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Acts 10:44-48

While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 98 *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done | marvelous things,
whose right hand and holy arm have | won the victory.

C **3O LORD, you have made | known your victory,
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight | of the nations.**

L **3You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the | house of Israel;
all the ends of the earth have seen the victory | of our God.**

C **3Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands;
lift up your voice, re- | joice, and sing.**

L **3Sing to the LORD | with the harp,
with the harp and the | voice of song.**

C **3With trumpets and the sound | of the horn
shout with joy before the | king, the LORD.**

L **3Let the sea roar, and | all that fills it,
the world and those who | dwell therein.**

C **3Let the rivers | clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes
to | judge the earth.**

L **3The LORD will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peo- | ples with equity.**

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

C **Amen.**

SECOND READING: 1 John 5:1-6

God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, ⁴for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

⁶This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: John 15:9-17

On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.

P The holy gospel according to John, the fifteenth chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ⁹“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*



1 Ho - ly God, ho - ly and glo - ri - ous,
 2 Ho - ly God, ho - ly and pow - er - ful,
 3 Ho - ly God, ho - ly and beau - ti - ful,
 4 Ho - ly God, ho - ly and on - ly wise,
 5 Ho - ly God, ho - ly and liv - ing one,



glo - ry most sub - lime, you come as one a - mong us
 pow - er with - out peer, you bend to us in weak - ness;
 beau - ty un - sur - passed, you are de - spised, re - ject - ed;
 wis - dom of great price, you choose the way of fol - ly:
 life that nev - er ends, you show your love by dy - ing,



in - to hu - man time, and we be - hold your glo - ry.
 emp - tied, you draw near, and we be - hold your pow - er.
 scorned, you hold us fast, and we be - hold your beau - ty.
 God the cru - ci - fied, and we be - hold your wis - dom.
 dy - ing for your friends, and we be - hold you liv - ing.

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952
 Music: NELSON, Robert Buckley Farlee, b. 1950
 Text © 2002 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
 All rights reserved. Used by permission.
 Music © 2001 Robert Buckley Farlee, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

APOSTLES' CREED

A Let us confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.

Congregational response: Your mercy is great.

OFFERING HYMN 870 *We Praise You, O God (vs. 1)*

1 We praise you, O God, our re - deem - er, cre - a - tor;
in grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
we bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C 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 *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN

836 *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
2 All thy works with joy sur - round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,
3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,

Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais - ing thee, their sun a - bove.
stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
well - spring of the joy of liv - ing. o - cean - depth of hap - py rest!

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.
Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,
Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;


Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.
chant - ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain call us to re - joice in thee,
teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine!

DISMISSAL

- P We believe out loud that God’s mission for us is:
- C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God’s call.**
- P Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!
- C Thanks be to God.**

+ + +

*Sundays and Seasons v.20200805.1416
Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved*



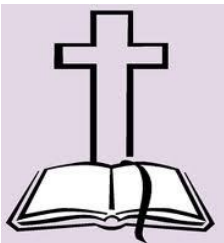
**FLOWERS ARE GIVEN
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND TO HONOR MY MOTHER AND
ALL MOTHERS EVERYWHERE.
BY AUDREY POST.**

Calendar for May 9 - 16

May	09	Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Worship (online), Sixth Sunday of Easter
	12	Wed.	Noon	Bible study (online)
	16	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship (online), Seventh Sunday of Easter

Next Sunday’s Readings, Seventh Sunday of Easter:

[Acts 1:15-17, 21-26](#)
[Psalm 1](#)
[1 John 5:9-13](#)
[John 17:6-19](#)



PRAYER REQUESTS

For the sick: Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor); being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Jamie Ann Meyers (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Gerhard Hofer (brother-in-law of Ridy Hofer).

In treatment for cancer: Stephanie Barber; Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Chris Dickman (synod councilmember); child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl).

For health and protection: For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personal, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc.; for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those “unaccounted for”.

For prisoners: Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

Other concerns: Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

Church concerns: St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

World concerns: For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.