

***The Lutheran Church of the Covenant***  
***“Reaching Out, Reflecting Christ, Renewing Lives”***



But the Advocate,  
the Holy Spirit,  
whom the Father will  
send in my name,  
will teach you all things  
and will remind you of  
everything I have said to  
you.

John 14:26

*Sixth Sunday of Easter*  
*May 22, 2022*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



We welcome you to worship here at the Lutheran Church of the Covenant! Here are a few notes to make you feel more at home as we praise this God of new life together!

- Bulletins and Communion (wheat or gluten-free wafers, wine or grape juice options) are available to be picked up at the back of the sanctuary.
- Portions marked with \* are when we invite you to stand as you are able to do so.
- We encourage you to participate throughout the worship by speaking the **bold** print and singing along with the hymns!
- There will not be a separate time for an offering, so a basket is placed in the back for those who wish to support our local ministry as well as the wider church.
- We will commune from our respective seats, where the presiding minister will invite you to open your respective cups with the Communion elements. We believe this meal is for everyone who wishes to partake, regardless of church affiliation or lack thereof. This tangible gift of God's love is meant for the world to enjoy!

### ***Our Worship Leaders & Staff***

Ministers  
Presiding Minister  
Organist  
Lector  
Parish Administrator  
Custodian

All People  
The Rev. Bradley Ross  
Robin Crawford  
Nel Lanese  
Jennifer Lasher-Dobush  
Vince Besednjak

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## Sixth Sunday of Easter

*Visions abound in the readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter. Paul has a vision about what to do. John has a vision of what will be. Jesus provides visions of peace that surpasses human understanding and power beyond human imagination..*

Prelude *It Is Well With My Soul* (Turner)

Welcome & Greetings

\*Thanksgiving for Baptism

*You may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at our baptism, forever uniting us as one family in our Risen Lord, and calling us to serve as disciples of Jesus Christ for the sake of the world.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

In the waters of baptism,  
we have passed over from death to life with Jesus Christ ✝,  
and we are a new creation.  
For this saving mystery, and for this water, let us bless God,  
who was, who is, and who is to come.

We thank you, God, for your river of life,  
flowing freely from your throne:  
through the earth,  
through the city,  
through every living thing.

You rescued Noah and his family from the flood;  
You opened wide the sea for the Israelites.  
Now in these waters you surround us with mercy,  
and our sin is drowned forever.

You open the gate of everlasting life  
and we pass safely through.  
In Jesus Christ, you calm troubled waters.

You nourish us and enclose us in safety.  
You call us forth and send us out.  
In lush and barren places, you are with us.  
You have become our salvation.

Now, breathe upon this water  
and awaken our Covenant family, and your whole church, once more.  
Claim us again as your beloved and holy people.  
Quench our thirst; cleanse our hearts; wipe away every tear.  
To you, our Beginning and our End,  
our Shepherd and Lamb,  
be honor, glory, praise, and thanksgiving,  
now and forever!

**Amen!**

\*Gathering Hymn    *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

ELW #631

\*Greeting

The grace of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you.**

Canticle of Praise    *This is the Feast*

ELW pg. 140

Prayer of the Day

Bountiful God, you gather all your precious children into your steadfast embrace, and you promise us enriching food from your tree of life. Nourish us with your word of hope, that we may love one another and the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

*A vision compels Paul to move his ministry into Greece. There he meets Lydia, an important person in the business community, whose heart has been opened by God to receive the gospel. Her conversion and baptism provide the impetus for the founding of the church at Philippi.*

<sup>9</sup>During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” <sup>10</sup>When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

<sup>11</sup>We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, <sup>12</sup>and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. <sup>13</sup>On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. <sup>14</sup>A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. <sup>15</sup>When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.” And she prevailed upon us.

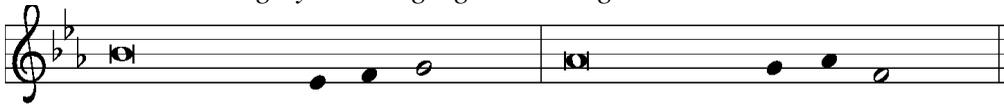
Word of God, word of life!

**Thanks be to God!**

Psalm

Psalm 67

*The bold verses are sung by the congregation using the tone below.*



Antiphon: *Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.* (Ps. 67:4)

<sup>1</sup>May God be merciful to | us and bless us;  
may the light of God’s face | shine upon us.

<sup>2</sup>**Let your way be known | upon earth,**  
**your saving health a- | mong all nations.**

<sup>3</sup>Let the peoples praise | you, O God;  
let all the | peoples praise you.

<sup>4</sup>**Let the nations be glad and | sing for joy,**

**for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the nations on earth.** *Antiphon*

<sup>5</sup>Let the peoples | praise you, O God;  
let all the | peoples praise you.

<sup>6</sup>**The earth has brought | forth its increase;  
God, our own | God, has blessed us.**

<sup>7</sup>May God | give us blessing,  
and may all the ends of the earth | stand in awe. *Antiphon*

Second Lesson

Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5

*John's vision of a new Jerusalem coming out of heaven provides continuity with God's past actions. Yet in this new city, God's presence replaces the temple, and the glory of God and the Lamb supplants sun and moon.*

<sup>10</sup>And in the spirit [one of the angels] carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

<sup>22</sup>I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup>And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup>The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. <sup>25</sup>Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. <sup>26</sup>People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. <sup>27</sup>But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

<sup>22:1</sup>Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup>through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup>Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; <sup>4</sup>they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup>And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Word of God, word of life!

**Thanks be to God!**

\*Gospel Acclamation



\*Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

\* Prayers of Intercession

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

God of new life, open your whole church to the unexpected ways the Holy Spirit continues to work in us, including through our entire Covenant family. Guide bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders in their visioning, partnership, and planning. Surround us all with your peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give a vision of increase and abundant harvest for farmers, laborers, and gardeners who are beginning their growing season. Join their efforts with the goodness of creation to feed all living things. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Shine your light of wisdom and peace among nations, including Russia and Ukraine. When those in power seek to assert dominance over others, confound their ways and make them yield to your humble authority. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give safe haven to those who seek healing, liberation, or peace. Create places filled with hospitality where hurting people find your loving presence and wholeness. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Uphold the work of ministries and organizations in our home communities who assist people experiencing homelessness, citizens returning from prison, and all marginalized people. Accomplish your gracious will through their efforts. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Assemble your people at rivers, streams, and fonts, where we remember our baptism and welcome others into the communion of saints. Gather us with those who have died when we meet together at your river of life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us through Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior and Lord. **Amen!**

\* Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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, almighty and merciful God,  
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,  
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;  
who in dying has destroyed death,  
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.  
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,  
with earth and sea and all their creatures,  
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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, living, and loving God,  
 we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.  
 We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood,  
 for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,  
 and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus  
 who, living among us,  
 healed the sick, fed the hungry,  
 and with a love stronger than death,  
 gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection,  
we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Holy Spirit, breathe on us and on this bread and cup:  
carry us in your arms from death to life,  
and empower us to live as your disciples now,  
clothed with the grace and new life of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
both now and forever. **Amen!**

**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.**

\*Invitation to Communion

The risen Christ dwells with us here!  
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord!  
**Thanks be to God!**

## Communion

Music Interlude *Holy Spirit, Truth Divine* (Paxton)

## Prayer after Communion

We give you thanks, generous God,  
for in this bread and cup  
we have tasted the new heaven and earth  
where hunger and thirst are no more.  
Send us from this table as witnesses to the resurrection,  
that through our lives, all may know life in Jesus' name.  
**Amen!**

## \*Blessing

God, the Author of life,  
Christ, the living Cornerstone,  
and the life-giving Spirit of adoption,  
✠ bless you now and forever.  
**Amen!**

\*Sending Hymn *My Life Flows on in Endless Song*

ELW #763

## \*Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**  
Go in peace. Go and tell what God has done!  
**Thanks be to God!**

Postlude *Postlude on "Wareham"* (Williamson)

***Our monthly FREE Community Meal will be returning inside starting this month! So, this Thursday, May 26 (4:30-6pm), feel free to join us for this FREE delicious meal. But, if you can't, and you know who someone who could use the help or a night off from cooking, please let them know!***

Praying Together

**... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating:** Gayle Agg, Mary Kaye Bernardo, Annie Brown, Bob Buettner, Joan Clarke, John Crawford, Nicole Crawford, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Donna Franz, Nealie Gage, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Clare Hanusz, Alex Hohenstein, Judy Jones, Dylan King, Jason Lanese, Sara Mendes, Phyllis Nemeth, Steve Senderak, Gary Smith, Arlene Stoltz, Marie Storms, Tom Susanek, Phyllis Treichel, Phyllis Welker, Linda Wright, Wilma Dancy, Bill Helmick, Nancy Helmick, Robert Lambrecht, Kim (Novak) Leonhardt, Laura Mele, Judy Morgan, Kris Sandor, Bill Wilkens, Eugene Winfrey, the Copeland/Lane Family, the Peypo family.

### ***Lectionary Blog: Not What I Expected...***

I'm writing this in Egypt on the first night of the first month of Ramadan. This isn't where I saw our family living at this time last year. A chance visit to elca.org completely changed our plans and the trajectory of our lives. I was happy with my two synod jobs, but I still kept my eyes open for a full-time seminary job. But God had different plans and sent us to a city of 24-plus million in the desert, where I hear the call to prayer (and fast breaking!) while I write Bible studies. Do you ever pause, look around and think, "Wow, I didn't expect to end up here"? I do frequently. I wonder if Paul and Timothy felt something like that.

Paul and Timothy had great plans! Paul was gaining so much traction among the Gentiles that a church council was called to make sure instruction for the thousands of new Christians was consistent from place to place. He had planned to just keep following the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, preaching the message of Jesus. But then some strange things happened.

In Acts 16:6, we read that the Spirit prevented the missionaries from entering Asia (think western Turkey). How odd! I can't imagine the Spirit saying, "Paul, Timothy, do not bring the good news of Jesus' triumph over sin and death and reconciliation by his blood to this place." Yet, that is what our missionaries understood. They then set out for the north of Asia Minor, by the Black Sea coast. But this time Jesus' Spirit said "no" (Acts 16:7). Instead of returning home, Paul and Timothy pressed on, going between the two areas that had been forbidden them. On his second major missionary journey, Paul can't have expected that he would hear more about where he shouldn't go than where he should.

Finally, in a dream, a man from Macedonia (northern Greece) called out for Paul and Timothy to come and help his people. After being steered away from everywhere he was expecting to go, Paul and Timothy took a boat to another continent. On arrival, they went to a major Roman colony, Philippi. Judging by the number of Latin inscriptions, this wealthy town was profoundly Roman rather than Greek. Although built literally on a Greek foundation, the city was mostly settled by veteran Roman legionaries who had fought in battles nearby. The economy and ethos of Philippi were based on this connection to the Roman military. It can be compared today to Fayetteville, N.C., which is next to Fort Bragg, one of the largest military installations in the world. With such a concentration of Romans, Philippi was the least likely town in the area to find a Greek man of Macedonia. Had Paul had his expectations upset again?

After staying in Philippi several days, Paul and Timothy went out of the city to a river, where they thought there might be a place of Sabbath prayer. There they met Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from Thyatira. She was the first person in Europe to follow Jesus. This could not have been what Paul was expecting. He went to a Roman military city to look for a man from northern Greece, but a woman was the first person to receive their message. She dealt in luxury goods, rather than being a warrior. And she was from a town in Asia Minor, where Paul had been forbidden to speak. The irony is thick!

God opened Lydia's heart. She and her whole household were baptized. Lydia prevailed upon Paul that if he found her faithful, he should come and stay in her home. Paul could never have expected that God would bar him from witnessing in some areas only to send him to another. When he arrived, instead of meeting a man of Macedonia, he met a woman from Asia living in a Roman town.

There's an old Yiddish adage that says: "Mann Tracht, Un Gott Lacht" (Humans plan, and God laughs). We don't know what will happen tomorrow, much less years from now. May we be faithful for the journey, wherever it leads. (LivingLutheran.org)

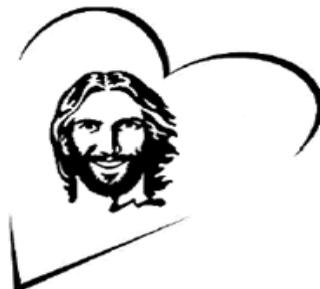


*Cory Driver is an ELCA missionary serving as the director of graduate studies at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo (Egypt). His book on wilderness spirituality, *Life Unsettled*, is available from Fortress Press.*

# If you love me...

Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching." John 14:23a (NIV)

The puzzle is based on John 14:23-29 (NIV).



S T E A C H I N G S J L V J M  
K Y H W O R L D S U P A O W U  
V B K O O A N Y O N E I T V S  
E Y P N L C M N O L M R R D E  
K L H W K Y P A U B O R X I K  
C P E A C E R Q B L E U G P T  
B I A C V E H C E O H Y R B M  
Y A R D H O C S L O G P E E D  
X D T T M A N R I S L F A L X  
J N A V C U L E E F A A T O X  
J F J F O S A M V X D P E N S  
I E N C R I T I E I M X R G W  
M O S A E A U N V N U T S Z K  
G P I U M K I D G H O M E R Y  
I P P Q S E E D N P N E S U A

ANYONE	BELIEVE	HEART	COUNSELOR	HOLY
LOVE	HOME	SPIRIT	TEACHING	REMINDE
PEACE	GREATER	AFRAID	BELONG	FATHER
WORLD	OBEY	NAME	GLAD	JESUS