**All Saints Lutheran Church, ELCA**

**421 SW 19th St. Blue Springs, Missouri 64015 816-229-3633**

**Pastor Sarah Pierce** Spierce.aslcpastor@gmail.com

allsaintslc64015@gmail.com <https://aslcbs.org/>

## Sunday, May 11, 2025

## Fourth Sunday of Easter

## *You are absolutely invited into this sacred space.  We welcome all who are seeking God’s love and grace.  All Saints recognizes that we are all unique and beloved children of God.  We celebrate and give thanks for the many diverse gifts that God has given us.  We affirm the sacredness of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.  We affirm the sacredness of all those who have experienced exclusion because of race, ability, age, or culture. We are committed to working towards anti-racism in ourselves and our community. We affirm the sacredness of all those who wrestle with addiction, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.  We believe that through our openness we all grow in our faith through Christ’s teaching to love one another as God loves us.  We need each other and our sincere hope is by being in community together, we will experience God’s presence in new and real ways.*

*The offering plate is by the main door to the sanctuary for your convenience.*

*We practice open communion at All Saints Lutheran Church. What does that mean? It means that if you believe and trust that Christ offers his body and blood For You, you are welcome at the table. At All Saints, we believe that Christ invites all people to the feast. “Come to the banquet for all is now ready.”*

***\*\*Stand as you are comfortable***

***Prelude***

***Announcements***

***Remembrance of Baptism***

**\*\**Thanksgiving for Baptism***

Blessed be the Holy Trinity: the God who creates us and all that exists, the Risen One + in whom we are set free from sin, and the Spirit who strengthens and enlightens us with her gifts.

**Amen.**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

We are joined to Christ in the waters of our baptism, made part of God’s holy family that extends to every time and every place. Through our baptisms, we are given new birth each day, and through the Word and the Meal we receive new life in abundance.

Let us give thanks for the saving gift of our baptism.

**Holy God, in our baptism you reached out your saving hand to give to us the gift of new life in you. You are the river of life, the source of all renewal and all joy.**

We are blessed by your gift of holy water: oceans and lakes, rivers and streams.

**We are blessed by your gift of the holy water which cleans and sustains our bodies.**

We are blessed by your gift of holy water: rain and clouds, puddles and pools.

**We are blessed by your gift of the holy water which nourishes flowerbeds and fields, and sustains all of creation.**

**We thank you for the gift of our holy baptism into Christ’s death and resurrection.**

**Wash away all our sin in your holy water.**

**Empower and encourage us to share the good news of the empty tomb.**

**Help us find the courage to speak and act toward justice for all your children.**

Refresh us and the world through this holy and living water.

Where there is drought, bring rain and renewal.

Where there is doubt and despair, bring hope.

Where war and chaos thrive, bring the promise of peace.

We ask all these things through Christ, the Risen One,

who reigns with you and the Spirit forever.

**Amen.**

***\*\*Entrance Hymn All Who Believe and Are Baptized ELW#442***

***\*\*Greeting***

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**\*\*Kyrie ELW#157**

**\*\*Now the Feast and Celebration ELW#167**

***\*\*Prayer of the Day***

**God who loves and values us, thank you for the gift of our baptism. Help us to see all people for who they are – people created by you, in your image, with gifts to offer. Empower us with your Spirit to speak up, to proclaim the value of all whom you love. In the name of Jesus, our Risen Savior. Amen.**

***Reading:*** **Acts 8:26-39**

26An angel of God spoke to Philip and said, “Be ready to set out at noon along the road that goes to Gaza, the desert road.” 27So Philip began his journey.

It happened that an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official in charge of the entire treasury of Candace, the ruler of Ethiopia, had come to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage 28and was returning home. He was sitting in his carriage and reading the prophet Isaiah.

29The Spirit said to Philip, “Go up and meet that carriage.”

30When Philip ran up, he heard the eunuch reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

31**“How can I,” the eunuch replied, “unless someone explains it to me?”** With that, he invited Philip to get in the carriage with him. 32This was the passage of scripture being read:

“You are like a sheep being led to slaughter,

you are like a lamb that is mute in front of its shearers:

like them, you never open your mouth.

33You have been humiliated

and have no one to defend you.

Who will ever talk about your descendants,

since your life on earth has been cut short?”

34The eunuch said to Philip, **“Tell me, if you will, about whom the prophet is talking—himself or someone else?”**

35So Philip proceeded to explain the Good News about Jesus to him.

36Further along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, **“Look, there is some water right there. Is there anything to keep me from being baptized?”**

38He ordered the carriage to stop; then Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. 39When they came out of the water, the Spirit of God snatched Philip away; the eunuch didn’t see him anymore, and went on his way rejoicing.

Word of God, Word of Life

**Thanks be to God**

***\*\*Gospel Acclamation***

**\*\*Halle, Halle, Hallelujah ELW#172**

*Announcement of the Gospel*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

***Gospel:* Luke 24:44-47**

44Then Jesus said to them, “Remember the words I spoke when I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the psalms had to be fulfilled.” 45Then Jesus opened their minds to the understanding of the scriptures, 46saying, “That is why the scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. 47In the Messiah’s name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon “Abdimalkah”**

***Hymn of the Day* O Blessed Spring ELW#447**

\*\***Affirmation of Faith – Immigrant’s Creed by Jose Luis Casal**

**I believe in Almighty God, who guided the people in exile and in exodus, the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon, the God of foreigners and immigrants.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced Galilean, who was born away from his people and his home, who fled his country with his parents when his life was in danger. When he returned to his own country he suffered under the oppression of Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power. Jesus was persecuted, beaten, tortured, and unjustly condemned to death. But on the third day Jesus rose from the dead, not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us citizenship in God’s kingdom.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal immigrant from God’s kingdom among us, who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.**

**I believe that the Church is the secure home for foreigners and for all believers. I believe that the communion of saints begins when we embrace all God’s people in all their diversity. I believe in forgiveness, which makes us all equal before God, and in reconciliation, which heals our brokenness. I believe that in the Resurrection God will unite us as one people in which all are distinct and all are alike at the same time. I believe in life eternal, in which no one will be foreigner but all will be citizens of the kingdom where God reigns forever and ever. Amen.**

***\*\*Prayers of Intercession***

**God of Love, hear the prayers that we lift before you. Hold close to you all those for whom we pray.**

You guide your people to the waters of life. Make your church a nourishing place for all who are thirsty for hope and healing. Renew us in the waters of baptism, and send us forth as signs of your love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You call us by name and form us. Nurture the baptized to receive your Spirit and proclaim boldly the grace, justice, and mercy of your reign. Hear us, O God,

**Your mercy is great.**

You tend to the earth, sustaining life in all places. Revive fragile ecosystems and restore species in danger of extinction. Teach us new ways of living in balance and harmony with our non-human neighbors. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You lead all peoples along right pathways. Grant wisdom and compassion to judges, lawyers, mediators, and legal advocates. Dismantle systems of mass incarceration, empower processes of restorative justice, and encourage all who strive for healing in our communities. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You wipe the tears from every eye. Tend to all who struggle with anxiety or depression, loneliness, or despair. Enfold all who are in any need in your shepherding care especially Monty, Paul, Linda, Betty F, Carla, Becky H., Becky W., David, William and family, Helen, Larry, Stephen, Jennifer, Otto, Fran, families in our community who endure hunger, those who seek asylum or citizenship, and our beloved for whom death is near. Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. May all who weep now sing songs of joy again. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

This Mother’s Day, bless mothers, grandmothers, and all who offer mothering care. Come close to those whose relationships with their families are difficult, and console all who grieve the loss of mother figures or the loss of children. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

O God, eternal teacher, we ask your blessings upon all of the students and professors in our congregation. Bless Evie as she attends preschool; Tyler and Addison in high school; Zachary, Katy, Erec, Kimberly, and Katie in college; and bless Janet and Lisa as they teach. Hear us, O God,

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the South Sudanese communities in the US, especially the South Sudanese Authorized Worshiping Community in St Joseph. Hear us, O God,

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for Border Servant Corps and all ministries and volunteer organizations whose mission is to care for those on the margins, and whose purposes are being challenged and budgets cut. Empower us, your people, to rise up in support. Hear us, O God,

**Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, be with Pope Leo XIV (14th). Empower him to lead the Catholic Church with grace and mercy. May your Spirit continue to lead him to care for all people, especially the poor and marginalized. Hear us, O God,

**Your mercy is great.**

You are the source of everlasting life. In deep gratitude for all your saints, we rejoice in the joy and hope of the resurrection made known to us in Jesus, your beloved child. Hear us, O God,

**Your mercy is great.**

**Good and loving God, we give everyone we have prayed for into your care. Amen.**

*\*\** ***Sharing of the Peace***

### *\*\*Offering is brought forward*

### *\*\** *Offertory Response*

### *As the Grains of Wheat (Refrain Only) ELW#465*

### *\*\*Offertory Prayer*

**Good and loving God, all you have created is good. Help us to be generous with that which you have first given us, so that we can respond to those who hunger in any way. As we gather now at your Table, prepare us to go out and proclaim Christ’s resurrection through what we say and do.** **Amen.**

**Dialogue**

The Risen Christ is with you!

**And also with you!**

Lift up your hearts in joyful praise!

**We lift them up to God in joy!**

We give thanks to God!

**It is good and right to raise our voices in praise and thanksgiving!**

**\*\*Preface:** As we celebrate Christ’s resurrection from the dead… this hymn of praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy ELW#191**

***\*\*Words of Institution***

**\*\*LORD’S PRAYER**

**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.**

***Invitation to Communion***

# ***Communion Hymn Let Us Break Bread Together ELW#471***

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### *\*\*Sending Song*

### *Praise to you, O God of Mercy ELW#208*

### *\*\*Prayer After Communion*

**Alleluia! We give you thanks, risen Lord, for your life-giving presence among us. You have fed and refreshed us with the healing gift of life. Now send us out to share the good news of the empty tomb, through all that we say and do. Amen! Alleluia!**

### *\*\*Blessing*

### *\*\*Closing Hymn On Our Way Rejoicing ELW#*537

### *\*\*Dismissal*

Go in peace to serve our Risen Christ. Alleluia!

**THANKS BE TO GOD!**

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**Weekly Attendance**

***Week of May 04***

***30***

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**Calendar of Events**

***Today***

* ***Youth Led Services***
* ***Mother’s Day***
* ***Adult Bible Study***

***This Week***

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| ***May 12-15*** | ***Pastor at Festival of Homiletics, Atlanta*** |
| ***May 13*** | ***Creative Friends 1:00 pm*** |
| ***May 14*** | ***Bells Practice 6:30 pm*** |

***Upcoming Events***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***May 18*** | ***Bells will perform*** |
| ***May 19***  | ***Grain Valley High School Graduation*** |
| ***May 20*** | ***Creative Friends 1:00 pm*** |
| ***May 20*** | ***Newsletter Deadline*** |
| ***May 21*** | ***Council Meeting 6:30 pm*** |
| ***May 24*** | ***Project Comfort 9:00 am-Noon*** |
| ***May 25*** | ***Vigil 7:00 pm*** |
| ***May 26*** | ***Memorial Day Office Closed*** |
| ***May 27*** | ***Creative Friends 1:00 pm*** |
| ***June 05-07*** | ***Synod Assembly*** |
| ***June 18*** | ***Council Meeting 6:30 pm*** |
| ***June 07*** | ***Kansas City Pride Parade 11:00 am*** |
| ***June 08*** | ***Pentecost*** |
| ***June 19*** | ***Juneteenth-Office Closed*** |
| ***June 22*** | ***Coffee with Council*** |
| ***July 04*** | ***Independence Day-Office Closed*** |
| ***July 13*** | ***Ice Cream Social after Worship*** |

***Pastor Sarah flies to Atlanta Sunday afternoon, May 11, for the Festival of Homiletics. From Monday through Wednesday, Rev. Janice Kibler will be available for pastoral emergencies. If something comes up that can't wait until Pastor Sarah comes back, you can reach her at 720-557-1460. On Thursday and Friday, Rev. Elizabeth Carr will be available for pastoral emergencies. If something comes up that can't wait until Pastor Sarah comes back Friday afternoon, you can reach her at 314-240-9195.***

**Vigil that was previously scheduled for May 24th has been moved to the evening of May 25th due to a schedule conflict.**

**“The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus (1849-1887)**

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

*(poets.org)*

This poem was written by Lazarus in 1883 as part of the fund-raising efforts for a base for the Statue of Liberty. It is cast on a plaque that is mounted on the inside of the base of the statue. Lazarus was an activist and advocate for Jewish refugees fleeing from Russian pogroms in the 1800s, and wrote the poem as a way to express empathy for Russian Jewish refugees to the US.

The statue was intended to be a symbol of republican (anti-imperialist) values; however, Lazarus’ poem gave it a new purpose, turning it into a symbol of welcome for immigrants and refugees at the front door of the country. *(Wikipedia article on “The New Colossus”)*

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*You may recall that there has been an announcement in the bulletin over the past year directing you to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) if you wish to support the people of Ukraine. LIRS has changed its name to Global Refuge and can be found at* ***globalrefuge.org****. Although their name has changed, their mission remains the same: to assist and support refugees in the United States and around the world. Visit their website to see all the ways you can support this important work.*

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**BLUE SPRINGS COMMUNITY SERVICE LEAGUE** *is very appreciative of your continued support of your neighbor.*

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**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. It’s interesting to note that the historical record demonstrates that most eunuchs who formed intimate partnerships did so either with other eunuchs, or with intact men, not with women. For at least some eunuchs, this would likely have been because they were less desirable to women – after all, one of the primary roles of a husband in the ancient world was to father children. There is no clear one-to-one correlation between ancient eunuchs and gay and/or transgender women today; for one thing, homosexuality as we understand it is not the same as it was understood in the ancient world, and for another, it’s likely that many of these men were straight (in a modern way of thinking) by inclination, but found that once they were no longer able to father children, women were no longer willing to consider them as potential spouses.
2. Another difference between the ancient world and the modern world that sometimes trips us up is the question of race. Race as we understand it today is a 17th-century construct, born out of the age of empire, when people from Europe needed an excuse to subjugate and oppress the indigenous people of Africa, the Americas, and the Indian subcontinent. In ancient times, the dark skin of someone from Ethiopia may have been considered beautiful and/or exotic, but any prejudice would have been based on geography. People from farther to the east were considered inferior than those from the west; or else, people from outside the Roman empire were considered inferior to people from inside.
3. The practice and theology of baptism of churches that practice infant baptism, including the Lutheran church, is based at least in part on this story. We believe that baptism is God’s work, not ours. Even for people who are not infants, we do not require any sort of “proof” of faith before baptism will be performed. God does the work of forgiveness of sins; we just show up and respond in love and trust!
4. Speaking of trust, if you look closely at our reading, you’ll notice that we skip from verse 36 to 38. Verse 37 is missing in the oldest and most reliable translations of the text. There is a verse 37 that many scholars think was added after the fact, in which Philip tells Abdimalkah that all he has to do is *pisteuo* in Jesus in his heart, to which Abdimalkah responds that he does! The text then proceeds with verse 38. *Pisteuo* is sometimes translated as believe, which is an exercise of the head or the intellect, but also sometimes translated as trust, which is more an exercise of the heart.

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***Birthdays***

***May 14 Charlie Cope-Morris***

***Baptismal Anniversaries***

***Feb 23 Evie Soetmelk***

***Feb 25 Tracy Nelson***

***Mar 26 Sara Meyers***

***Apr 17 Joyce Cutbirth***

***Apr 20 Tonya Hamilton***

***May 03 Jackie Soetmelk***

***May 13 David Fast***

***May 14 Jerrian Renfro***

***Greeter***

***May 11*** ***Youth***

***Usher***

***May 11 Youth***

***Altar Guild***

***May 11 Sara Meyers***

***Reader***

***May 11 Youth***

***Tech***

***May 11 Gary Antes***

**Prayer Requests**

***Monty Health Concerns (May 15)***

*Paul Health Concerns (May 31)*

*Mary Health Concerns (May 15)*

*Carla (Pr. George’s wife) Health Concerns (June 26)*

*James & Family Health Concerns (September 11)*

*Betty F (Sara’s friend) Health Concerns (September 23)*

*William and Family Health Concerns (September 25)*

*Becky H Health Concerns (October 28)*

*David Health Concerns (November 18)*

*Becky W Health Concerns (November 18)*

*Larry Health Issues (December 16)*

*Helen Health Issues (January 14)*

*Stephen Health Concerns (February 27)*

*Jennifer Health Concerns (February 27)*

*Otto Health Concerns (April 23)*

*Fran Health Concerns (April 23)*

***Please pray for the South Sudanese communities in the US and especially South Sudanese Authorized Worshiping Community in St Joseph***

***Please pray for Border Patrol Servants***

***Please pray for the people of Haiti, Ukraine, Israel and Palestine.***

***Please pray for the people of the Sudan.***

***Please pray for the Homeless.***

***Please pray for the families of the victims that were affected by the tragedy of plane crashes.***

***Please pray for legal & illegal immigrants & those seeking asylum or citizenship.***