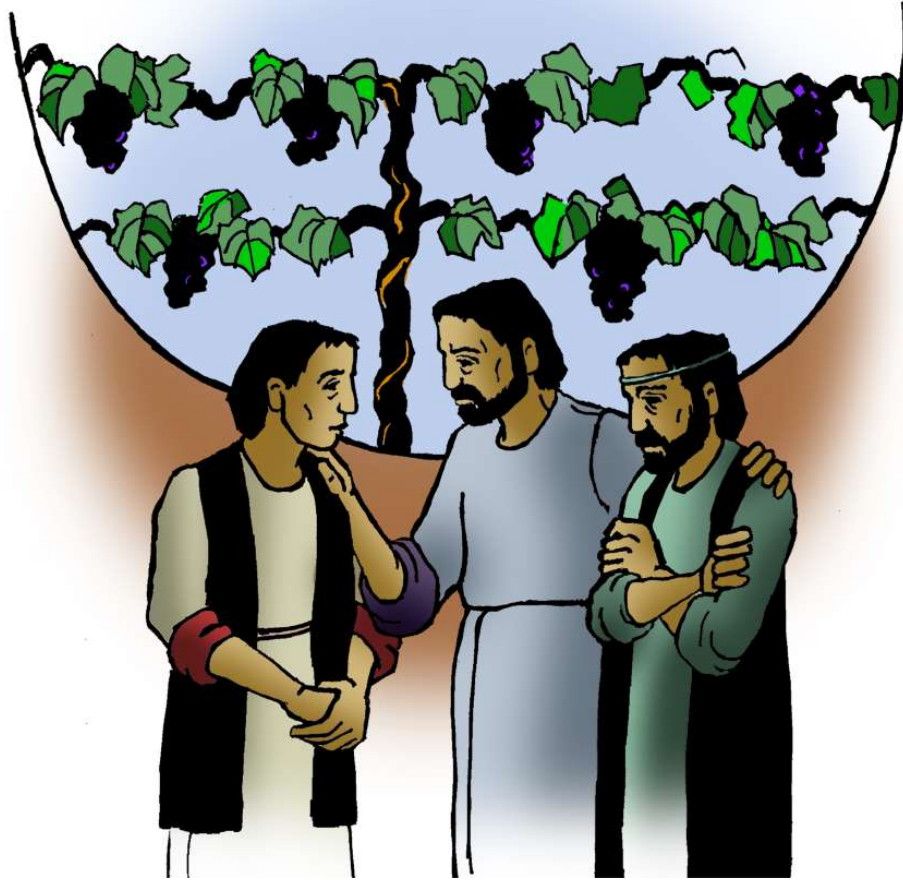


THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 2, 2021



First Evangelical Lutheran Church

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A ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

In this time of uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, we hope that this service assures everyone of the certainty of God's love and provides hope for all through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

While we worship virtually we use a Service of the Word, knowing that when the virus has passed we will join each other once again at the Table of the Lord.

As it has been a blessing to us to provide this service, we hope it is a blessing to you to receive it.

We'd love to hear from you. Let us know if our services and bulletins are beneficial to you and your weekly devotions.

Worship Leaders:

Rev. Anthony Stephens, Homilist
Deacon Peter Slingerland
Eric Hepp, Organist
Nancy Slingerland
Carol Reichert
Lisa Stephens
Shirley Mowell
Linda Connors



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ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

We Prepare for the Word of God

Prelude

Now We Pray Unto Thee

Dieterich Buxtehude

Welcome

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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

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.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn

Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds



1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds in praise of love that
2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings, there - fore our heart with
3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love; set heart and will on
4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring and with the heav'n - ly

still a - bounds: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
rap - ture sings: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
things a - bove that we con - quer through your tri - umph;
bless - ed sing: "Christ has tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!"

Sing, choirs of an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song
Now still he comes to give us life and by his pres -
grant grace suf - fi - cient for life's day that by our lives
Be to the Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest,

of glo - ry here: "Christ has tri - umphed! Christ has tri - umphed!"
ence stills all strife. Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!
we tru - ly say: Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!
most ho - ly God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!

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

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876–1947, alt.
Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623

Text © 1958 *Service Book and Hymnal*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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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.**

Prayer of the Day

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

First Reading: Acts 8:26-40

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

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

In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Psalm: 22:25-31

- ²⁵**From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.**
- ²⁶The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!
- ²⁷**All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.**
- ²⁸For dominion belongs to the LORD,
who rules over the nations.
- ²⁹**Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.**
- ³⁰Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.
- ³¹**They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"**

Second Reading: 1 John 4:7-21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

The Gospel: John 15:1-8

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 15th Chapter.

Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you O Christ,

Hymn of the Day

We Know That Christ Is Raised



1 We know that Christ is raised and dies no more.
2 We share by wa - ter in his sav - ing death.
3 The Fa - ther's splen - dor clothes the Son with life.
4 A new cre - a - tion comes to life and grows.

Em - braced by death, he broke its fear - ful hold,
Re - born, we share with him an Eas - ter life,
The Spir - it's fis - sion shakes the church of God.
as Christ's new bod - y takes on flesh and blood.

and our de - spair he turned to blaz - ing joy.
as liv - ing mem - bers of our Sav - ior Christ.
Bap - tized, we live with God the Three in One.
The u - ni - verse re - stored and whole will sing:

Hal - le - lu - jah!

Text: John B. Geyer, b. 1932
Music: ENGELBERG, Charles V. Stanford, 1852–1924
Text © John B. Geyer.

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Sermon

Affirmation of Faith – The Apostles' Creed

**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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell.
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

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depends on the earth for life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence, that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have loved us so that we can love others. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Other intercessions are offered.

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit, especially with Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria and those we name before you. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace

The Peace of the LORD be with you always.
And also with you.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Savior has taught us, so we pray.

**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

We are Blessed and Sent

Blessing

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead
raise you to new life, fill you with hope,
and turn your mourning into dancing.
Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever. **Amen.**



Sending Hymn

On Our Way Rejoicing

1 On our way re - joic - ing glad - ly let us go.
2 Un - to God the Fa - ther joy - ful songs we sing;

Christ our Lord has con - quered; van - quished is the foe.
un - to God the Sav - ior thank - ful hearts we bring;

Christ with - out, our safe - ty; Christ with - in, our joy;
un - to God the Spir - it bow we and a - dore,

who, if we be faith - ful, can our hope de - stroy?
on our way re - joic - ing now and ev - er - more.

Refrain

On our way re - joic - ing; as we for - ward move,
hear-ken to our prais - es, O blest God of love!

Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt.
Music: HERMAS, Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed.

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Rigaudon

André Campra