

Sixth Sunday of Easter
First Communion
May 14, 2023

Greetings and Welcome

Prelude by Maria & Lily Snodgrass – “Sleepyhead Sun,” by Chris Rice

GATHERING

**Confession and Forgiveness*

P: Returning again to the waters of baptism, we begin in the name of the Father and of the
+ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin before God and in the presence of one another.

Silence

P: Gracious and merciful God,

C: We confess to you the truth of our broken lives. We have not trusted your promises or walked in your ways. We have hoarded and squandered the gifts of your creation. We have failed to welcome the stranger and the outcast, and to make room at the table for the homeless and the hungry. We have neither worked to release the oppressed nor admitted our own captivities. Forgive our sin, heal our lives, and set us free that we might live with your whole creation in the justice and joy of your promised future.

P: God, who is merciful and kind, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, hears the cries of all who plead for mercy and, in these last days, has sent Christ Jesus to announce the good news of forgiveness and release to all who are bound by guilt or broken by shame, that they might praise God and serve the world with glad and generous hearts.

P: For freedom Christ has set you free.

C: Thanks be to God.

**Sharing of the Peace*

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

C: **And also with you.**

All are invited to share the peace of Christ with one another.

Gathering Song – “Gather Us In” ELW 532, vv. 1-3

(organ)

- 1 **Here in this place the new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken, gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken, we shall arise at the sound of our name.**
- 2 **We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty, gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly, give us the courage to enter the song.**
- 3 **Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.**

Children's Sermon

Hymn of Praise: “Come and Gather Beneath the Tree of Life”

(piano)

Refrain: Come and gather beneath the tree of life.

Come and gather beneath the tree of life –

Root of wisdom, branch of peace, fruit of healing and release.

Come and gather beneath the tree of life.

**Here beneath the branches of your mercy,
We invoke your name, remember how your love has set us free. *Refrain***

WORD

Reading: Romans 3:28-30; 5:1-11

Reader: Adam Krohe

²⁸For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. ²⁹Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

⁵Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. ⁹Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. ¹¹But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

P: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Reading:* Matthew 11:28-30

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁸'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

P: The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Song of the Day – “People of Hope”

(piano)

*Refrain: We are people of hope alive in the myst’ry, growing in faith, learning to love.
We are people of hope throughout all of hist’ry, held by the one who will never let go.*

- 1. We are dead in our striving for wealth and for might,
But God rich in mercy has loved us to life. *Refrain***
- 2. We are what God has made us, created in Christ,
For justice and mercy to be our way of life. *Refrain***

In the journey ev’ry day we’re led by the Word, saved by grace. *Refrain*

**The Apostles’ Creed*

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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*

Stewardship Time

"Mine," arr. Holcomb
Kelly Hartz, vocalist

–Please take a moment to sign into the Welcome Folder in your pew–

Celebration of First Communion

Today we celebrate with Madeline Crossin, Mackenzie Hartz, and Cataleah Wagy as they receive the sacrament of Holy Communion.

The bread and chalices used today were made by them in our First Communion classes.

P: Madeline, Mackenzie, and Cataleah, welcome to the Lord's Supper! You have learned about this sacrament and the meaning of this meal of grace. You learned about the significance of Passover, a meal that celebrates God's faithfulness in leading the Israelites from slavery to freedom. You learned about the significance of this meal, a meal that celebrates God's faithfulness in leading us to freedom through the forgiveness of God's grace. **Amen.**

You know why Jesus gives us this meal, so that we would never forget Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and the life he gives to us. **Amen.**

You know that Christ is truly present in this meal, his body and blood, broken and shed for us. **Amen.**

You know that at this meal, you are not alone, but you are joined by a great cloud of witnesses, those here today, all who have gathered before, and all who are to come. **Amen.**

And you know what it means to live a forgiven, forgiving life in Christ's name. **Amen.**

I ask you, therefore, are you prepared to receive our Lord Jesus Christ as he comes to you now in his holy meal?

Yes, I am prepared. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Do you believe that Jesus' blood was shed for you, that he has died for your sins, and that in this holy supper he offers you forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation?

Yes, I believe it. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Do you promise to try to let go of resentments, grudges, anger, and sin that would keep you from living the full and rich life Jesus wants for you, living in God's power and not your own?

Yes, and I ask God to help me.

P: Parents, will you make this meal of forgiveness a regular part of your family life? Will you examine your own hearts, keep your own conscience clear, and help your child prepare rightly each time you come to the altar to receive this gift of grace?

Yes, and we ask God to help us.

P: Siblings, grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and friends, will you pray for these children and encourage them as they continue to discover the grace of God in this meal and at work in their lives?

Yes, and we ask God to help us.

The congregation is invited to stand

P: People of God, when these children were baptized, you promised to support them in their life in Christ. As we welcome them to the Lord's Table today, will you continue to love and support them, affirming God's faithfulness in their lives?

C: Yes, and we ask God to help us.

P: Then all things are ready. Welcome to the Banquet of our Lord!

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 God thanks and praise.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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.

P: Together we pray:

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.

P: Families, please place your hands on your child in blessing and repeat after me: May this day be a new beginning / of new life in our family. / May this gift bring forgiveness / to our hearts and to our home. / And may the living, forgiving presence of Jesus / be a gift of healing and hope / to you, my beloved child / from this day on and forevermore. / In Christ's name. Amen.

*Communion is first shared among the families by intinction
using the bread baked and chalices made by the students.*

Communion Songs

"Let Us Break Bread Together" ELW 471 *(organ)*

1. **Let us break bread together on our knees;
Let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.**
2. **Let us drink wine together on our knees;
Let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.**
3. **Let us praise God together on our knees;
Let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.**

"In Your Presence"

(piano)

**The only power that wins, is in your hands,
victorious God is the one we serve.
In your presence, God we're here, to worship you,
you're the mighty warrior, and mighty to save.
The only power that wins, is in your hands,
victorious God is the one we serve.**

Chorus

**In your presence, we worship you, O Lord, receive our praise.
In your presence, we worship you, O Lord, receive our praise.**

**You touched me with your mighty hand,
you saved me from the past and pain.
Jesus, you renew my life again. (x2)**

Chorus

**In your presence, we worship you, O Lord, receive our praise.
In your presence, we worship you, O Lord, receive our praise.**

**In your presence, God we're here, to worship you,
you're the mighty warrior, and mighty to save.
The only power that wins, is in your hands,
victorious God is the one we serve. *Chorus***

"Beautiful Savior" ELW 838 *(organ)*

- 1 Beautiful Savior, King of creation, Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee, truly I'd serve thee, light of my soul, my joy, my crown.**
- 2 Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, he makes our sorrowing spirit sing.**
- 3 Fair is the sunshine, fair is the moonlight, bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer than all the angels in the sky.**
- 4 Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration, now and forevermore be thine!**

**Post-Communion Blessing*

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
C: **Amen.**

**Closing Prayer*

*Song: "By Your Hand, You Feed Your People" ELW 469 *(organ)*

- 1. By your hand you feed your people, food of angels, heaven's bread.
For these gifts we did not labor, by your grace have we been fed:**

*Refrain: Christ's own body, blessed and broken, cup o'erflowing, life outpoured,
Given as a living token of your world redeemed, restored.*

- 2. In this meal we taste your sweetness, bread for hunger, wine of peace.
Holy word and holy wisdom satisfy our deepest needs. *Refrain***
- 3. Send us now with faith and courage to the hungry, lost, bereaved.
In our living and our dying, we become what we receive: *Refrain***

SENDING

**Benediction*

P: May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you, may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

**Sending Song – “Forever”*

(piano)

**1. Give thanks to the Lord our God and King; his love endures forever.
For he is good, he is above all things; his love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise.**

**2. With a mighty hand and outstretched arm; his love endures forever.
For the life that’s been reborn; his love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise, sing praise, sing praise!**

*Refrain: Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong,
forever God is with us, forever.*

**3. From the rising to the setting sun his love endures forever.
And by the grace of God we will carry on; his love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise, sing praise, sing praise! *Refrain***

Ending: And ever, forever.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Song Credits

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“In Your Presence,” Ugandan song.

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Worship Assistants

Communion Assistant: Hallie Mayner
Greeter: Doris Robinson
Reader: Adam Krohe
Usher: John Williams
Pastor: Adam Dichsen
Music Director: Jean Welch
Pianist: Jean Welch
Organist: Sandi Watts
Drummer: John Demien
Financial Assistants: Ken Devlin & Kelly Street
Chancel Committee: Martha Krohe
Coffee Hosts: Judy Dillard & Vicki Robson



Singers:

Benen Dichsen	Rigby Dichsen	Adam Krohe	Carol VanderKloot
Louis Dichsen	Kelly Hartz	Kris Roth	
Marilyn Dichsen	Terri Kimler	Melissa Street	

Church Council Members:

Malinda Carlson	Kelly Hartz	Patty Nelson	Monica Proefrock
Ken Devlin	Greg Kimler	Mike Oldenettel	Kelly Street

The plants at the altar today are donated by
Chad & Cindy Boehlke in celebration of their wedding anniversary

What's Coming Up at Faith?

Sunday, May 14, 9:30am: Worship

10:45am: Sunday School

Monday, May 15, 11:30am: Potluck lunch

12:00pm: Movie: "His Only Son"

Wednesday, May 17, 7-8am: Men's Prayer Group

10am: Discipleship Group in the Library

6pm: Women of Faith at El Patron (901 W. Morton, #111)

Sunday, May 21, 9:30am: Worship
10:45am: Sunday School

Newsletter Deadline

Tuesday, May 23, 6pm: Ministry Support Structure Meeting

Wednesday, May 24, 7-8am: Men's Prayer Group
6pm: Council Retreat

Thursday, May 25, 6pm: Church Council Meeting

News Updates

Music Update

I wish everyone a safe and fun summer, and we will meet again in the fall. If anyone is interested in doing something musical during the summer, please contact me.

Jean Welch, *Director of Music*

Faith and Film

Do you like the ways movies nurture and challenge our faith? Come check out this new small group as we gather for fellowship and lunch, then watch a movie and have discussion. Our next potluck and movie will be on **May 15 at 11:30am**. The movie will be ***His Only Son***, a dramatization of the story of Abraham and Sarah. It specifically focuses on God's call to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. It stirs deep emotions and conflicts of faith while calling to our minds and hearts the sacrifice of the cross and the death of Jesus... "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son..."

Discipleship Group

Join us at **10am on Wednesday, May 17**, in the Faith Library as we meet for great conversation and fellowship time. If you haven't attended before, now's a great time to give it a try! For more information, please contact Kelly Hartz at (217) 502-1979 or by email at khartz@sompo-intl.com.

Women of Faith Fellowship Night

Join us on Wednesday, May 17th at 6:00 pm for dinner out at El Patron. Please RSVP to Monica by **TODAY** if you plan to come.

Sign-Up Sheets

are available at the podium in the gathering area. Please take a moment to sign up to be an Usher, Reader, Greeter, Communion Assistant, Coffee Host, Chancel Committee volunteer, and to Donate Altar Plants. **Thank You!** *We are Gifted to Serve!*

Community Outreach Opportunity

Prairieland United Way has kicked off a community food drive that will continue through May 26. Community members are being asked to donate food to help kids in need of food through the summer months when school is out. Though participants may donate any nonperishable foods, items most needed include:

Juice	canned soups	jelly
Gatorade	Ramen noodles	breakfast cereal
canned chicken	canned pasta and meat	macaroni and cheese cups
fruit	peanut butter	oatmeal
Jell-O or pudding cups		

Faith members may put their donations in the Blue Box found in the Mission and Ministry area; the **deadline for donations is Sunday, May 21st**.

Doorbell Dinners — May 29-June 2

Help us deliver meals in the community. We are in need of drivers & deliverers to cover the needs of five routes — time commitment is 11:15-12:30 each day. For more information and to sign up, visit the signup counter by the Fair Trade coffee sales.

Fairly-Traded Coffee/Tea

Check out the coffee display from Equal Exchange. Simply select the product(s) you would like to purchase, and place the money in the container provided by the display (**\$6.50** regular; **\$7.50** decaf & flavored; **\$3.00** tea; **\$2.50** chocolate bars; **\$5.50** hot chocolate—milk & dark; **\$5.50** coffee pods; **\$6.25** cashews). Checks should be made out to Faith Lutheran Church with “*coffee*” designated in the memo area.

Contribution Envelopes for 2023

are in the gathering area under the cross close to the Coffee Bar. If you don't see a box with your name on it, please mention this to Barb Davenport, Pam Devlin, or Kris Roth. We will happily provide you with a box. If you would like to register for our easy, **automatic online giving service**, contact the church office.

Faith Telephone Directory

A new Faith Directory is available in the gathering area on the Coffee Sales counter by the Mission & Ministry Center for all to take home (1 per household, please).