

# Third Sunday of Easter

May 4, 2025

*Greetings and Welcome*

*Prelude by Kelly Hartz & Terri Kimler – “The Old Rugged Cross”*

## GATHERING

*Call to Worship*

P: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

*Confession*

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

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

*Silence*

P: Most merciful God,

**C: We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

- 1 **Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; his the scepter, his the throne;  
Alleluia! his the triumph, his the victory alone.  
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood:  
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation has redeemed us by his blood."**
- 2 **Alleluia! Not as orphans are we left in sorrow now;  
Alleluia! he is near us; faith believes, nor questions how.  
Though the cloud from sight received him when the forty days were o'er,  
shall our hearts forget his promise: "I am with you evermore"?**
- 3 **Alleluia! Bread of heaven, here on earth our food, our stay;  
Alleluia! here the sinful flee to you from day to day.  
Intercessor, friend of sinners, earth's redeemer, hear our plea  
where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal sea.**
- 4 **Alleluia! King eternal, Lord omnipotent we own;  
Alleluia! born of Mary, earth your footstool, heav'n your throne.  
As within the veil you entered, robed in flesh, our great high priest,  
here on earth both priest and victim in the eucharistic feast.**
- 5 **Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; his the scepter, his the throne;  
Alleluia! his the triumph, his the victory alone.  
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood:  
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation has redeemed us by his blood."**

*\*Greeting*

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

**C: And also with you.**

*\*Prayer of the Day*

P: Gracious God, your martyr, Stephen, shined with the light of your Holy Spirit. When his opponents took his life, he offered up his spirit to you, and prayed mercy for theirs. Make Stephen an example of faith and courage for all your followers, for the sake of the one who brought light and life to this world, Jesus Christ.

**C: Amen.**

*\*Sharing Christ's 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.*

*Children's Sermon*

*Hymn of Praise* – “For All Your Goodness, Lord”

*(piano)*

**For all your goodness, Lord, we give you thanks.  
Thanks for the food we eat, and for the friends we meet;  
for each new day we greet, we give you thanks.**

## WORD

*Reading:* Acts 6:8-15; 7:1, 51-58

*Reader:* Mike Fenner

<sup>8</sup>Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup>Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. <sup>10</sup>But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

<sup>11</sup>Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, “We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.”

<sup>12</sup>So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. <sup>13</sup>They produced false witnesses, who testified, “This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law.

<sup>14</sup>For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us.”

<sup>15</sup>All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

<sup>7</sup>Then the high priest asked Stephen, “Are these charges true?”

<sup>51</sup>“You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! <sup>52</sup>Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the

Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—<sup>53</sup>you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”

<sup>54</sup>When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup>But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup>“Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

<sup>57</sup>At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, <sup>58</sup>dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

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

*Song: “Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive” ELW 605 (organ)*

- 1 "Forgive our sins as we forgive," you taught us, Lord, to pray;  
but you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say.**
- 2 How can your pardon reach and bless the unforgiving heart  
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bitterness depart?**
- 3 In blazing light your cross reveals the truth we dimly knew:  
how trifling others' debts to us; how great our debt to you!**
- 4 Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls and bid resentment cease;  
then, by your mercy reconciled, our lives will spread your peace.**

*Sermon: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it"*

*Song of the Day – “Carry the Light” (piano)*

- 1. In this world of darkness we are given light,  
Hope for all the dying. How will they know?  
How will they know ... that Jesus loves them, And He died to save them?**

*Refrain: Carry the Light, carry the Light.*

*Go and tell the children they are precious in His sight.*

*Carry the Light, carry the Light. Go and preach the gospel 'til there is no more night.*

*In the name of Jesus Christ, carry the Light;*

*(2nd time) the Light. Carry the Light.*

2. **Count them by the millions, blinded slaves to sin.  
Inside they are dying. How will they know?  
How will they know ... that Jesus loves them, And His heart is breaking?** *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 of Intercession*

*Stewardship Time*

“Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus,” arr. Helen H. Lemmel  
*Marilyn Dichsen*

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

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*\*Great Thanksgiving*

**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 our thanks and praise.**

*\*Words of Institution*

P: 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.

*\*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.**

*Communion Songs*

“Come and Behold Him” *(piano)*

**Come and behold him, come see his glory,  
come with an honest heart to see all he is.**

**We will discover all of his beauty;  
his light will burn away all the darkness we've known.**

**Come and behold him, come and behold him,  
come with an honest heart to see all he is.  
Come and behold him, wait now before him,  
come with an honest heart to see all he is.**

“Christ, Be Our Light” ELW 715 *(organ)*

1. **Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.**

*Refrain: Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

2. **Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has pow'r to save us. Make us your living voice. Refrain**
3. **Longing for food, many are hungry. Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others, shared until all are fed. Refrain**
4. **Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone. Refrain**
5. **Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come. Refrain**

*\*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*

## SENDING

*Farewell and Godspeed for Glen and Carol VanderKloot*

*\*Benediction*

P: As you leave this place, know that God is with you in every messy middle, and go with God's blessing. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor, and + give you peace.  
C: **Amen.**

*\*Sending Song – “Go, My Children, with My Blessing” ELW 543 (organ)*

- 1 **“Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.  
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.  
In my love's baptismal river  
I have made you mine forever.  
Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.”**

- 2 “Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.  
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
Here you heard my dear Son’s story,  
here you touched him, saw his glory.  
Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.”
- 3 “Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.  
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.  
Here my Spirit’s power filled you,  
here my tender comfort stilled you.  
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.”

*\*Dismissal*

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

**Song Credits**

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“For All Your Goodness, Lord,” used by permission.

“Carry the Light,” from **Songs for Praise & Worship**, Word Music, © 1992. CCLI#973583

“Come and Behold Him,” by John Chisum & George Searcy, Integrity’s Hosanna! Music/Integrity’s Praise! Music,  
© 1994. CCLI#973583

**Worship Assistants**

Communion Assistant: Kay Schnitker

Greeter: Lillian Korous

Reader: Mike Fenner

Ushers: Angie & Mike Fenner

Pastor: Adam Dichsen

Music Director: Jean Welch

Organist: Susan Roegge

Pianist: Jean Welch

Guitarist: Marilyn Dichsen

Drummers: John Demien & Louis Dichsen

Financial Assistants: Mindy Carlson & Monica Proefrock

Chancel Committee: Pat Glyshaw

Coffee Host: Karen Sibert





**Singers:**

Benen Dichsen	Terri Kimler	Kris Roth	Melissa Street
Kelly Hartz	Adam Krohe	Cole Street	Carol VanderKloot

**Church Council Members:**

Malinda Carlson	Marilyn Dichsen	Greg Kimler	Monica Proefrock
Ken Devlin	Kelly Hartz	Patty Nelson	Kay Schnitker
			Kelly Street

The altar plants are given today by Jeff and Shelley McDaniel  
in celebration of Alexis' 9<sup>th</sup> birthday

## **What's Coming Up at Faith?**

Sunday, May 4, 9:30am: Worship  
11:00am: Bible Study in the Justice Room  
5:00pm: Youth Service Project

Sunday, May 11, 9:30am: Worship  
11:00am: Bible Study in the Justice Room

Thursday, May 15, 6:00pm: Church Council Meeting

## **News Updates**

### **Faith's Little Flock**

Faith's Little Flock is for children ages 2-7. We also welcome Big Kid Helpers (ages 8 and up) to help the little ones with the more difficult parts of the crafts, and our older adults to read the scripture story to the children. Contact Melissa Street if you would like to take a turn reading the story to the children. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered so far! The children all return to the sanctuary for the communion blessing. Word-finds, crossword puzzles, and other activity sheets are available in the gathering area for the older children (and adults) to help reinforce the message of the day. We look forward to seeing all of the children in May!

### **Bible Study on The Apostle Paul**

Following worship, join Pastor Adam for Bible study in the Justice Room. Through May and into June, we will be reading from Acts and Galatians. The book of Acts was also

written by Luke and tells the story of the Holy Spirit and the early Church through Paul and the other apostles. No preparation necessary... just come to ask questions, listen, and share.

### **Women of Faith Craft Night**

Join us on Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm for a Women of Faith craft night! We'll be making bookmarks/bracelets that will help us remember and celebrate the women who have made an impact on our lives. No special skills required. All supplies and food will be provided. Hope to see you there!

### **Discipleship Group**

Join us in the Faith Library at **10:00am on Wednesday, May 21**, for Bible study and great conversation. Have questions or need more info? Contact Kelly Hartz at (217) 502-1979 or email [khartz@sompo-intl.com](mailto:khartz@sompo-intl.com). Can't wait to see you there!

### **Music at Faith**

As always, we would love to have more people involved in the music ministry at Faith. Please contact Jean Welch if you are interested in sharing your musical gifts at our worship services – all are welcome!

[jrwelch53@msn.com](mailto:jrwelch53@msn.com) or 217-652-7009 (phone/text)

### **Outdoor Contemporary - June 1, 9:30 a.m.**

Contemporary worship is often identified by a style of music, but “contemporary” simply means that it pertains to the current time. This contemporary service will incorporate some current music heard on Christian radio as well as some from our files. Marilyn Dichsen will help select and lead the music, utilizing her love for worship music and desire to lead. We won't have our Faith Singer choir, but invite anyone to help lead the singing. We will share a list of songs and rehearsal schedule as we get closer. The rest of the service can best be described as “Lutheran casual” with a familiar Lutheran structure, but less scripted. Bring a chair or a blanket, and stick around for fellowship afterwards. This is a great opportunity to expand your worship horizons. Bring a friend and invite them to get to know our church.

### **Indoor Traditional -- June 1, 11:00 a.m.**

Good traditional worship is still “contemporary” as it speaks to us in our current time. Our Lutheran heritage is rich in theology and worship that connect with us today. This service will draw from the more traditional aspects of worship such as sung liturgy, familiar hymns, and all organ all the time. Our liturgy will come from the Lutheran Book of

Worship (the green hymnal). For communion, we will gather around the altar by table with the option to kneel or stand. This is also a great opportunity to expand your worship horizons. Invite a friend to worship and rediscover our Lutheran heritage.

### **Summer Vacation Bible School**

It has been a few years since Faith has offered Vacation Bible School, and we have many children who are asking for it to return. Our Discipleship Core Team would like to offer a VBS program that extends through the summer, choosing a day or two each month when we can gather for songs, lessons, games, and food. At this point, we are looking for helpers. If you would like to help in any of these areas, please contact Pam Devlin, Carol Freesen, Celeste Hill, or Pastor Adam. We need to know your interest and availability so we can have our dates set by the end of May. Stay tuned, and we look forward for some great times to come!

### **Doorbell Dinners - May 19-23**

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 sign-up counter by the Fair Trade coffee sales.

### **Praise and Worship and Ice Cream and Cookies**

This probably sounds like a weird combination, but we're going to enjoy both of these on **Sunday, May 18**. This is the first of many Jacksonville Conference of Churches' events that are being planned for this summer. A day filled with praise and gospel music, and much more with all who want to join us at Spirit of Faith Soup Kitchen, 105 E Dunlap St.

A preview and **rehearsal** of the music will be on **Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Soup Kitchen**. Music provided - just bring your voices!!! If you don't want to sing, please join us at the service at 1:00pm on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Since no good bowl of ice cream should be served without a cookie - we will be **baking cookies on Saturday, May 17 at The Soup Kitchen** - so we're looking for helpers with that. **Time to be determined.**

### **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!*

### **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; **\$3.00** tea; **\$2.50** chocolate bars; **\$6.50** cashews). Checks should be made out to Faith Lutheran Church with “*coffee*” designated in the memo area.

### **Summer Youth Camps**

**Performing Arts Camp** (PAC) at Green Pastures Christian Retreat Center is for youth entering grades 5-12 and will take place on June 13-14, 20-21, and 27-28. Cost is \$50/camper.

**Fire in Our Hearts** (FIOH) at Green Pastures is for youth entering grades 5-12 and will take place on July 7-11 and 21-25. Cost is \$135/camper.

If needed, scholarships are available.

Registration link: <http://www.greenpasturesretreatcenter.org/registration>.

For more information call: 217-584-1374

Email: [contact@greenpasturesretreatcenter.org](mailto:contact@greenpasturesretreatcenter.org)