

# Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 18, 2025

*Greetings and Welcome*

*Prelude by Sharon Zuiderveld – “Be Thou But Near,” by JS Bach*

## 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 O day of rest and gladness, O day of joy and light,  
O balm for care and sadness, most beautiful, most bright:  
on you the high and lowly, through ages joined in tune,  
sing, “Holy, holy, holy,” to the great God triune.
- 2 On you, at earth's creation, the light first had its birth;  
on you, for our salvation, Christ rose from depths of earth;  
on you, our Lord victorious the Spirit sent from heav'n;  
and thus on you, most glorious, a threefold light was giv'n.
- 3 Today on weary nations the heav'nly manna falls;  
to holy convocations the silver trumpet calls,  
where gospel light is glowing with pure and radiant beams  
and living water flowing with soul-refreshing streams.
- 4 New graces ever gaining from this our day of rest,  
we reach the rest remaining to spirits of the blest.  
We sing to you our praises, O Father, Spirit, Son;  
the church its voice upraises to you, blest Three in One.

*\*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: Lord God, you open your arms to all. The early church struggled to offer a wide welcome to the gentiles, and we struggle to offer a wide welcome as well. Help us remember that it is your grace that saves us, not our works, and help us to live and proclaim this good news to all.

**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.*

*Hymn of Praise – “You Are Holy” ELW 525*

*(piano)*

**You are holy, you are whole. You are always ever more  
than we ever understand. You are always at hand.  
Blessed are you coming near. Blessed are you coming here  
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.  
You are holy, you are wholeness, you are present.  
Let the cosmos praise you, Lord!  
Sing hosanna in the highest! Sing hosanna!  
Sing hosanna to our God!**

## WORD

*Reading: Acts 15:1-18*

*Reader: Terri Kimler*

<sup>1</sup>Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” <sup>2</sup>This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. <sup>3</sup>The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad. <sup>4</sup>When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.

<sup>5</sup>Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses.”

<sup>6</sup>The apostles and elders met to consider this question. <sup>7</sup>After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. <sup>8</sup>God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. <sup>9</sup>He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup>Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup>No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

<sup>12</sup>The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. <sup>13</sup>When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me. <sup>14</sup>Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. <sup>15</sup>The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

<sup>16</sup>“After this I will return  
and rebuild David’s fallen tent.  
Its ruins I will rebuild,  
and I will restore it,  
<sup>17</sup>that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord,  
even all the Gentiles who bear my name,  
says the Lord, who does these things’—  
<sup>18</sup>things known from long ago.

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

*Reading:* Jeremiah 31:31-34

<sup>31</sup>“The days are coming,” declares the Lord,  
“when I will make a new covenant  
with the people of Israel  
and with the people of Judah.  
<sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant  
I made with their ancestors  
when I took them by the hand  
to lead them out of Egypt,  
because they broke my covenant,  
though I was a husband to them,”  
declares the Lord.  
<sup>33</sup>“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel  
after that time,” declares the Lord.  
“I will put my law in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.  
I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.  
<sup>34</sup>No longer will they teach their neighbor,  
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’  
because they will all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest,”  
declares the Lord.  
“For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more.”

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

Song: “By Grace We Have Been Saved” (ACS 1006) (piano)

*Refrain: By grace we have been saved—saved by grace through faith,  
not because of what we do; it is the gift of God.*

- 1 **On the days when you are weak, on the days when you are strong,  
rich or poor, young or old, just listen to the song. Refrain**
- 2 **Rest your body, rest your mind, in the stillness you will find  
you're a lovely, precious child, part of the great design. Refrain**
- 3 **You don't need to be afraid. You will never be alone.  
There is mercy, there is hope, and love will take you home. Refrain**

Sermon: "A New Covenant"

Song of the Day – “All Are Welcome” ELW 641 (organ)

1. **Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,  
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions:**  
*Refrain: All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.*
2. **Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,  
Where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus: Refrain**
3. **Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine, and wheat:  
A banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;  
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us: Refrain**

4. **Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone  
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;  
Let us bring an end to fear and danger: *Refrain***
5. **Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard  
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: *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*

**"O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing," arr. Bottomley  
*Jean Welch, piano***

*—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 to the Table”

*(piano)*

**We all start on the outside, the outside looking in,  
This is where grace begins.**

**We were hungry, we were thirsty, with nothing left to give,  
Oh the shape that we were in.**

**And just when all hope seemed lost, love opened the door for us.**

**He said come to the table, come join the sinners who have been redeemed.**

**Take your place beside the Savior, sit down and be set free,  
Come to the table.**

**Come meet this motley crew of misfits, these liars and these thieves,  
There's no one unwelcome here.**

**And that sin and shame that you brought with you, you can leave it at the door,  
And let mercy draw you near, so ...**

**Come to the table, come join the sinners who have been redeemed.**

**Take your place beside the Savior, sit down and be set free,  
Come to the table, come to the table.**

**To the thief and to the doubter, to the hero and the coward,  
To the pris'ner and the soldier, to the young and to the older.**

**All who hunger, all who thirst, all the last and all the first,  
All the paupers and the princes, all who fail you've been forgiven.**

**Come to the table, come to the table.  
Sit down and be set free, come to the table.**

**“O Living Bread from Heaven” ELW 542 (organ)**

- 1 O living Bread from heaven, how well you feed your guest!  
The gifts that you have given have filled my heart with rest.  
O wondrous food of blessing! O cup that heals our woes!  
My heart, this gift possessing, in thankful song o'er flows.**
- 2 My Savior, you have led me within your holiest place,  
and here yourself have fed me with treasures of your grace;  
for you have freely given what earth could never buy,  
the bread of life from heaven, that now I shall not die.**
- 3 You gave me all I wanted; this food can death destroy.  
And you have freely granted the cup of endless joy.  
My Lord, I do not merit the favor you have shown;  
and all my soul and spirit bow down before your throne.**
- 4 Oh, grant me then, well-strengthened with heav'nly food, while here  
my course on earth is lengthened, to serve you, free from fear;  
and bring me home to praise you where none can peace destroy,  
where I will ever raise you glad songs in endless joy.**

*\*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**

*\*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, Make Disciples”*

*(piano)*

**Go, make disciples, baptizing them, teaching them.  
Go, make disciples, for I am with you till the end of time.  
Go, be the salt of the earth. Go, be the light for the world.  
Go, be a city on a hill so all can see that you’re serving me. Repeat  
Go, make disciples!**

*\*Dismissal*

**P:** Go in peace, serve the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Worship Assistants**

Communion Assistant: Liddy Stark

Greeter: Hallie Mayner

Reader: Terri Kimler

Usher: Larry Kuster

Pastor: Adam Dichsen

Music Director: Jean Welch

Organist: Sharon Zuiderveld

Pianist: Jean Welch

Guitarist: Marilyn Dichsen

Drummers: John Demien & Louis Dichsen

Financial Assistants: Greg Kimler & Kay Schnitker

Chancel Committee: Martha Krohe

Coffee Hosts: Verla Buckner & Laura Sweatman



**Singers:**

Benen Dichsen

Terri Kimler

Kris Roth

Melissa Street

Kelly Hartz

Adam Krohe

Cole Street

**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 Kris & Bishop Em. John Roth  
in celebration of their 43<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary on May 23

## **Song Credits**

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“Go, Make Disciples,” from **Spirit Touching Spirit**, Prince of Peace Publishing, Inc, used by permission.

## **What’s Coming Up at Faith?**

Sunday, May 18, 9:30am: Worship

11:00am: Bible Study in the Justice Room

1:00pm: Spirit of Faith Service & Ice Cream

Tuesday, May 20, 4:30pm: Faith for the Future Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 21, 10:00am: Discipleship Group in the Faith Library

Thursday, May 22, 6:00pm: Council Meeting in the Faith Library

Sunday, May 25, 9:30am: Worship                   **Friends from Faith**

11:00am: Bible Study in the Justice Room

## **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.

## **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!

### **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. Bring your voices to sing with the choir! If you don't want to sing, please join us for the service.

### **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 signup counter by the Fair Trade coffee sales.

### **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!*

### **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)