

## Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 15, 2022

### Introduction to the Day

Easter initiates a new day. It anticipates a new heaven and a new earth. The risen Christ is making all things new. In the mystery of holy baptism God has made new people of us. Today Jesus invites us to see everyone in a new light—through the lens of love.

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

In the waters of baptism,  
we have passed over from death to life with Jesus  
Christ,  
and we are a new creation.

For this saving mystery, and for this water, let us  
bless God,

who was, who is, and who is to come.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding  
minister gives thanks.*

We thank you, God, for your river of life,

flowing freely from your throne:

through the earth,

through the city,

through every living thing.

You rescued Noah and his family from the flood;

You opened wide the sea for the Israelites.

Now in these waters you flood us with mercy,  
and our sin is drowned forever.

You open the gate of righteousness  
and we pass safely through.

In Jesus Christ, you calm and trouble the waters.

You nourish us and enclose us in safety.

You call us forth and send us out.

In lush and barren places, you are with us.

You have become our salvation.

Now breathe upon this water

and awaken your church once more.

Claim us again as your beloved and holy people.

Quench our thirst; cleanse our hearts; wipe away  
every tear.

To you, our Beginning and our End,

our Shepherd and Lamb,

be honor, glory, praise, and thanksgiving,

now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Gathering Hymn “Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds”

#367, vs. 1,2,4

**Greeting** – The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**And also with you.**

### Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Reading: Psalm 148

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

<sup>2</sup> Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his host!

<sup>3</sup> Praise him, sun and moon;

praise him, all you shining stars!

<sup>4</sup> Praise him, you highest heavens

and you waters above the heavens!

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,

for he commanded and they were created.

<sup>6</sup> He established them forever and ever;

he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Praise the LORD from the earth,

you sea monsters and all deeps,

<sup>8</sup> fire and hail, snow and frost,

stormy wind fulfilling his command!

<sup>9</sup> Mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars!

<sup>10</sup> Wild animals and all cattle,  
creeping things and flying birds!  
<sup>11</sup> Kings of the earth and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers of the earth!  
<sup>12</sup> Young men and women alike,  
old and young together!

<sup>13</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
for his name alone is exalted;  
his glory is above earth and heaven.  
<sup>14</sup> He has raised up a horn for his people,  
praise for all his faithful,  
for the people of Israel who are close to him.  
Praise the LORD!

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Children's Message**

#### **Gospel: John 13:31-35**

<sup>31</sup>When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup>Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' <sup>34</sup>I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ**

### **Sermon**

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

On the surface, this seems a very random – though very good and needed to hear – gospel text. We are brought back to the evening of the Last Supper when Jesus had just given his disciples that Holy meal of forgiveness, which he follows with the mandate to "love one another, just as Christ loved you."

It seems odd that we find ourselves, again, pre-crucifixion just 4 weeks removed from Easter. But, here we are.

It's almost as though the world knew that we needed to hear this reminder that this Gospel text gives us. The people will know that we are God's by how we love others.

If we take a look back at the themes that have weaved their way through previous weeks coming out of Easter, this Gospel text not only makes sense, it becomes quite relevant. (Not that a Gospel text about loving others would ever be irrelevant)

On Easter we found ourselves hearing the resurrection story as it was experienced by communities of Jesus followers.

First it was the women that went to the tomb, who then returned to the gathered community of Jesus' disciples, and then the smaller group walking on the road to Emmaus.

Then, we are introduced to Thomas who, after hearing of the experience that the community had with the risen Christ, longed for that same experience for himself.

In confronting the tragedy in the Chippewa Valley leading up to Easter 3, we were reminded of the call to tend to the flock that is Jesus followers. We were reminded that we find hope in the community that surrounds us, and wraps us in God's embrace in our most difficult times.

Then, we are confronted with the challenge of the role we sometimes play as the gathered community when others don't feel that embrace that we have come to know and love. We were challenged to think of where we

have maybe turned others away, and not been the open place where all would feel God's grace, though it is Jesus' calling that has them continually returning.

So, we get this reminder. Through the continual theme of post-resurrection community stories, we are reminded of that which God longs for. Community.

It would do us good to take a quick look again at what is happening in this Gospel text. Jesus has just shared the meal of forgiveness with his beloved community. He has just told them that his betrayer was among them, whom he gave a piece of wine dipped bread to, and told him to go and do as he must. Judas, the fine upstanding citizen that he is, scurries away. Which brings us to this.

“The Son of Man has been glorified.” – in his betrayal, he has been glorified.

“I give you this new commandment. Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also ought to love one another.”

I imagine the Judas exchange is fresh in their minds. Their perhaps even reeling from the realization that one of those they've journeyed with is the one that will betray him. So, when Jesus says, “just as I have loved you,” they've got to be wondering if he is referring to handing his betrayer the meal of forgiveness.

That is what God's love is about.

So often we think of God's love as how easily we love those who are really easy to love. And, that is good. Love is good. But that isn't the love Jesus is necessarily talking about here.

Love those for whom finding love is impossible. Love those that you could never imagine loving. Love those who simply aren't.

That is the love that God in Jesus Christ call us into.

It is a reconciliation love that passes all understanding. It is a love that doesn't come with strings attached or criteria to pass.

It is love. Unconditional.

AND, don't forget, it is how others will know that we are God's, “if you have love for one another.”

All of the good things you might do. All of the deeds. All of the “look at how great I am” acts. Are just that. They are acts...if they aren't done in love.

However, if done in love – true, humble, genuine, reconciliatory – love, then glory is given to God in heaven.

It is through this reconciliatory love that Christ calls to us. It is God's desire in Jesus Christ that we would be in community with one another. It is God's desire in Jesus Christ that in those communities we would find unconditional love. And, in that unconditional love communities would be formed, and love would be found, which would form communities, where love is found...and the cycle goes on an on.

People of God, let us live into the reconciliatory power of God's love for God's people. It is a love that would have us commune with those we least desire to. And it is a love that would overcome all division to build that community that God longs for for God's people.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

## 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 Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, 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,  
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.**

## Offering

### Offertory Prayer

Living God,  
you gather the wolf and the lamb to feed together  
in your peaceable reign,  
and you welcome us all at your table.  
Reach out to us through this meal,  
and show us your wounded and risen body,  
that we may be nourished and believe  
in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

### Prayers of Intercession

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

Loving God, lead us to follow your Spirit, rather than our own prejudices or desires, as the church cares for one another. Open us to perceive your gifts in those we least expect. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Inspire us to praise you through the beauty and majesty of the natural world around us (*local natural areas may be named*). Urge us toward more deliberate care of the world you have made. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Humble the rulers of nations before your splendor. Direct them to the people who need their attention most, and turn them from the temptation to hoard wealth or power. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Hasten to dwell among those who are in pain or distress (*especially for Gena, Peyton, Kathy, Matt, Bob and Joanne, Jim and Sandy, Bob, Joe, Bill and Bonnie, David, Cassie, Keith and JoJo, Sherm and Mary, Frank and Heather, Verna, Bob and Sonja, Irene, Kathy, Val, Jacob*). As Christ enters our deepest suffering, remain with those experiencing despair and great need. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Place holy love at the center of all our relationships and communities. By your love heal us, convict us, and renew us. Bring an end to racism in our churches and communities. Let everyone know your goodness by the love we show one another. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Give us a place in the diverse company of your beloved saints. Teach us the value of each person's identity, and bless us with a shared identity as your children, kindred of Christ. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

### **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**

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

We give you thanks, generous God,  
for in this bread and cup  
we have tasted the new heaven and earth  
where hunger and thirst are no more.

Send us from this table as witnesses to the resurrection,  
that through our lives, all may know life in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

#### **Blessing**

God, the Author of life,  
Christ, the living Cornerstone,  
and the life-giving Spirit of adoption,  
✠ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **Sending Song**

**“Sent Forth by God's Blessings”**

**#547**

### **Dismissal**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Go in peace. Tell what God has done.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Announcements**

If you are not aware, we have had the capabilities for an online directory since we started using our new database program in 2017. At some point during an update, things changed and now I need to go into each person's information and make sure you are checked to be in this online directory. This means you will receive an email stating your privacy has been changed. It doesn't mean that the whole world is seeing your information - only members of Good Shepherd can see this.

Why do we have an online directory? We only do a photo directory so often, and we have new members added at different times. It makes it a lot easier for people to send you a note or call you to see how you are or to ask you a favor maybe. Or to see if you would like to join them at a concert. It is a great way to stay in touch! But I need to keep it updated. If you haven't signed into Realm, give me a call! If you have any questions about it, please contact me at [lgseauclaire@gmail.com](mailto:lgseauclaire@gmail.com) or call the church office at 715-834-2959.

## **Outdoor Flowers**

If you would like to donate towards the outdoor flowerpots, please note "Outdoor Flowers" on your check memo or on an envelope with your donation.