



**The Fifth Sunday of Easter  
Worship with Holy Communion  
Sunday, April 28, 2024**

# ***Good morning & welcome to Grace during this holy season of Easter!***

*Our mission is to invite and welcome all  
to the fellowship of Christ in service to our community.*

**Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!** The church keeps Easter for eight Sundays. Early Christians referred to Sunday as the eighth day, as if the normal week of seven is miraculously completed in an extraordinary eighth day. The fifty days culminates at Pentecost. Each Sunday, individually and communally, we meet the risen Christ in word and sacrament. **Alleluia!**

**We are glad you are with us for worship today, and we offer a special welcome to any guests who may be with us this morning, and to all those who are joining us via Live-Stream.**

**Children are welcome in worship at Grace!** The voices of children only enhance worship, and they are welcome in this space! There is a Children's Corner in the sanctuary and, if needed, a nursery off the lobby.

**Your bulletin** contains the worship service in its entirety, **and your parts are printed in bold type.**

**In thanksgiving to God for the saving grace shown to all of us in the death and resurrection of Christ, we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion each week. All are welcome at the Table.** We do come forward to the front of the sanctuary for communion. The Pastor stands in the center of the aisle with the bread. Gluten free bread is available – just ask when you come forward. Finally, communion assistants are located on both sides of the sanctuary, with both **wine (red)** and **juice (white)**. Please place your empty cup in the bowl on your way back to your seat after you commune.

**For those participating from home, please have a small glass of wine or juice and a small piece of bread available for all who are planning to commune.** When we come to the Meal portion of the service, and the people who are present in person are coming forward, please eat your bread and drink your cup as you are moved to do so. You may say the words: This is the body of Christ; this is the blood of Christ, as you commune yourself, and/or others.

**If you have questions** about our worship service, please don't hesitate to ask someone around you. For more information about Baptism or Communion, about what Lutherans believe, or even about Grace Lutheran Church, please do not hesitate to reach out to our pastor.

**Again, welcome to worship!**

**GATHERING ~ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.**

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**PRELUDE**

*“Like the Murmur of the Dove’s Song”*

**ELW 403**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

*All may make the sign of the cross as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy!

**Amen**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and water became the essence of life. Adam and Eve beheld Eden’s verdant rivers. The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day. Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom’s land. In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus’ death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people. We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

**GATHERING HYMN**

*“Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!”*

**ELW 377**

**GREETING**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, the love of Christ that guards our hearts and minds, and the joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## CANTICLE OF PRAISE

(ELW 836 – “Hymn to Joy”)



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.  
2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.  
3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:  
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;  
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.  
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.  
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.  
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.  
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

## 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.**

## MUSICAL OFFERING

**WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.**

## FIRST READING

**Acts 8:26 - 40**

*Led by the Spirit, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official who is returning to his African home after having been to Jerusalem to worship. Philip uses their encounter to proclaim the gospel to him. Upon coming to faith in Jesus, he is baptized by Philip. And we read:*

<sup>26</sup>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.) <sup>27</sup>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 <sup>28</sup>and

was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." <sup>30</sup>So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup>He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup>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.

<sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth."

<sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>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?" <sup>38</sup>He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>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. <sup>40</sup>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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 22:25 - 31** (*read in unison*)

**<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the great assembly;  
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.**

**<sup>26</sup>The poor shall eat and be satisfied,  
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

**<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;  
all the families of nations shall bow before God.**

**<sup>28</sup>For dominion belongs to the LORD,  
who rules over the nations.**

**<sup>29</sup>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.**

**<sup>30</sup>Their descendants shall serve the LORD,  
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

**<sup>31</sup>They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"**

## SECOND READING

1<sup>st</sup> John 4:7 - 21

*We love God and others because God first loved us. We cannot say we love God, whom we have not seen, while hating fellow Christians, whom we regularly see. Love toward God is to be matched by love toward others because the essence of God is love. And we read:*

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*The holy gospel, according to Saint John. **Glory to you, O Lord.***

*On the night of his arrest, Jesus taught his disciples about the relationship they would have with him. Those who abide in his word and love bear fruit, for apart from him, they can do nothing. And we read:*

[Jesus said:] <sup>1</sup>"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup>He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

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

**SERMON****HYMN OF THE DAY**

*"O Blessed Spring"*

**ELW 447**

**THE CREED** ~ *Let us affirm our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE PEACE

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news (*a brief silence*).

We pray for the church around the world, for all ministers, and for the mission of the gospel. Keep all the newly baptized and confirmed in your care. Cleanse our hearts with your word and help us to abide in you always. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For the well-being of the earth and of all created things: for rivers and lakes, streams and estuaries, melting glaciers and polluted waters (*local bodies of water may be named*). Renew the face of the earth and shower us with your goodness. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For the nations and all those in authority: for local, state, and national leaders, for elected representatives at every level, and for international organizations, that justice and peace may reign. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For all those in need: for any experiencing homelessness or unemployment, for those fleeing from oppression or seeking asylum, and for all who are ill or suffering (*especially*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For this congregation: for the caring ministries of this faith community, for all who visit and minister to one another, for all who take communion to homes or care centers, and for all who seek to share your love with the world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With thanksgiving for the saints who rest from their labors. Help us, like them, to bear much fruit and to become your disciples, and at the last, bring us to that heavenly banquet where all will feast together at your table. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**

The peace of our risen Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

*At this time, you are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

**MEAL ~ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.**

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**CHANCEL CHOIR**

*"Bread of the World"*

**by Dennis Eliot**

**OFFERING**

*If you would like to offer a gift, the collection plate is located at the back of the sanctuary for your convenience. Thank you for your continued support of our mission and ministry.*

**OFFERING RESPONSE**

*"Create in Me a Clean Heart"*

**ELW 186**



## OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. Amen

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Those moved to do so may rise.)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*The presiding minister continues with the proper preface:*

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places, give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb, who gave himself to take away our sin, and who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter, and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

(ELW 448 – “This is the Spirit’s Entry Now”)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.  
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we bless and magnify you.

You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.

Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on all the baptized gathered for this feast: wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Lord, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to 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**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table. **Amen**

## LAMB OF GOD

(ELW 359 – “Where Charity and Love Prevail”)



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

## COMMUNION HYMNS

*“Where Charity and Love Prevail”*

**ELW 359**

*“Let All Things Now Living”*

**ELW 881**

## BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

## PRAYER

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen**

**SENDING ~** God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

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## BLESSING

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen**

## SENDING HYMN

*“Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death”*

**ELW 452**

## DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

**We will! Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

## POSTLUDE

*“Mercy, We Abide in You”*

**ACS 1077**

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