

Salem Lutheran Church

115 N. Washington Ave., Albert Lea

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 7, 2023

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

Gathering

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

Prelude

Announcements

***Thanksgiving for Baptism**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

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.**

***HYMN**

Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!

#382

***Greeting**

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

***Kyrie & Cantic of Praise**

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***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Word

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

FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

⁵⁵Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶"Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰Then

he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."
When he had said this, he died.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit. (Ps. 31:5)

¹In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be | put to shame;
deliver me | in your righteousness.

²**Incline your | ear to me;**
make haste to de- | liver me.

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag | and my stronghold;
for the sake of your name, lead | me and guide me.

⁴**Take me out of the net that they have secretly | set for me,**
for you are my tow- | er of strength. R

⁵Into your hands I com- | mend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, | God of truth.

¹⁵**My times are | in your hand;**
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who | persecute me.

¹⁶Let your face shine up- | on your servant;
save me in your | steadfast love." **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Christ is the cornerstone of God's saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God's chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture:

"See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

⁷To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,
"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,"

⁸and
"A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order

that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

¹⁰Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL READING: John 14:1-14**

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The gospel of the Lord,

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Mark Boorsma

***HYMN**

Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life

ELW #816

***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**

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of life, strengthen your church to proclaim your gospel even in times of trouble. As we remember Stephen, we give thanks for diaconal ministry. Bless all deacons and strengthen them for their bridge-building ministry between church and world.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, you show your steadfast love through mighty waters, towering mountains, verdant fields, and arid deserts. Protect the earth's diverse habitats from the forces of pollution, erosion, extinction, and global warming.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Mighty God, your Spirit guides us into all truth. Give wisdom to world and local leaders and organizations as they begin, build, or renew relationships. Strengthen leaders and aid organizations in areas needing to be rebuilt following conflict, unrest, or natural disaster. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving God, you make your home among us. Abide with refugees, those experiencing homelessness, those fleeing war and poverty, and all who question if there is a home in your heart. We pray for all who are sick Woody, Larry, Shirley, Bob, Dean, Leland and all others on our hearts and minds this day.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Assuring God, you accompany your people amid uncertainty and change. Uphold people in this community who have recently moved, changed jobs or schools, retired, or are going through transitions of any kind. Lead us in your ways.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Renewing God, you gather the saints at your heavenly banquet. We give you thanks for the care shown us by those who have gone before us. Grant confidence and comfort for all awaiting the place you have prepared.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

We very much appreciate your continued giving and generosity at this time.

Offering can be placed in the offering plate at the door.

OFFERTORY

This Joyful Eastertide

vs. 1 #391

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.**

DISTRIBUTION IN PEWS

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God,
in you we live and move and have our being.
With your word and this meal of grace,
you have nourished our life together.
Strengthen us to show your love
and serve the world in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***Blessing**

The God of all,
who raised † Jesus from the dead,
bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit
to live in the new creation. **Amen.**

***HYMN**

Christ, Be Our Light

#715

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

Thanks be to God.

Assisting in Worship

Lector: Donna Werner

Coffee: Cynthia Nelson & Deb Stolarcek

Ushers:

Thank you to Jan Reshetar for the beautiful music this morning.

Flowers near the altar today are given by Randy & Karen Rugroden in memory of Tony Rugroden.

This Week at Salem

Tuesday, May 9: 8:30 a.m. Sew 'N Tell

9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting

Friday, May 12: 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study

Sunday, May 14: 9:00 a.m. Fellowship Coffee

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

The Worship & Music Committee of Ascension Lutheran would like to extend an invitation to all our friends at Salem to a "Spuds & Sundaes" Ascension Day celebration on Thursday, May 18, beginning at 5:30 pm at Ascension. Baked potatoes and a variety of items will be provided for you to "load it up your way!" Following that, Ascension's Second Quarter Member honoree, Doris Guenthner, will be celebrated with cake and an ice cream sundae bar. We hope you'll make plans to join us as we come together to celebrate the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. We would appreciate an RSVP to Georgia, our secretary, at 373-3408 so we can better prepare.

There is a sign-up sheet to give altar flowers in the narthex. Flowers are \$30 per Sunday.

There is a new sign-up sheet in the Gathering Space for Women of Salem. We need volunteers (men & women) to help at funerals. Would you be willing to help if contacted?

The sign-up sheets to help in May with ushering or serving coffee are also available. Please consider helping.

High School Graduation Time

Salem will be honoring Morgan Luhning on Sunday, May 21st at 9:00 a.m. coffee reception and during the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

Salem members are also invited to a Grad Party for Morgan Luhning on Friday, May 26th from 5-8 p.m. at the Edgewater Bay Pavilion, Edgewater Drive, Albert Lea.

Geraniums for Pentecost Sunday, May 28th

Geraniums are \$5.75 each to be used in church on Sunday, May 28th.

Please include payment to Salem Altar Guild.

Deadline is May 21.

Name_____

of plants_____

___ will pick up ___ will not pick up