

**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH    EASTER 6**  
**MAY 14, 2023**

PRELUDE and WELCOME

GATHERING

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!**

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,  
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

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 is 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 seas for the Israelites.  
Now in these waters you flood us with mercy,  
**and our sin is drowned forever.**

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

In Jesus Christ, you calm the troubled 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.

We thank you, risen Christ,

For these waters where you make us new,

**leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.**

We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us  
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,  
like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls,  
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.

Clothe us with mercy and forgiveness.

Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

**Make us one, risen Christ.**

**Cleanse our hearts.**

**Shower us with life.**

To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**HYMN: ELW # 631 LOVE DIVINE, ALL LOVES EXCELLING**

**Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heav'n, to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown.**

**Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art.**

**Visit us with thy salvation; enter ev'ry trembling heart.**

**Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast.**

**Let us all in thee inherit, let us find thy promised rest.**

**Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be.**

**End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.**

**Come, Almighty, to deliver, let us all thy life receive.**

**Suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.**

**Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.**

**Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be.**

**Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee.**

**Changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love and praise!**

**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.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold all things together in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children and give to all the world the spirit of your truth and peace through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## WORD

### ACTS 17:22-31

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

The word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM 66:8-20

Bless our God, you peoples,

**let the sound of praise be heard,**

Our God has kept us among the living,

**and has not allowed our feet to slip.**

For you, O God, have tested us;  
**you have tried us just as silver is tried.**  
You brought us into the net;  
**you laid heavy burdens upon our backs;**  
You let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water;  
**but you brought us out into a place of refreshment.**  
I will enter your house with burnt offerings;  
**and will pay you my vows,**  
those that I promised with my lips  
**and spoke with my mouth when I was in trouble.**  
I will offer you burnt offerings of fatlings, with the smoke of rams;  
**I will give you oxen and goats.**  
Come and listen, all you who believe,  
**and I will tell what God has done for me.**  
I called out to God with my mouth  
**and praised the Lord with my tongue.**  
If I had cherished evil in my heart,  
**the Lord would not have heard me.**  
But in truth God has heard me;  
**and has attended to the sound of my prayer.**  
Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer  
**nor withheld unfailing love from me.**

#### 1 PETER 3:13-22

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.

Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil.

For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

JOHN 14:15-21

”If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.  
”I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

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

SERMON

**HYMN ELW # 613 THY HOLY WINGS**

**Thy holy wings, O Saviour, spread gently over me,  
and let me rest securely through good and ill in thee.  
Oh, be my strength and portion, my rock and hiding place,  
and let my ev’ry moment be lived within thy grace.**

**Oh, let me nestle near thee, within thy downy breast  
where I will find sweet comfort and peace within thy nest.  
Oh, close thy wings around me and keep me safely there,  
for I am but a newborn and need thy tender care.**

**Oh, wash me in the waters of Noah’s cleansing flood.  
Give me a willing spirit, a heart both clean and good.  
Oh, take into thy keeping thy children great and small,  
and while we sweetly slumber, enfold us one and all.**

## 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:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from 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.  
He 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

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 our faithful companion, you promise to never leave us and to send your  
Spirit to guide us in wisdom and truth. Send your people into the world to serve  
as mirrors that reflect and magnify your love.

Hear us, O God.....**your mercy is great.**

All earth sings praises to you. Grant your care to the creatures, plants and waters, and equip us to respond to their song. Bless with courage and healing the places of fire, flood, earthquake, and tsunami. Watch over the growth of Spring's blossoms and new growth. Make us agents of restoration and refreshment for all your beloved creation.

Hear us, O God.....**your mercy is great.**

You call all people of the earth your children. Judge the nations justly, show mercy to all who are oppressed, and speak truth to power through your prophets. Journey with refugees and migrants. Give leaders and people together the tools for peace and reconciliation. We pray for trust and hope in our land and for Ukraine, Russia, and Sudan.

Hear us, O God.....**your mercy is great.**

Nurturing Lord, you sent your Spirit to grant us comfort and peace. Make your presence known to those who feel abandoned or alone, and to all who are sick, suffering or grieving. For all we hold in our hearts.....Ingrid, Bryan, Harold and Margaret, and all we remember today.....

*pause*

Hear us, O God.....**your mercy is great.**

You hold us in your loving care. We pray for mothers and mother figures. Console all who long to be mothers, children estranged from their mothers, anyone grieving the death of a mother, and mothers who have lost a child. Support all who celebrate this day and all for whom this day is difficult.

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.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE and OFFERING

## MEAL

### PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Generous God, in this meal you offer your very self. We give thanks for these gifts of the earth. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, Holy Love, Holy Wonder,

out of silence and emptiness you created the heavens and the earth.

The oceans sing your praise. The rivers chant your glory.

Out of Abraham and Sarah's dead end, you made promises,

you granted laughter, you brought forth descendants to continue your story.

Out of the deathly power of oppression and slavery you liberated your people and blessed them with water, bread, wine.

Out of their lifeless wandering from your justice and mercy

you sent them prophets who sang poems that serenaded them back to you.

In your great compassion for every tribe and nation, you sent Jesus,

to bring everyone out of the tomb of hatred and sin and into a life of your love.

He fully embodied your compassion,

lifting up the poor, raising up the lowly, forgiving the sinner, suffering, and dying

so that no one need suffer injustice and fear anymore.

Out of the death of his own tomb,

you raised him up so your story of love will not end.

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.

Together with one voice, we celebrate the paschal mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Send your Spirit to fill us with the joy of the resurrection.

Grant us hope beyond our comprehension.



Bless these gifts of bread and wine,  
so that the endless life and love of Jesus may dwell in us,  
and flow from us through acts of love for our neighbours.  
Holy God, Holy Love, Holy Wonder,  
we give you more praise than we can utter,  
as we await that great day when the feast of your love  
has no walls, no exceptions, no end,  
when we gather with Christ, by the Spirit, and know life in you:  
love that cannot die,  
love that enlivens our weary bones,  
love that exceeds every hope and dream,  
love, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.....

#### **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.  
Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.**

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and know Christ, broken and poured out for you.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### HOLY COMMUNION

*you are invited to eat your bread and drink your wine as you hear the words  
"the body of Christ given for you" "the blood of Christ shed for you"*

#### TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ strengthen us and  
keep us always in his grace. **Amen.**

#### 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

### BLESSING

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

### **HYMN ELW # 404 COME GRACIOUS SPIRIT, HEAVENLY DOVE**

**Come, gracious Spirit, heav'nly Dove,  
With light and comfort from above;  
Be Thou our Guardian, Thou our Guide,  
O'er every thought and step preside.**

**The light of truth to us display,  
And make us know and choose your way;  
Plant holy fear in every heart,  
That we from God may ne'er depart.**

**Lead us to Christ, the living Way,  
Nor let us from His pastures stray.  
Lead us in holiness, the road  
That we must take to dwell with God;**

**Lead us to Heav'n, that we may share,  
Fullness of joy forever there.  
Lead us to our eternal rest,  
To be with God forever blest.**

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE