

+DIVINE SERVICE IV+
OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
+THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER+ 14 APRIL 2023+



The
Holy Spirit
Our Helper

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

902 S. Maple

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tgslicms.org

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

“A Church where God gives and we receive.”

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Welcome to our Divine Service!

We are pleased that you are with us.

+Worship Notes+

The entire service, including the rubrics of when to sit and when to kneel or stand, and what to say, is printed out in this folder so you may follow along.

Welcome to weekly Divine Service at The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church! We are a congregation that confesses the Holy Bible as inerrant, that justification is by faith according to the Holy Bible and confessed in the 1580 Book of Concord. God bless you.

To all of you who are visiting our service this morning, we extend a most cordial welcome in Jesus' name. Please introduce yourself to our pastor. It is our hope that you will feel at home in our midst and will be blessed by our message of Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the world. If you are looking for a church home and would like to know about our membership, pastor would love to speak with you!

A Note From The Organist:

Dale Wood spent most of his career in the Bay Area but did live in SoCal for a while. This beautiful setting of “Children of the Heavenly Father” was published in 1966, and carries a dedication to Dr. Paul Stroud, long-time professor of organ at CSULB.

Mathias Weckmann spent much of his life in Dresden and Hamburg. His music often mixed German and Italian influences. “All Christians Who Have Been Baptized” is a straightforward setting of the chorale, with the melody in the pedal.

Confession and Absolution

Hymn of Invocation

457 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today



1 Je - sus Christ is ris'n to - day, Al - le - lu - ia!
 2 Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
 3 But the pains which He en - dured, Al - le - lu - ia!
 △ 4 Sing we to our God a - bove, Al - le - lu - ia!



Our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Un - to Christ, our heav'n - ly king, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Our sal - va - tion have pro - cured; Al - le - lu - ia!
 Praise e - ter - nal as His love; Al - le - lu - ia!



Who did once up - on the cross, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Now a - bove the sky He's king, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Praise Him, all ye heav'n - ly host, Al - le - lu - ia!



Suf - fer to re - deem our loss. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Where the an - gels ev - er sing. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia!

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.
- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Kneel/Stand

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **Amen.**

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 119:89-93; antiphon: v. 105

Your word is a lamp | to my feet*
and a light | to my path.

Forever, O | LORD, your word*
is firmly fixed | in the heavens.

Your faithfulness endures to all gener- | ations;*
you have established the earth, and it | stands fast.

By your appointment they | stand this day,*
for all things are your | servants.

If your law had not been | my delight,*
I would have perished in my af- | fliction.

I will never forget your | precepts,*
for by them you have giv- | en me life.

Kyrie

LSB 204



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 204



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole - be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat - ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

O God, the giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

First Reading

Acts 17:16–31

¹⁶While Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, “What does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹And they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean.” ²¹Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

Paul Addresses the Areopagus

²²So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸for

“‘In him we live and move and have our being’;
as even some of your own poets have said,

“‘For we are indeed his offspring.’”

²⁹Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

- ⁸Bless our God, O | peoples;*
 let the sound of his | praise be heard,
⁹**who has kept our soul among the | living***
and has not let our | feet slip.
- ¹⁰For you, O God, have | tested us;*
 you have tried us as sil- | ver is tried.
- ¹¹**You brought us in- | to the net;***
you laid a crushing burden | on our backs;
- ¹²you let men ride o- | ver our heads;*
 we went through fire and through water;
 yet you have brought us out to a place of a- | bundance.
- ¹³**I will come into your house with burnt | offerings;***
I will perform my | vows to you,
- ¹⁴that which my lips | uttered*
 and my mouth promised when I was in | trouble.
- ¹⁵**I will offer to you burnt offerings of fattened animals,**
with the smoke of the sacri- | fice of rams;*
I will make an offering of | bulls and goats.
- ¹⁶Come and hear, all you who | fear God,*
 and I will tell what he has done | for my soul.
- ¹⁷**I cried to him | with my mouth,***
and high praise was | on my tongue.
- ¹⁸If I had cherished iniquity | in my heart,*
 the Lord would not have | listened.
- ¹⁹**But truly God has | listened;***
he has attended to the voice | of my prayer.
- ²⁰Blessèd | be God,*
 because he has not rejected my prayer
 or removed his steadfast | love from me!

Epistle

1 Peter 3:13–22

¹³Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior

in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

¹⁸For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹Baptism, which corresponds to this, 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, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



C These things are writ - ten that you may be - lieve that



Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

John 14:15-21

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourteenth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

¹⁵[Jesus said:] “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

¹⁸“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,

whose kingdom will have no end.

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life † of the world to come. Amen.**

Sit

Hymn of the Day

463 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia



1 Christ the Lord is ris'n to - day; Al - le - lu - ia!
2 For the sheep the Lamb has bled, Al - le - lu - ia!
3 Hail, the vic - tim un - de - filed, Al - le - lu - ia!
4 Chris - tians, on this ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!



Chris-tians, has - ten on your way; Al - le - lu - ia!
Sin - less in the sin - ner's stead. Al - le - lu - ia!
God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled, Al - le - lu - ia!
All your grate - ful hom - age pay; Al - le - lu - ia!



Of - fer praise with love re - plete, Al - le - lu - ia!
Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Al - le - lu - ia!
When con - tend - ing death and life, Al - le - lu - ia!
Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Al - le - lu - ia!



At the pas - chal vic - tim's feet. Al - le - lu - ia!
Now He lives, no more to die. Al - le - lu - ia!
Met in strange and awe - some strife. Al - le - lu - ia!
Now He lives, no more to die. Al - le - lu - ia!

Stand

Prayer of the Church

Proper response is "Hear our prayer."

- P** Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

- O Lord, You bless and protect Your people in a world where many false gods, known and unknown, are worshiped. Give Your saints a clear and bold proclamation of Jesus Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**

- P** Heavenly Father, Your Son suffered on our behalf to win salvation for us. Grant that we may have the privilege not only of believing in Him but also of suffering for His sake. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Lord of heaven and earth, You have given the Spirit of truth to dwell in us through Holy Baptism. Grant Your Spirit's steadfast guidance, that the feet of this congregation and its catechumens may not slip into sin and unbelief, but live always in praise of You before the world. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Creator, You made from one man all the nations of the earth, and still You sustain us. Grant good leaders in every land who will seek peace and serve justice. Frustrate the causes of evil, violence and oppression. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Father in heaven, You have given us a mirror of Your love in the vocation of mothers who nurture, guide and raise their children in all things good. Bless them in their calling. Sustain them through weary and difficult times. Remember in compassion all who are barren, and bring them comfort through the children of Your Church. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Lord, You promised not to abandon us in our need nor leave us as orphans. Send forth Your Spirit and work through us, Your people, that the lonely, poor, homeless and travelers may rejoice in Your presence and the power of Your love. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Grant healing according to Your will, and sustain in faith those for whom we pray. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** We give You thanks for the salvation and life You give us through Christ Jesus. You do not leave Your people as orphans but strengthen the penitent with the body and blood of Your Son. Help us to receive what You offer here for our good, that this Holy Communion may strengthen our faith and equip us for Your service. Lord, in Your mercy,

P All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Offering *Collected after service in the back of the church.*

Service of the Sacrament

Stand

Preface

LSB 208

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 Him thanks and praise.**

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 208



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. By His death, He has redeemed us from bondage to sin and death, and by His resurrection, He has delivered us into new life in Him.

Grant us to keep the Feast in sincerity and truth, faithfully eating His body given into death and drinking His life's blood poured out for our salvation until we pass through death to the promised land of life eternal.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

C 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.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pax Domini

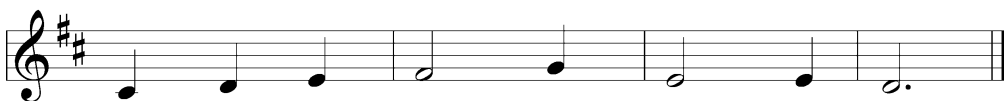
P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

LSB 210

C 1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 You take the sin of the world a - way;
 You take the sin of the world a - way;
 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
 Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,



Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
 And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Sit

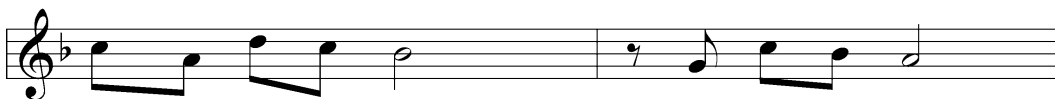
Distribution

Distribution Hymn

629 What Is This Bread



1	What	is	this	bread?	Christ's	bod - y
2	What	is	this	wine?	The	blood of
3	So	who	am	I,	That	I should
4	Yet	is	God	here?	Oh,	yes! By
5	Is	this	for	me?	I	am for -



ris - en from the dead:	This bread we break,
Je - sus shed for mine;	The cup of grace
live and He should die	Un - der the rod?
Word and prom - ise clear,	In mouth and soul
giv - en and set free!	I do be - lieve



This life we take,	Was crushed to pay for our re -
Brings His em - brace	Of life and love un - til I
My God, my God,	Why have You not for - sak - en
He makes us whole—	Christ, tru - ly pres - ent in this
That I re - ceive	His ver - y bod - y and His



lease.	O taste and see—	the Lord is peace.
sing!	O taste and see—	the Lord is King.
me?	O taste and see—	the Lord is free.
meal.	O taste and see—	the Lord is real.
blood.	O taste and see—	the Lord is good.

Distribution Hymn

609 Jesus Sinners Doth Receive



1 Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive; Oh, may all this
 2 We de - serve but grief and shame, Yet His words, rich
 3 Sheep that from the fold did stray No true shep - herd
 4 I, a sin - ner, come to Thee With a pen - i -



say - ing pon - der Who in sin's de - lu - sions live
 grace re - veal - ing, Par - don, peace, and life pro - claim;
 e'er for - sak - eth; Wea - ry souls that lost their way
 tent con - fes - sion. Sav - ior, mer - cy show to me;



And from God and heav - en wan - der! Here is hope for
 Here our ills have per - fect heal - ing. Firm - ly in these
 Christ, the Shep - herd, gent - ly tak - eth In His arms that
 Grant for all my sins re - mis - sion. Let these words my



all who grieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
 words be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
 they may live: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
 soul re - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.

- 5 Oh, how blest it is to know:
 Were as scarlet my transgression,
 It shall be as white as snow
 By Thy blood and bitter passion;
 For these words I now believe:
 Jesus sinners doth receive.

- 6 Now my conscience is at peace;
 From the Law I stand acquitted.
 Christ hath purchased my release
 And my ev'ry sin remitted.
 Naught remains my soul to grieve:
 Jesus sinners doth receive.

7 Jesus sinners doth receive;
 Also I have been forgiven;
 And when I this earth must leave,
 I shall find an open heaven.
 Dying, still to Him I cleave:
 Jesus sinners doth receive.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756
 Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch, 1699, Darmstadt
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 211

1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
 2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All
 part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
 glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the
 glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
 Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;
 A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
 For as in the be - gin - ning, Is
 to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
 now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
 peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
 sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Post-Communion Collect

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benedicamus

LSB 212

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P 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.

Hymn to Depart

484 Make Songs of Joy



1 Make songs of joy to Christ, our head; Al - le - lu - ia!
2 Our life was pur - chased by His loss; Al - le - lu - ia!
3 O death, where is your dead - ly sting? Al - le - lu - ia!
4 And where your vic - to - ry, O grave, Al - le - lu - ia!



He lives a - gain who once was dead! Al - le - lu - ia!
He died our death up - on the cross. Al - le - lu - ia!
As - sumed by our tri - um - phant King! Al - le - lu - ia!
When one like Christ has come to save? Al - le - lu - ia!

5 Behold, the tyrants, one and all,

Alleluia!

Before our mighty Savior fall!

Alleluia!

△ 6 For this be praised the Son who rose,

Alleluia!

The Father, and the Holy Ghost!

Alleluia!

Text: Juraj Tranovský, 1591–1637; tr. Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008
Tune: Velká Partitúra, 1936, ed. Juraj Chorvát
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All Christians Who Have Been Baptized

Mathias Weckmann(1621-1674)

Acknowledgments

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✠ THIS WEEK'S NOTES ✠

Announcements

+ **Last Sunday's Attendance:**

+ **Altar Guild Set Up:** May 14th Marie

May 21st Jill

Cleanup for May: Sydney and Onja

+ **Ushers for May:** Dick Huhn and Olaf Teitell

+ **We welcome Vicar Kirk Bauer and the Congregation of Christ Lutheran as they worship with us today!**

+ **Happy Mother's Day to the ladies of the congregation and those visiting!**

+ **Next Sunday, May 21st, we will be taking down the Easter decorations. If you have an extra hand to spare, it would be greatly appreciated by the ladies of the altar guild! You are all welcomed to a light luncheon provided by the ladies of the LWML.**

LWML Spring Meeting to follow the luncheon. All ladies of the congregation are welcome to join!

May Birthdays

Lynette Hurd 9th

Jay Rogers 19th

Leon Tarr 20th

A Snippet From 1517

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” ([John 14:27](#)).

The Gospel is not a benzodiazepine; it is a word of promise. As such, the nature of the Gospel is not to make us powerful but to embrace our weakness as a reality that requires us to seek shelter in the One who is all-powerful and in love with us. The peace of Jesus gives us Jesus who, despite his fears, was brave enough to endure the cross for all the rest of us who would not have been brave enough (I’m looking at you St. Peter around that campfire before that rooster crowed).

The peace that Jesus offers us is, like the soldier, peace *within* a war. And everyone is fighting a battle of some kind: anxiety, addiction, poverty, sickness, disability, loneliness, rejection, etc. The invitation to “let” our hearts not be troubled is not an invitation to do but an invitation to *not do*. It is a calling, a summons, to hear, to really attend to *what Christ is doing*. That’s all it is. To hear what Jesus is saying. Not only that, multiple times in the passage, Jesus says the Holy Spirit will work with our hearing to produce remembrance and faith in these words. All this leaves us with one last question: how does the peace of Jesus, the Gospel, work to still our anxiety because we need Jesus to do that.

This Gospel peace is meant to speak *into* our hearts where the weltering winds of anxiety shake and moan.

And the answer is that it transforms our perspective by giving us the eyes of faith so that we don’t live just with the eyes of experience. Slowly, gently—more like erosion than like an explosion, the remembered Word of God transforms us into the image of his son. The more we hear that word and struggle and wrestle with it, the more we abide in it and pray it, the more it works upon us to bear fruit. To celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is to celebrate the death of hopelessness. If death can be outmatched, then nothing is fated to failure. No one is fated to a life of misery. Everyone can receive the peace of God and, *in time as the Lord leads*, reach new places of clarity and freedom. That peace is always working, but it can be hard to see in the everyday struggles of life, and we will never be totally free of troubles in this life. The peace of Jesus is not an escape from life’s troubles (that comes in our own resurrection) but a partnership where we, once trying to make it through a day on our own unreliable strength, become enjoined to the One who never fails and will never leave us.

When our anxiety gets the better of us, it is easy to dismiss Jesus’ words as empty. But Jesus’ words are not barren; they are filled with himself. Anxiety is a habit of avoidance coupled with negative thinking. Jesus offers to the anxious soul the one thing it ironically wants: certainty of the good. The more that vision of certainty is held before our hearts, the more they can participate, turbulent or not, in the promised and lasting peace of Christ. He is the One who faced his fears for our salvation so that we never have to face ours with the fear we would remain lost. *Bruce Hillman, 2021*