

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
229 South Broad Street
Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Sunday, May 7, 2023
5th Sunday of Easter



INTRODUCTON

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 I 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.

PRELUDE

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are welcomed, restored, and supported
as citizens of the new creation.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God, holy and merciful,
holy and mighty, you are the river of life,
you are the everlasting wellspring.

In mercy and might you have freed us from death
and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.

In baptismal waters our old life is washed away,
and in them we are born anew.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister continues.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes,
for rivers and streams.

Honor to you for waters that wash us clean,
quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures.

Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism,
the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you.

Empower our witness to your resurrection.

Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.

Satisfy the world's need through this living water.

Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment.

Where despair prevails, grant hope.

Where chaos reigns, bring peace.

We ask this through Christ,
who with you and the Spirit reigns forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation* 654

Greeting

P: Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

HYMN OF PRAISE: *Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing 389*

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.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

L: A reading from Acts

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.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

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 deliver 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 tower of strength.**

⁵Into your hands I commend 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 upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love."

L: A reading from First Peter

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.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION p.142

P: The holy gospel according to St. John.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 14:1-14

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 assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly will stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY *You Are the Way* 758

THE NICENE CREED p.104

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: 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 (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: 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 (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of reconciliation, in this world so plundered by division, dissent, and vitriol accusations, we give you thanks that you are working for the renewal, rejoining, and restoration

of all things. We pray especially for ministries like Lutheran World Federation which seek to bring people of various religious traditions into holy, honest, and compassionate conversation with one another. Hear us, O God

C: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: 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 (*especially*). Grant confidence and comfort for all awaiting the place you have prepared. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.**

The assembly is seated.

CHOIR ANTHEM *The Wonder of His Love*

The assembly stands.

OFFERTORY

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit with me.

Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: 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.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING P.144 (*in the beginning of the hymnal*)

Dialogue

Preface by the Pastor Holy Holy Holy

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer p. 145

Invitation to Communion

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

The assembly is seated.

Communion

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond **Amen.**

SONG AFTER COMMUNION *Jesus, Name Above All Names* (repeat twice)
*Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.*

The assembly stands.

Prayer after Communion

A: 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.

Blessing

P: 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.**

Sending Song: *The Church's One Foundation* 654

Dismissal

P; Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

We extend our sympathies to the family of Jack Rishel who died on May 2, 2023. His funeral service will be held on Monday, at 11:00 a.m. at St. John Lutheran.

Announcements

We welcome our visitors and ask that you sign a Visitor Attendance and Holy Communion Card that is located in the pew rack. We ask that cards be returned via the offering plate during the receiving of the offering. We practice "open Communion" here at St. John meaning that all who believe in the "real presence" of Christ are welcomed to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We offer two choices for Holy Communion, wine or grape juice. Those worshipers desiring grape juice are asked at the communion rail to place their right hand over their heart after receiving "The Body of Christ."

Remember in prayer: Rowan Aldridge, Jim Allen, Carolyn Arthur, Christine and Dave Barner, Agnes Cryder, Don & Helen Delaney, Joanne Fisher, Barb Hoffman, Mick Miller, Cora Pelletier, Shane Snyder, and all of our shut-ins.

We also remember in prayer Family Promise; Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – ELCA; Bishop Craig A. Miller - USS; for our Companion Synods in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; and we pray for peace in Ukraine and an end to war; those effected by the tornadoes and flooding and snow.

We pray for the safety of our military troops around the world including Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Ben Cramer, Trevor and Nehemiah Eberhart, Patrick Hamlin, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Steven Moore, Maddison Myers, Tyler O'Neal, Adam Shaffer, Richie

Speicher, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Kevin Titus, and Jenna White. We also lift up in prayer their families who strive to keep a normalcy in the family and continue on often with added stress.

Special thanks to this weeks' helpers: Lector – Kathy Brundick; Assisting Ministers— Deb Heydrich, Ron Brundick; Head Usher –Cozette Stoltzfus; Teller – Shelby Rice; Bulletin Sponsor –John and Kathie Horne.

Next week's helpers: Lector –Darlene Bilby; Assisting, Bill Ely Jr and Ken Dougherty; Head Usher – Cozette Stoltzfus; Teller – Shelby Rice; Bulletin Sponsor-- John and Kathie Horne; Flowers –Nicole Scott.

The flowers are to the glory of God and in honor of Vivian's Birthday by Ashley Shields.

The Sanctuary Candle in May is in memory of Pap Yost by Nicole, Hannah, Brian, and Adalynn.

The Lutheran Church Women's Prayer Chain is a vital ministry of St. John Lutheran. Anyone in need of prayers is asked to contact any of the following persons:

Gloria Ely – 570-873-3597 Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

This bulletin and more can be found on church site www.stjl.org

Clean-up Day at Camp Mt. Luther is Saturday, May 20, from 8am - noon. If you can help, please contact Cathy Eisner. Come clean St. John's adopted cabin in preparation for the summer camping season.

Spring Cash Sunday is Today. Donations will be used for a new speaker in the front of the sanctuary to improve the audio in our recorded worship services. A Spring Cash Sunday envelope will be mailed to every household in the congregation in April. A return envelope can be used for your donation. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Our on-going Needs. Sponsors sheets are available on the second-floor tower bulletin board for the Sanctuary Candle, Weekly Bulletins, Flowers, and Bread Donors (starting in April). You can sponsor any of the above by placing your name on the sponsor sheets and they will be listed in the bulletin. Enclose money in your offering envelope: Sanctuary candle \$6; Weekly bulletin \$10; Flowers provided by Russell Florists (\$50), or use our beautiful arrangement of silk flowers \$25; or you can provide your own. If you wish to provide your own, please contact Mrs. Aucker. Payment should be made to "St. John Lutheran Church."

Calendar

Sunday, May 7, 2023 5th Sunday of Easter
8:30 a.m. Sunday School
9:30 a.m. Children's Church and Worship Service
Spring Cash Sunday
3-4:00 p.m. Visitation for David Mitchell
4:00 p.m. Funeral Service for David Mitchell

Monday, May 8, 2023
11:00 a.m. Funeral Service for Jack Rishel.

Tuesday, May 9, 2023 West Branch Conference Clergy Meeting

Thursday, May 11, 2023
Noon Jersey Shore Ministerium
4:00 p.m. Pack Boxes for the Food Pantry

Friday, May 12, 2023
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Food Distribution

Sunday, May 14, 2023 6th Sunday of Easter
8:30 a.m. Sunday School
9:30 a.m. Children's Church and Worship Service

HEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE **MANSIONS**? DIDN'T THERE USED TO BE **MANSIONS**?

THAT'S AN ARCHAIC TRANSLATION.

BESIDES, IT'S NOT ABOUT THE ARCHITECTURE, IT'S ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER THROUGH JESUS.

I **GET** THAT! ALL I'M SAYING IS I WISHED THAT THE FATHER HADN'T **DOWN SIZED!**



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG



JOHN 14:1-14

© WETZSTEIN 17.05.10