



“*Love  
each other  
as I have  
loved you.*”

JOHN 15:12, NIV



**The Sixth Sunday of Easter  
May 5, 2024**

# FAITH LUTHERAN

## An Evangelical Lutheran Church

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**Ministers:** *The Disciples at Faith Lutheran Church*

**Pastor:** *The Rev. Thomas A. Cassem*

**Organist:** *Helena Bradford*

**Flutist:** *Andrea Brisbin*

## INTRODUCTION

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

## WE PREPARE

## WORSHIP PREPARATION

*When you hear the Prelude, please be seated and observe silence as we prepare ourselves for the beginning of our worship service.*

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Voices Raised to You



1 Voic - es raised to you we of - fer; tune them, God, for  
 2 All cre - a - tion joins to praise you; earth and sky your  
 3 Christ, the song of love in - car - nate, touch - ing earth with  
 4 Spir - it, flam - ing through cre - a - tion, kin - dle faith with -  
 5 How can an - y praise we of - fer mea - sure all the



songs of praise. Hearts and hands we bring in trib - ute  
 works dis - play. Art and mu - sic, gifts you lend us,  
 heav - en's grace, for your liv - ing, suf - f'ring, dy - ing,  
 in each heart. Lift our voic - es high in cho - rus;  
 thanks we owe? Take our hearts and hands and voic - es—



for your gifts through all our days. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 we re - turn to you to - day. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 for your ris - ing, hear our praise! Al - le - lu - ia!  
 through our hands your love im - part. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 gifts of love we can be - stow. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! God, cre - a - tor, source of life!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, re - decm - er, Lord of life!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Spir - it, help - er, breath of life!  
 Al - le - lu - ia! Tri - une God, to you we sing!

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923–2007

Music: SONG OF PRAISE, Carolyn Jennings, b. 1936

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Music © 1996 Carolyn Jennings

# CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*As the presiding minister begins, all may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.*

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

## GREETING

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

P The joy and peace of God be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

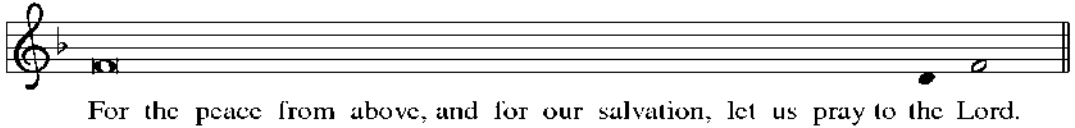
# WE PRAISE GOD

## KYRIE

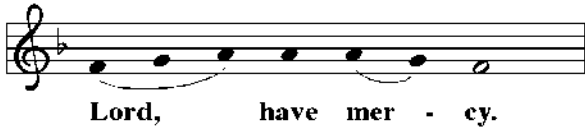
ELW pg. 138



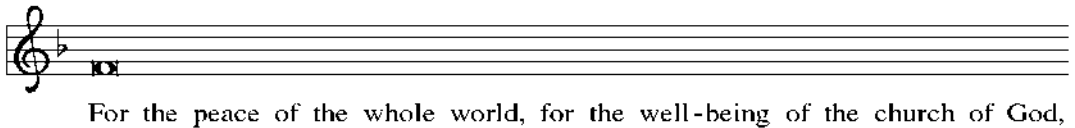
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



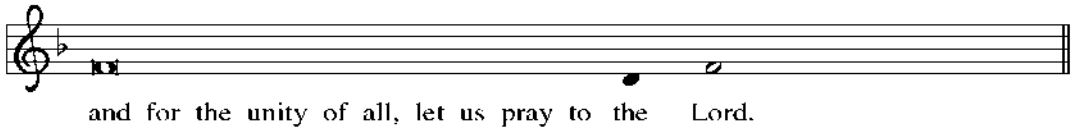
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



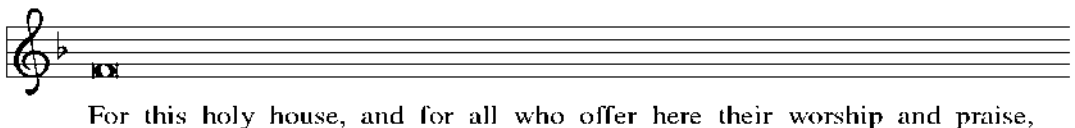
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



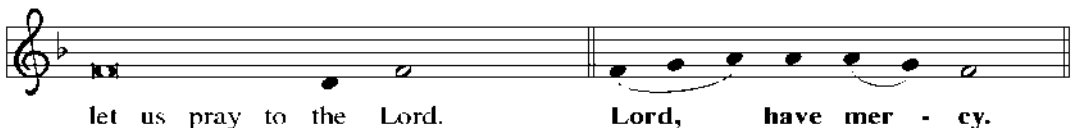
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.



*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb



who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.



*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and



strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

**Hymn continues on next page**

*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of

God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,

glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was

slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

*Final refrain*

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.

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

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray.

**C** **O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**



## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

### **First Reading: Acts 10:44-48**

*While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

<sup>44</sup>While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. <sup>45</sup>The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, <sup>46</sup>for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, <sup>47</sup>“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” <sup>48</sup>So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

**L** The Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm: Psalm 98**

*Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands. (Ps. 98:4)*

<sup>1</sup>Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things,  
whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.

<sup>2</sup>**O LORD, you have made known your victory,  
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

<sup>3</sup>You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel;  
all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

<sup>4</sup>**Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands;  
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

<sup>5</sup>Sing to the LORD with the harp,  
with the harp and the voice of song.

<sup>6</sup>**With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
shout with joy before the king, the LORD.**

<sup>7</sup>Let the sea roar, and all that fills it,  
the world and those who dwell therein.

<sup>8</sup>**Let the rivers clap their hands,  
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD,  
who comes to judge the earth.**

<sup>9</sup>The LORD will judge the world with righteousness  
and the peoples with equity.

## **Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-6**

*God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.*

<sup>1</sup>Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup>for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

<sup>6</sup>This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

**L** The Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.*

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

**Gospel: John 15:9-17***On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.***P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 15th chapter.**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] <sup>9</sup>“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup>“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

<sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

<sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup>I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.**C** **Praise to you, O Christ.****CHILDREN’S SERMON***All children are invited to come to the Altar steps for a special “Children’s message”.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

HYMN OF THE DAY

WOV 748

# Bind Us Together

*Refrain*  
F Dm Gm

Bind us to - geth - er, Lord, bind us to - geth - er with cords that

C7 F F

can - not be bro - ken. Bind us to - geth - er, Lord,

Dm Gm C F

bind us to - geth - er, Lord; bind us to - geth - er in love.

F C7 F F C7 F

1 There . . is on - ly one God.                      There . . is on - ly one King.  
2 You are the fam-'ly of God.                      You are the prom-ise di - vine.

F C7 F F C7 F *Refrain* B<sup>b</sup>/C

There . . is on - ly one Bod-y;                      that . . is why we can sing;  
You are God's cho-sen de - sire,                      you are the glo-rious new wine.

Text: Bob Gillman, b. 1946  
Music: Bob Gillman, b. 1946  
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# **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.**

\*Or, “who proceeds from the Father.” The phrase “and the Son” is a later addition to the creed.

## Prayers of Intercession

L 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.*

L Your Holy Spirit falls upon all who hear the word. Fill your church with the gifts of your Spirit and give understanding hearts to those who strengthen our commitments with our ecumenical and interreligious partners.

God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L You speak and the face of the earth is renewed. Revive your creation, that habitats and every kind of living thing might flourish. Protect endangered species and help us to care for all your creatures. God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L Your world is divided and the nations rage. Grant wisdom and vision to world leaders, that they may seek justice, peace, and the good of all. Strengthen international partnerships and cooperation. God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L Your children are in need. Comfort all those who suffer, especially those afflicted by anxiety, depression, and mental illness. Help us to be conduits of your love in our care for one another. God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L Your work is done in this place with our hands. Bless the ministries of this congregation, that we may embody your love for the world. Inspire those who plan and lead worship, council members, committee members, and volunteers. God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L We lift up to you all who are especially on our hearts silently or spoken.  
(*A Brief Silence for Petitions*) God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L Your blessed saints now rest in you. Give us thankful hearts for those who have gone before us. At the last, bring us all together around your heavenly banquet table. God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

L 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.

**C Amen.**

## SHARING OUR LORD'S PEACE

*The minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.*

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C** **And also with you.**



## OFFERING

*Offerings given for the mission of the church. Please place offerings in basket in Narthex.*



# MUSICAL OFFERING

## OFFERING PRAYER

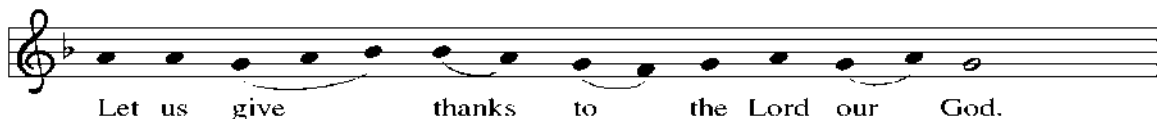
P Let us pray.

C 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.

## WE RECEIVE GOD'S GIFT

### HOLY COMMUNION

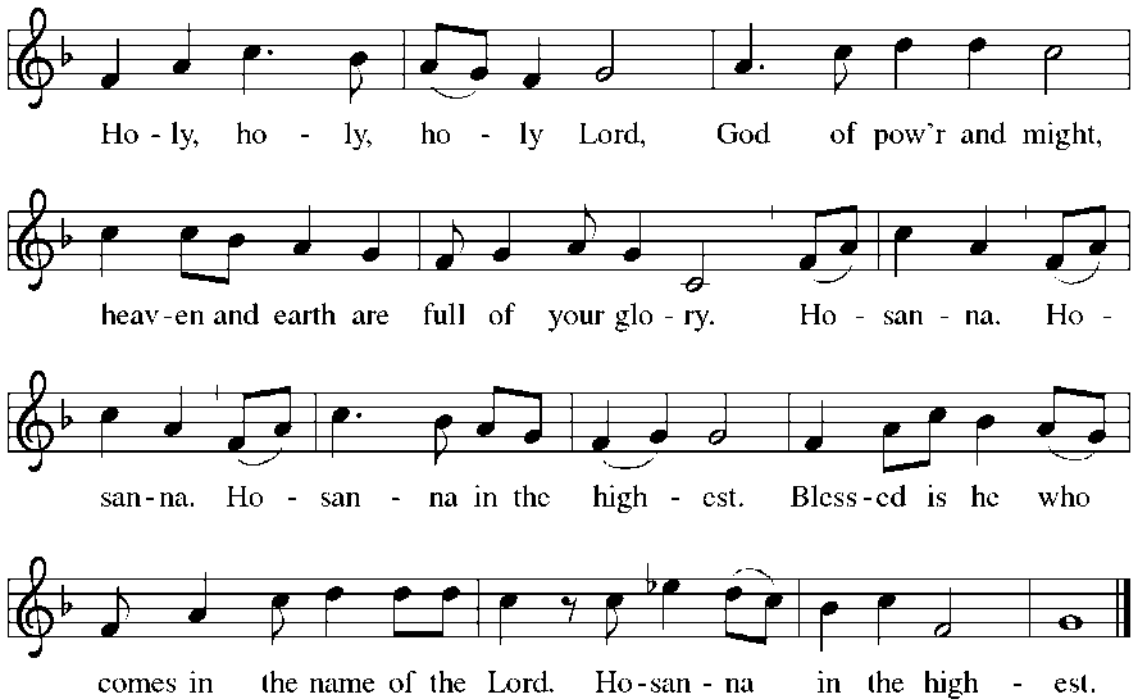
#### Great Thanksgiving



*The presiding minister continues:*

P 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; 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 LORD**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. 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.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*The Pastor leads us in the Words of Institution (Not Printed)  
Please direct your attention to the altar.*

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**P** Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

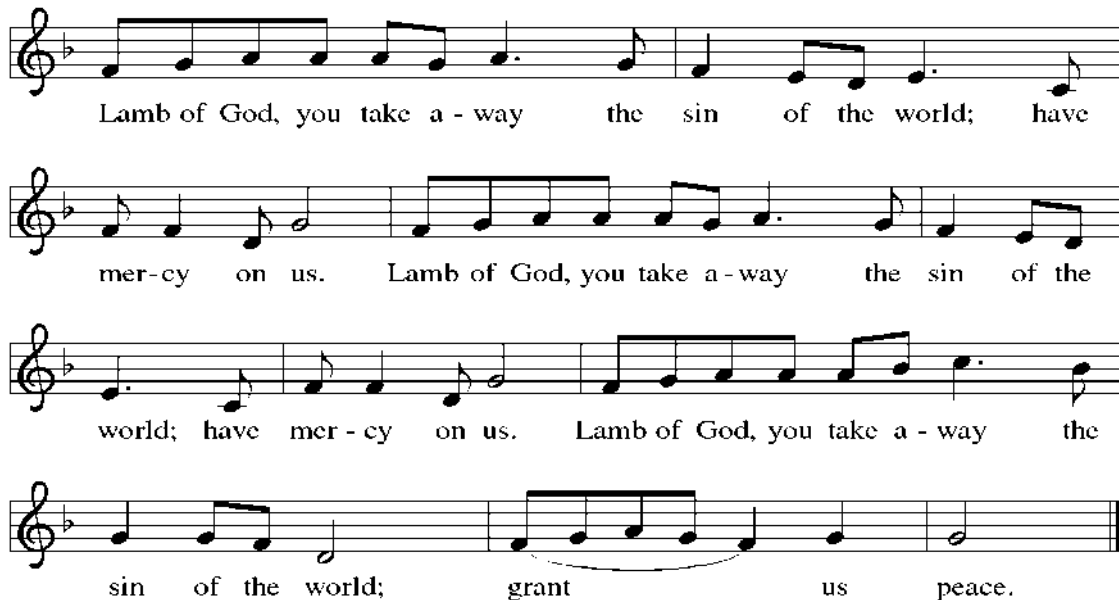
**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P The Gifts of God for the People of God.

C Thanks be to God.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

## WE RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION

### Communion Distribution

*Please be seated. All who celebrate with us the presence of the risen Christ in Holy Communion are invited to join us for this sacrament. We receive communion at the communion rail. Please remain seated until the ushers invite you to commune by pew. When you come forward, please return to your seat by the outside aisle. Children are invited for a blessing.*

*If you would like to communion brought to you in your pew, please notify an usher.*

## **Communion Hymns**

**ELW 656 “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”**

**ELW 470 “Draw Us In the Spirit’s Tether”**

## **Communion Blessing**

**P** May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.


**C Amen.**

## **Communion Prayer**

**P** Let us pray.

**C** **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.**

## **WE ARE SENT** **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**

# SENDING HYMN


## They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love

Stanzas - optional Descant  
Fm


Words and Music by  
Peter Scholtes



1. We are one in the Spir-it, We are one in the Lord, We are  
2. We will walk with each oth-er, We will walk hand in hand, We will  
3. We will work with each oth-er, We will work side by side, We will  
4. All— praise to the Fa-ther, From— whom all things come, And all



1. one in the Spir - it, We are one in the Lord, And we  
2. walk with each oth - er, We will walk hand in hand, And to -  
3. work with each oth - er, We will work side by side, And we'll  
4. praise to Christ Je - sus, His— on - ly— Son, And all



1. pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored.  
2. geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land.  
3. guard each one's dig - ni - ty and save— each one's pride.  
4. praise to the Spir - it, who— makes— us— one.



Chorus  
And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our



love, Yes, they'll know— we are Chris-tians by our love. (by our love.)

## DISMISSAL

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

P The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope + bless you now and always.

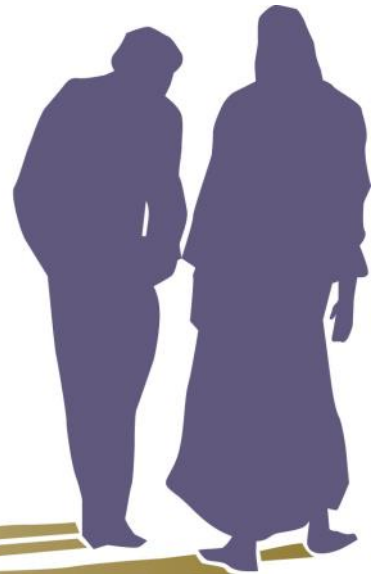
C **Amen.**

P Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

C **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

### Statement of Purpose

As servants of Christ, we are called to proclaim God's saving Word in a caring, nurturing way, to spread God's love throughout our community, and to provide opportunities for people to grow in Christ.



## The Sixth Sunday of Easter — May 5, 2024

### The Unconditional Love of Disciple-Friends

Friend requests are a common feature of Facebook and similar digital platforms. When it comes to social media, “friends” are just a click away. But there is no automatic guarantee of accountability, warmth, relationship, or true belonging in a virtual community. In stark contrast, Jesus invites the disciples to become part of a community where selfless, sacrificial, unconditional *agape* love is the core criterion. The kingdom, or “kin-dom,” of God is present wherever God’s people are affirmed as children of God and siblings in Christ. But Jesus gives his disciples an additional identity: that of “friends.”

In the new status Jesus confers on his disciples, the single most important criterion is love, including the readiness to lay down one’s life for another. Jesus has just taught this lesson by example when he washed the feet of his disciples, including Judas Iscariot. The new commandment to love one another as Jesus loved us summarizes the whole of the gospel mandate. It is not an easy commandment by any human standards, but it is possible because Jesus himself showed us the way and forgives us when we fall short. The status of “disciple-friends” is not a request for the church, but a faith mandate.

How can we live as disciple-friends of Jesus in this world? When we believe, trust, obey, and follow the word, and the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples, a real new community is born. When we learn to embrace the other—those who are marginalized and “othered”—we partner with God in enabling the image of God to blossom to its fullest.

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

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