

The Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 2, 2021
Living Faith Lutheran Church, Sechelt, BC

Preservice Music/Welcome/Announcements

GATHERING

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!** (*Repeat 3 times*)

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

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 your 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.**

Opening Hymn - Gather Us In # 532

- 1 Here in this place the new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

- 2 We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,
gather us in, the proud and the strong;

give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.

- 3 Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.
- 4 Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away—
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Greeting

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

Prayer of the Day

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

First Reading Acts 8:26-40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,

and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading 1John 4:7-21

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation *Please rise in body or spirit*

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Holy Gospel John15:1-8

[Jesus said:] ¹“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

The good news of our Lord Jesus. **Praise to you, O Christ**

Sermon

Music for Reflection

Hymn of the Day - Alleluia! Christ is Risen! #377

- 1 Alleluia! Jesus is risen!
Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb, heaven forever!
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight!

Refrain

Jesus is risen and we shall arise.
Give God the glory! Alleluia!

- 2 Walking the way, Christ in the center
telling the story to open our eyes;
breaking our bread, giving us glory:
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise. *Refrain*
- 3 Jesus the vine, we are the branches;
life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;
heaven to earth, Christ to the people,
gift of the future now flowing to me. *Refrain*
- 4 Weeping, be gone; sorrow, be silent:
death put asunder, and Easter is bright.
Cherubim sing: O grave, be open!
Clothe us in wonder, adorn us in light. *Refrain*
- 5 City of God, Easter forever,
golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
river of life, saints and archangels,

sing with creation to God the I AM! *Refrain*

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the Faithful

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depends on the earth for life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence, that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have loved us so that we can love others. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all (*especially, Bud and Brenda as they mourn the passing of Nancy, daughter and sister. Give peace to Bud and Brenda as they grieve. Gather Nancy into your timeless love. For all those that we know and love, now named aloud or in the quiet of our hearts.*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offertory Prayer

God of love, **you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Thanksgiving for the Word

Praise to you, O God, for your Word of life:
creating a wondrous universe, *Ps. 92:5*
proclaiming freedom from captivity, *Exod. 5:1*
becoming the song of your people. *Ps. 118:4*
We praise you, O God, for your Word.
We praise you, O God, for your Word.

Your Word is made flesh among us:
with Mary in the garden, you call us by name. *John 20:16*
With Thomas beholding your wounds, you call us to believe. *John 20:17*
With sheep of others folds, we are gathered by your voice. *John 10:16*
Your Word names our death and our life: *John 5:24*
a seed that falls into the earth and dies, *John 12:24*
rain and snow that come down from heaven to water the earth, *Isa. 55:10*
a vine in which we abide. *John 15:5*
Through your Word, you appoint us to bear fruit, fruit that will last. *John 15:16*
We bless you, O God, for your Word.
We bless you, O God, for your Word.

By your living Word, we are witnesses of these things. *Luke 24:48*
Breathe into us your Holy Spirit. *John 20:22*
Open our minds to understand the scriptures. *Luke 24:45*
Give us wisdom to declare what we have heard,
what we have seen with our eyes,
what we have looked at and touched with our hands
concerning the word of life. *1 John 1:1*
Fill us with strength to love, not in word or speech alone,

but in truth and action. *1 John 3:18*
With every creature in heaven and on earth
and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, *Rev. 5:13*
we join in the hymn of all creation, as
we thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word.
We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer *(to be sung to the usual melody)*
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

Benediction
May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.
The God of life, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn #389 Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing

- 1 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.
- 2 Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching ev'ry place and time.
- 3 In ev'ry insult, rift, and war,
where color, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.
- 4 Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.
- 5 Christ is alive, and comes to bring

good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

You are the body of Christ raised up for the world.

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

Postlude