

Welcome to
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Loving God, Serving Others
Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 5, 2024 - 9:30 am



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.

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church
1915 N First St Dekalb IL 60115
(815) 758-3203
Rev. Bob Hansen
Michael Graddy, Musician

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the wellspring of grace,
our Easter and our joy.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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

Most merciful God,
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.

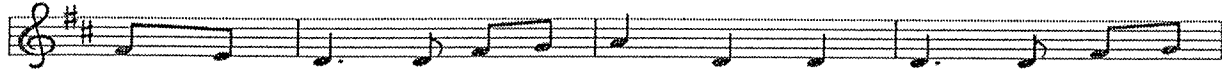
Amen.

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.

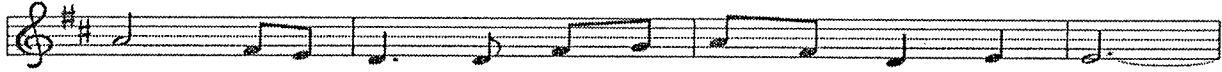
Amen

GATHERING HYMN ACS 1038

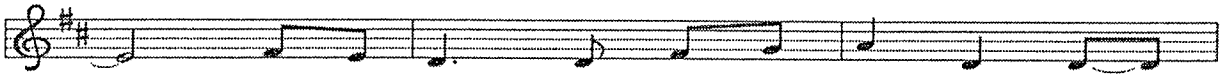
God, We Gather As Your People



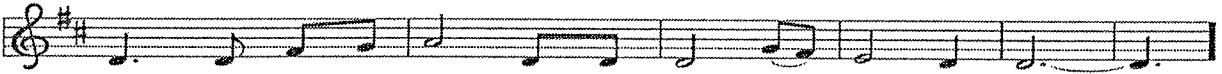
1 God, we gath - er as your peo - ple to raise our song a -
 2 Oh, we sing for all the chil - dren, that one day they be
 3 Oh, we pray for all the young lives cut short by fear and
 4 God, we're work - ing for the fu - ture when chil - dren far and



bove, and we dare to claim the prom - ise of your love.
 free; and we sing for gen - er - a - tions yet to be,
 shame, so a - fraid of who they are and whom they love.
 wide can . . . live their lives with dig - ni - ty and pride.

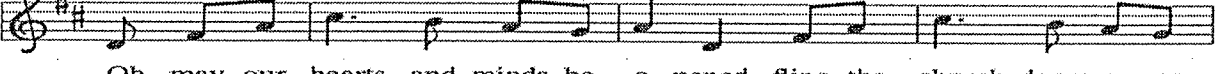


Though the day may not yet be here, we
 that they nev - er have a rea - son to
 May the mes - sage now be ban - ished that your
 As they grow in strength and stat - ure, may they

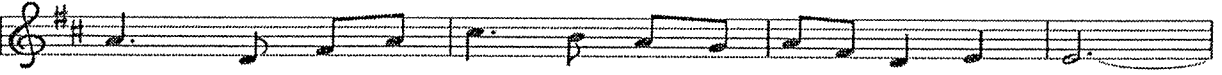


trust it soon will be, when your chil - dren will be free.
 doubt that they are blest. May they, in your love, find rest.
 love is for the few; may their faith in you re - new.
 join us hand in hand, as a - gainst all hate we stand.

Refrain



Oh, may our hearts and minds be o - pened, fling the church doors o - pen



wide. May there be room e - nough for ev - 'ry - one in - side.



For in God there is a wel - come, in God we all be -



long. May that wel - come be our song.

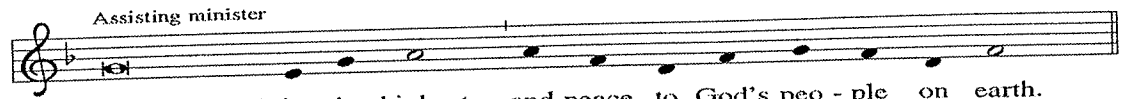
Text: David Lohman, b. 1961
 Music: WELCOME BE OUR SONG, David Lohman
 Text and music © 2007 Welcome Song Music, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Assisting minister

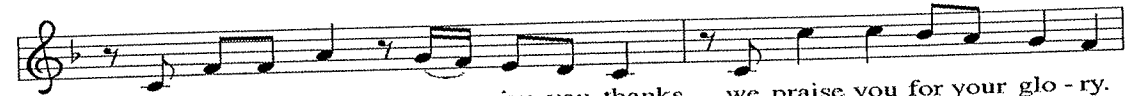


Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

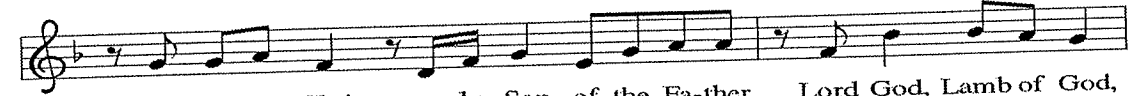
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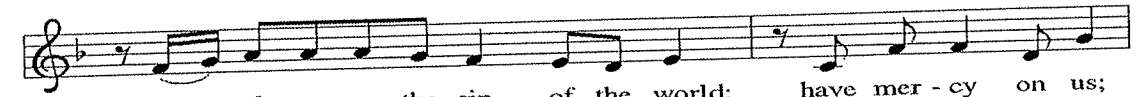
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



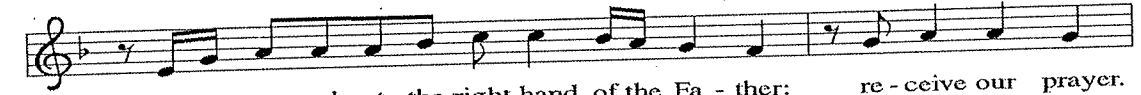
we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



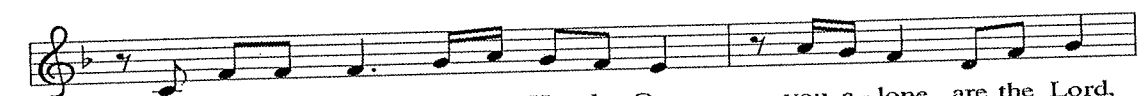
Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,




you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



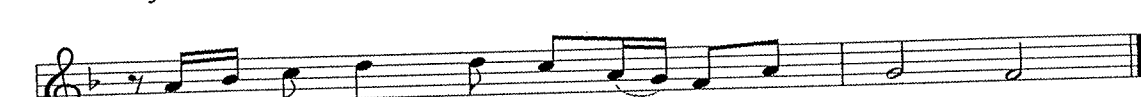
you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

WORD

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

First Reading: Acts 10:44-48

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

Psalm: Psalm 98

¹Sing a new song to the Lord, who has done marvelous things,
whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.

²**O Lord, you have made known your victory,
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

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

⁴**Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands;
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

⁵Sing to the Lord with the harp,
with the harp and the voice of song.

⁶**With trumpets and the sound of the horn
shout with joy before the king, the Lord.**

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

⁸**Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord, who comes to judge the earth.**

⁹The Lord will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with equity.

Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-6

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

⁶This 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.

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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.

The gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 15:9-17

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

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I 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. ¹⁶You 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. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”


The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE

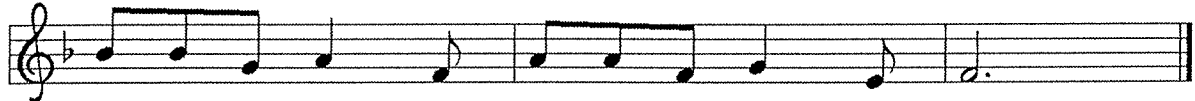
Rev. Bob Hansen

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

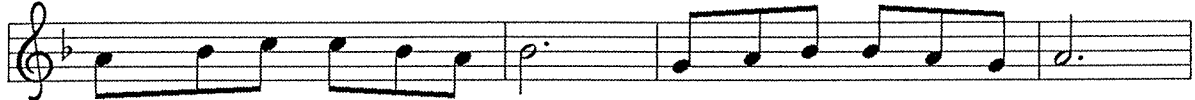
Refrain




Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show



us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.



1 Kneels at the feet of his friends, si - lent-ly wash-es their feet,
2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor, var - ied in col - or and race,
3 These are the ones we will serve, these are the ones we will love;
4 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent-ly wash-ing their feet:



Refrain

mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.
neigh-bors are near - by and far a - way.
all these are neigh - bors to us and you.
this is the way we will live with you.

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925-2000, alt.
Music: CHEREPONI, Ghanaian folk tune, adapt. Tom Colvin
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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 INTERCESSION

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.

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,
hear our prayer.

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,
hear our prayer.

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,
hear our prayer.

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,
hear our prayer.

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,
hear our prayer.

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,
hear our prayer.

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.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING PRAYER

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.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise.....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



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

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's Passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

O God of resurrection and new life:

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Bless this feast.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.

Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.

Breathe new life into us.

Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

With your holy ones of all time and place, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

CONSECRATION

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;
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

The risen Christ is made known to us
in the breaking of the bread.
Come and eat at God's table.

The Week Ahead

Monday-5/6	7:15-Food Truck Delivery 12:30—Cut-Ups
Tuesday-5/7	3-5—Feed My Sheep Food Pantry
Wednesday-5/8	10:30-Pantry Pick-up
Thursday-5/9	8:30—Pantry Pick Up 9:30-11:30 -Feed My Sheep Food Pantry 10:30 -Martha's Sisters (zoom)
Saturday, 5/11	8:30/9:30—Pantry Pick up
Sunday, 5/12	9:30 am-Worship

*Our offering plate is located at the rear of the sanctuary.
We give thanks to God for all of our gifts!*

Pastor Schedule

May

12	Pastor Sharon Rogers
19	Pastor Bob Hansen
26	Pastor Sharon Rogers

Bethlehem's Church Council Communications

- ◆ Sunday Worship Musician is Michael Graddy.
- ◆ Thank you to all our Volunteers who are offering to share their time and talent.
- ◆ Church Office Hours are Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 9:00am to 2:00pm.
- ◆ Serving Bethlehem's Office needs is Barb Luchsinger under the supervision of Sue Ann Brown.
- ◆ Sue Ann Brown is our Finance Administrator under the supervision of Aaron Bloyd.
- ◆ Feed My Sheep Pantry Hours are Tuesday 3:00pm to 5:00pm & Thursday 9:30am to 11:00am.
- ◆ Serving Bethlehem's Food Pantry needs is Karen Maciejewski under the supervision of SueAnn Brown.
- ◆ Club 55 Senior Services Hours are Monday through Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm.
- ◆ Serving Club 55 is Kate Sullivan, Coordinator, and Bethlehem's partnership liaison is SueAnn Brown.
- ◆ Facility maintenance, key control or other building concerns are managed by Church Council.
- ◆ Church Council Members are Aaron Bloyd, Tammie Farley, Dawn George, Bill Perian, and Andy Velez.
- ◆ Questions?? Please call the Church Office at 815-758-3203 to leave a message for a Council Member.