

# ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD  
LITTLETON, COLORADO

*January 23 and 24, 2021*

5 p.m. Saturday, 8 a.m. Sunday



## THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY/SANCTITY OF LIFE SUNDAY

### The God Who Opens Hearts

**AS WE GATHER** (*based on Ephesians 1:15-23*)

In the Third Article to the Apostles' Creed, about the work of the Holy Spirit, Luther explains, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or effort believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or [even] come to Him." Our total inability to have faith and trust in God without both the initial and ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to "open the eyes of our hearts" and keep them open is not only a gift of grace but is also a mighty miracle that is wrought by God's raw Power. The power exerted in us is so great Paul says it's the same power God used to raise Jesus Christ from death and the grave. "That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead"! Awesome! That's Christ's own resurrection power at work in us! We have literally been raised from death to life when we believe and it takes nothing less than resurrection power to keep us in faith, knowing "the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance." Just as Christ was physically DEAD, so we were DEAD in sin and unbelief. Christ has raised us from the DEAD by "opening the eyes of our hearts."

✂ PREPARATION ✂

Prelude

“Alleluia! Jesus is Risen”

David Cherwien

Pastoral Greeting

Opening Hymn

“Alleluia! Jesus is Risen”  
Verses 1-3

LSB 474



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Je - sus is ris - en! Trum - pets re -  
2 Walk - ing the way, Christ in the cen - ter Tell - ing the  
3 Je - sus the vine, We are the branch - es; Life in the



sound - ing in glo - ri - ous light! Splen - dor, the Lamb, Heav - en for -  
sto - ry to o - pen our eyes; Break - ing our bread, Giv - ing us  
Spir - it the fruit of the tree; Heav - en to earth, Christ to the



ev - er! Oh, what a mir - a - cle God has in sight!  
glo - ry: Je - sus our bless - ing, our con - stant sur - prise.  
peo - ple, Gift of the fu - ture now flow - ing to me.



Je - sus is ris - en and we shall a - rise:



Give God the glo - ry! Al - le - lu - ia!

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Invocation

Confession

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.

People: **Dear Lord, we confess that we grossly underestimate the amount of God's power at work in us when You bring us to faith and keep us in faith. In arrogance, we imagine we have somehow made a wise decision in trusting you. We foolishly think it is up to us to make a wise choice in continuing to trust in You. Forgive us for not giving You every ounce of credit! Open the eyes of our hearts,**

**Lord! Enlighten us to know "the hope to which You have called us"! Help us to see that nothing less than Your resurrection power is at work in us -- bringing us to faith and keeping us in faith. Give us humility to give you all the credit not only for our salvation, but also for believing in our salvation. And forgive us ALL our sins, we forgive those who sin against us. Amen.**

## **Absolution**

**✘ WORD ✘**

### **Spoken Kyrie (Divine Service, Setting One)**

**Pastor:** In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** 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.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**People:** **Amen.**

### **Epistle: Ephesians 1:15-23**

(God opens the "eyes of your hearts" to know "the hope to which He has called you.")

**For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the LORD Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our LORD Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that is can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.**

**Pastor:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

**Holy Gospel: Mark 1:14-20**

(Jesus invites His followers to become fishers of men.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to mark, the 1st Chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

**After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"**

**As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him.**

**When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.**

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**



Hymn of the Day "Open the Eyes of My Heart/Holy, Holy, Holy" BOB 180 & LSB 507  
Verses 1, 4

Open the eyes \_\_\_ of my heart, \_\_\_ Lord, Open the eyes \_\_\_ of my heart; \_\_\_ I want to  
see You, \_\_\_ I want to see You. \_\_\_ To see You  
high and lift - ed up, \_\_\_ shin-ing in the light of Your glo - ry  
Pour out \_\_\_ Your pow'r and love \_\_\_ as we sing, "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly." \_\_\_  
"Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly." \_\_\_ "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly." \_\_\_  
"Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly." \_\_\_ I want to see You. \_\_\_  
1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!  
4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!  
Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to Thee;  
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!  
God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!  
God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

**Sermon** "The God Who Opens Hearts"

Pastor John Larson  
TEXT: Ephesians 1:15-23

### **The Third Article of the Apostle's Creed**

**Pastor:** Today we confess the third article of the Apostle's Creed with Explanation which gives God all the credit for "opening the eyes of our heart."

**People:** **I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Pastor:** What does this mean?

**People:** **I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.**

**In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.**

**In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.**

**On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.**

**This is most certainly true.**

### **Prayer of the Church**

**Pastor:** Lord, in your mercy...

**People:** **Hear our prayer.**

**Offering** *Offerings will be collected at the back, in the Narthex.*

### **✠ HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION ✠**

*The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.*

### **✠ SACRAMENT ✠**

### **Preface (Divine Service, Setting One)**

**Pastor:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

**Pastor:** Lift up your hearts.

**People:** We lift them to the Lord.

**Pastor:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People:** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

## Words of Institution

### Lord's Prayer

**People:** 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.

## DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

"Blessed Jesus, at Your Word "

LSB 904

### Verses 1-3



1 Bless - ed Je - sus, at Your Word We are gath - ered  
2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight Lie in deep - est  
3 Gra - cious Sav - ior, good and kind, Light of Light, from



all to hear You. Let our hearts and souls be stirred  
dark - ness shroud - ed Till Your Spir - it breaks our night  
God pro - ceed - ing, O - pen now our heart and mind;



Now to seek and love and fear You, By Your teach - ings,  
With the beams of truth un - cloud - ed. You a - lone to  
Help us by Your Spir - it's plead - ing. Hear the cry Your



sweet and ho - ly, Drawn from earth to love You sole - ly.  
God can win us; You must work all good with - in us.  
Church now rais - es; Hear and bless our prayers and prais - es.

"Blessed Jesus, at Your Word " (Organ)

Paul Manz

## General Communion Blessing

## Benediction (Divine Service, Setting One)

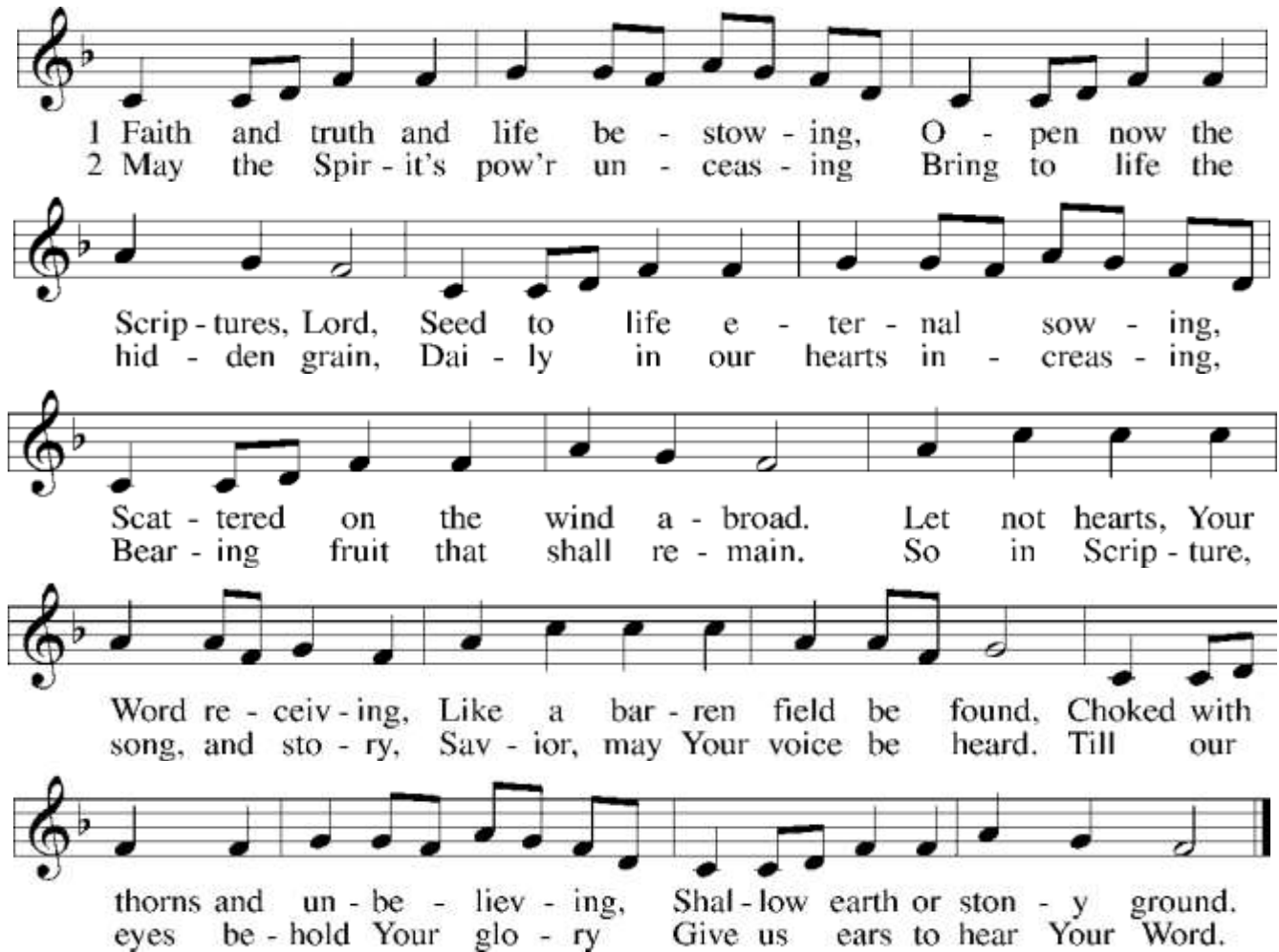
Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you  
and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

## Closing Hymn "Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing"

LSB 584



1 Faith and truth and life be - stow - ing, O - pen now the  
2 May the Spir - it's pow'r un - ceas - ing Bring to life the

Scrip - tures, Lord, Seed to life e - ter - nal sow - ing,  
hid - den grain, Dai - ly in our hearts in - creas - ing,

Scat - tered on the wind a - broad. Let not hearts, Your  
Bear - ing fruit that shall re - main. So in Scrip - ture,

Word re - ceiv - ing, Like a bar - ren field be found, Choked with  
song, and sto - ry, Sav - ior, may Your voice be heard. Till our

thorns and un - be - liev - ing, Shal - low earth or ston - y ground.  
eyes be - hold Your glo - ry Give us ears to hear Your Word.

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## Congregational Concerns

### Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude** "Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing"  
(and Row by Row Dismissal)

Edwin T. Childs

## Serving in Worship

**OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT**  
**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES**

Pastor John Larson  
Michael Zehnder