

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

May 14, 2023

10:30 a.m. Sunday



SIXTH SUNDAY IN EASTER

IDENTITY: GOD'S AND YOURS

AS WE GATHER

Who am I? Who are you? Who is God? These are questions surrounding identity—questions we and others wrestle with on and off throughout our lives as we live through life's chapters that may include being a child, sibling, spouse, parent, employee, employer, hobbyist, or retiree, with the spiritual journey that accompanies them. These identity questions also have added meaning today as the society we live in especially wrestles with one's identity. When God baptizes us into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we receive our most important identity as a baptized child of God.

✘ PREPARATION ✘

Gathering Song

BETTER IS ONE DAY

Redman

How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty.
For my soul longs and even faints for You.
For here my heart is satisfied within Your presence.
I sing beneath the shadow of Your wings.

**CHORUS: Better is one day in Your courts, better is one day in Your house,
Better is one day in Your courts than thousands elsewhere.
Better is one day in Your courts, better is one day in Your house,
Better is one day in Your courts than thousands elsewhere,
Than thousands elsewhere.**

One thing I ask and I would seek: To see Your beauty,
to find You in the place Your glory dwells.
One thing I ask and I would seek: To see Your beauty,
to find You in the place Your glory dwells. **CHORUS**

My heart and flesh cry out for You, the Living God.
Your Spirit's water to my soul.
I've tasted, and I've seen. Come once again to me.
I will draw near to You. I will draw near to You, to You. **CHORUS**

Pastoral Greeting

Opening Song

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

Tomlin—Reeves—Cash

The splendor of the King, clothed in majesty;
Let all the earth rejoice, all the earth rejoice.
He wraps Himself in light, and darkness tries to hide,
And trembles at His voice, and trembles at His voice.

**CHORUS: How great is our God! Sing with me: How great is our God!
And all will see how great, how great is our God!**

And age to age He stands, and time is in His hands;
Beginning and the End, Beginning and the End.
The Godhead, three in one, Father, Spirit, Son,
The Lion and the Lamb, the Lion and the Lamb. **CHORUS**

Invocation

OPENING SENTENCES

John 14:19b; Acts 17:28; Romans 6:3–4

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor: Jesus said, "Because I live, you also will live."
People: In Him we live and move and have our being.

Pastor: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

People: **We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.**

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

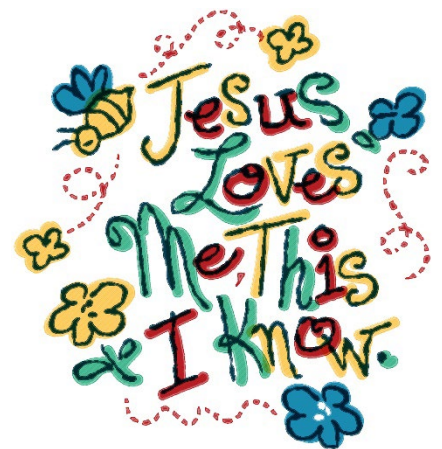
CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father, seeking His forgiveness through our risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

People: **Heavenly Father, creator of all that was, is, and will ever be, we confess to You that we fall short of the calling that we have received from You, as Your dearly loved children. We have struggled to share the reason for the hope we have in You. We have not always responded to others with gentleness and respect. We have failed to live and share the love we have first received from You. Forgive our sins, for Jesus' sake, and lead us to live lives that reflect Your indwelling presence.**

Pastor: Our God hears our prayers and forgives our sins because of Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection. At the command of Christ and through the power of the cross and the empty tomb, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Go in peace!

People: **Alleluia! Amen.**



☩ WORD ☩

First Reading: Acts 17:16-31

(Paul witnesses about the one true God.)

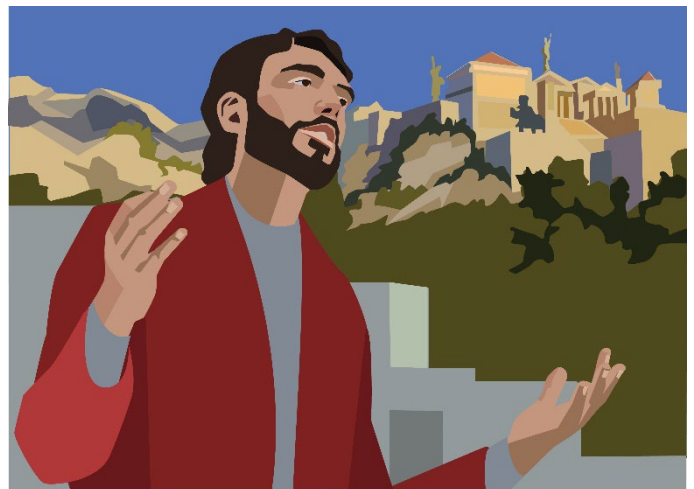
While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they

mean." (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. `For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, `We are his offspring.'

"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."



Paul Preaches in Athens

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Epistle: 1 Peter 3:13-22

(Be prepared to share your faith with gentleness and respect.)

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while

the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise for the Holy Gospel.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St.
John, the 14th chapter.

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

Holy Gospel: John 14:15-21

(Jesus is with us, now and forever.)



"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever -- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

Children's Message

Jenna Lawrenz

Song of the Day WHO YOU SAY I AM

Hillsongs

Who am I that the highest King Would welcome me?
I was lost but He brought me in Oh His love for me
Oh His love for me

**CHORUS: Who the Son sets free
Oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God Yes I am**

Free at last, He has ransomed me His grace runs deep
While I was a slave to sin Jesus died for me
Yes He died for me **CHORUS**

In my Father's house There's a place for me

I'm a child of God Yes I am
I am chosen Not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me Not against me
I am who You say I am

I am chosen Not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me Not against me
I am who You say I am

I am who You say I am **CHORUS**

In my Father's house There's a place for me
I'm a child of God Yes I am

Sermon "Always Right"

Pastor John Larson
Text: 1 Peter 3:13-22

Apostle's Creed

(found in the back of the hymnal)

Prayer of the Church

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy ...

People: Hear our prayer.

Sharing of the Peace

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

You may now greet one another in the name of the Lord using...Peace be with you!

Offering *(collected in the back)*

✠ 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 *Matthew 6:9-13*

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

Song **JESUS MESSIAH**

Tomlin

He became sin, who knew no sin;
that we might become His righteousness;
He humbled Himself, and carried the cross.
Love so amazing, love so amazing.

**CHORUS: Jesus, Messiah; Name above all names;
Blessed Redeemer; Emmanuel.
The Rescue for sinners, the ransom from heaven;
Jesus, Messiah, Lord of all.**

His body, the bread; His blood, the wine;
Broken and poured out, all for love.
The whole earth trembled, and the veil was torn.
Love so amazing, love so amazing. **CHORUS**

All our hope is in You, all our hope is in You;
All the glory to You, God, the light of the world. **CHORUS**

Jesus, Messiah, Lord of all. The Lord of all! The Lord of all.

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 Song

MY LIGHTHOUSE

Rend Collective

In my wrestling and in my doubts; In my failures You won't walk out
Your great love will lead me through; You are the peace in my troubled sea (whoa-oh),
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

In the silence, You won't let go; In the questions, Your truth will hold
Your great love will lead us through; You are the peace in my troubled sea (whoa-oh),
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

My lighthouse, my lighthouse; Shining in the darkness. I will follow You, oh,
My lighthouse, my lighthouse; I will trust the promise
You will carry us safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh); Safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh);
Safe to shore (oh-oh-oh-oh-oh); Safe to shore.

I won't fear what tomorrow brings; With each morning I'll rise and sing
My God's love will lead me through; You are the peace in my troubled sea (whoa-oh),
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

Congregational Concerns

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**



OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT
MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP
ORGANIST / PIANIST
CHOIR DIRECTOR
CHOIR ACCOMPANIST
FLAUTIST
CONTEMPORARY PRAISE TEAM
ELDERS 4 p.m. Arvin Michel; 8 a.m. John Klepetka; 10:30 a.m. Michael Lawrenz
LECTORS 4 p.m. Mike Price; 8 a.m. Norm Finrock; 10:30 a.m. Jude Donovan
COMMUNION SERVER
ALTAR GUILD

Pastor John Larson
Michael Zehnder
Michael Zehnder
Stephanie Roettjer
Diana Gaide
Ann Westra
Youth Praise Team
4:00 p.m. Mike Price; 10:30 a.m. Jude Donovan
Cathy Utecht, Donna Nielsen, Lynne Nelson