

**AS WE GATHER:** The Father has loved the Son, and the Son has loved all people, making a home for us with Him in the Father’s love. Dwelling in the Father’s love by faith in Jesus, we keep His commandments. As we come to realize that we are loved by God, we discover that keeping His commandments is not burdensome, but a joy. Jesus’ word of promise fills us with joy. He has chosen us to be His fruit-bearing friends who love people the way He does. Alleluia!

✠ CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTIO ✠

**Greeting**

**P** The Lord be with you. **C** And also with you.

**Hymn of Invocation** ..... “Thanks To Thee, O Christ, Victorious” #548 (FR)

**Invocation, Confession of Sins and Absolution**<sup>②</sup> ..... Page 151

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

**Introit and Gloria Patri**<sup>③</sup> *Psalm 66:1–2, 8–9, 20; antiphon: Ps. 66:16*



**P** Come and hear, all you who | fear God,\*  
and I will tell what he has done | for my soul.

**C** Shout for joy to God, | all the earth;\*  
sing the glory of his name; give to him | glorious praise!

**P** Bless our God, O | peoples;\*  
let the sound of his | praise be heard,

**C** who has kept our soul among the | living\*  
and has not let our | feet slip.

**P** Blessèd | be God,\*  
because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast | love from me!

**All** Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen. ➔

① “Rogate” is the traditional name for the Sixth Sunday of Easter. It is from the original Latin Gospel reading and means “Ask ye.”

② The Scripture Teaches (*St. John 20:23*): We should receive the Pastor’s absolution as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. “It is not the voice or word of the man who speaks it, but it is the Word of God, who forgives sin, for it is spoken in God’s stead and by God’s command” (Augsburg Confession XXV 3).

③ “Introit” is pronounced “in-troh-it” & Latin for “he enters.” Here the Pastor enters the Chancel with the reading/chanting of these Psalm/Scripture verses. “Gloria Patri” is Latin for “Glory be to the Father” which is acclamation of praise before the final antiphon (a refrain that begins and concludes the Introit).

**P** Come and hear, all you who | fear God,\*  
and I will tell what he has done | for my soul.

**Kyrie**<sup>①</sup> ~ *Lord, have mercy* .....Pages 152-153

**Hymn of Praise** ~ *This is the Feast*.....Page 155

**Salutation and Collect of the Day**<sup>②</sup> .....Page 156

**P** [♪] O God, the giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** [♪] **Amen.**

**First Reading** .....**Acts 10:34–48**

*[Peter preaches the Gospel of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is poured out on Gentile hearers.]*

So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord. **C** **Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual**<sup>③</sup> and Verse *adapt. from St. Matthew 28:7; Heb. 2:7; Ps. 8:6; Rom. 6:9; St. John 16:33b*

**P** Christ has risen from the dead.

**C** **[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor,**

**P** He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;

**C** **he has put all things under his feet.**

**P** We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again;

**C** **death no longer has dominion over him.**



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① “**Kyrie**” is pronounced ‘keer-ee-ay’ – shortened from the Greek phrase *Kyrie Eleison* (“*Lord, have mercy*”) and reminds us of pleas for mercy like the one recorded in *Matthew 15:22*

② The “**Collect**” is a short prayer which ‘collects’ or summarizes the thoughts of the day. The Collects for every Sunday come to us from the rich treasury of the church’s heritage.

③ “**Gradual**” comes from the Latin “*gradus*” meaning ‘step’. In the ancient church these Psalm & Scripture verses were chanted from the steps of the Altar. It is a response to the First Lesson and a bridge to the Second Lesson.

- P** In the world you will have tribulation.
- C** **But take heart; I have overcome the world.**

**Epistle**..... **1 John 5:1–8**  
*[We are born of God and overcome the world through faith in Jesus.]*

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

- P** This is the Word of the Lord. **C** **Thanks be to God.**

**Alleluia and Verse** ~ *Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?* .....Page 156

**Gospel Acclamations**.....Page 157

**Holy + Gospel**..... **St. John 15:9–17**  
*[Loving one another, we abide in God’s love and experience the fullness of joy.]*

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 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. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

[Jesus said:] “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord. **C** (♪) **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Children’s Message**

**Hymn of the Day** ..... “Lord, ‘Tis Not That I Did Choose Thee” #573 (G)

**Sermon** ..... “Chosen in Love, for Love” St. John 15:9-17

1. loved from \_\_\_\_\_ ,
2. now the \_\_\_\_\_ ,
3. and \_\_\_\_\_ to love

**Nicene Creed** .....Page 158

**Prayer of the Church**

- P** Let us pray to the Lord. **C** **Lord, have mercy.** or **P** Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **Hear our prayer.**

**Offering and Attendance Registration**

## A Matter of Importance:

**Please Note:** If you are visiting and have not already done so, please read Communion Information in the bulletin.

## Your Preparation for the Sacrament

*“Father, I believe that You sent Your Son, Jesus, as my Savior from sin. I repent of my sins and ask Your forgiveness. I believe the Risen Christ is really present in this Sacrament and that with the bread and wine I receive His True Body and Blood. In accordance with the pure doctrine taught at this altar, I dedicate myself anew to You regular worship, study of Your Word, faithful witness and loving service. With the help of Your Holy Spirit, make this my conviction and intention. Amen.”*

*Other prayers may be found on the inside front cover of the Hymnal, “Lutheran Service Book.”*

**Offertory**<sup>①</sup> ~ *What Shall I Render to the Lord* .....Pages 159-160

## ✠ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT ✠

**Preface** .....Page 160

**Sanctus**<sup>②</sup> ~ *Holy, Holy, Holy and Prayer of Thanksgiving* .....Page 161

**Lord’s Prayer and The Words of our Lord**<sup>③</sup> .....Page 162

**Pax Domini** ~ *The Peace of the Lord and Agnus Dei*<sup>④</sup> ~ *Lamb of God*.....Page 163

## The Distribution

*Communicants are ushered forward by rows. **Please receive the host upon an open palm.** The Chalice (or common cup) is available at every table. The Duty Elder will offer the individual cups and is followed by the Pastor who will offer the Chalice. **Please tip the base of the chalice yourself** to avoid spillage. The individual cups in the center ring contain de-alcoholized wine for those who have so requested.*

**Distribution Hymns** ..... “The Gifts Christ Freely Gives” #602 (E)  
“What A Friend We Have in Jesus” #770 (G)  
“Come, My Soul, with Every Care” #779 (G)

**Post-Communion Cantic**<sup>⑤</sup> ~ *Thank the Lord*.....Pages 164-165

**Post Communion Collect and Benediction** .....Page 166

**Hymn of Departure**..... “Christ the Eternal Lord” #829 (G)

## Silent Prayer

## Announcements and Sending:

**P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **G** Thanks be to God!

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① The “**Offertory**” is a Scripture based hymn which is sung as we prepare to bring our tithes and offerings to God. In doing so we are reminded that the offering of monetary offerings is a public testimony that we have first “*given [ourselves] to the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 8:5)

② “**Sanctus**” is Latin for “*Holy*.” This Hymn is based on *Isaiah 6:3* & *St. Matthew 21:9*

③ These are the very Words of Christ which make the elements of bread and wine a sacrament. Our Confessions state “When the Word is joined to the external element, it becomes a sacrament” (Large Catechism, v.10).

④ “**Agnus Dei**” (pronounced ‘ahn-yoos day-ee’) is Latin for “Lamb of God”

⑤ This hymn of Thanksgiving is based on *1 Chronicles 16:8-10* and expresses our thanks to God who sends us forth into the world with rejoicing.

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:** *Steadfast in the Word, Bethlehem Lutheran Church shares Christ and serves people with friendship in His love in all of God's world.*

**WELCOME TO BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH!** We extend a most joyous welcome to all who are worshipping today. We are confident the Lord will reveal Himself to you through this Divine Service so that you may know the joy of His presence in your life. To our guests: If you have any questions about the Christian faith or about Lutheran worship and practice, please ask the Pastor, one of our Elders, or any of our members. God bless you in Christ Jesus!



**COMMUNION INFORMATION:** Bethlehem is an orthodox, confessional Lutheran congregation. Following the teaching of God's Word, we believe that the Lord's Supper is more than a mere symbol, but that in the Lord's Supper we receive the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ with the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink. Through this eating and drinking, we receive the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. The Apostle Paul notes the importance of those who come to the Lord's Supper coming in a worthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:25-19), that is, coming in an attitude of repentance, recognizing the bread and wine as the true body and blood of the Lord Jesus, and firmly believing Christ and his words that this is given for the forgiveness of sins. We also recognize that the Lord's Supper is also an outward sign of doctrinal unity. The Apostle Paul notes the importance of unity within the body of believers who receive this sacrament (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). For these reasons and since Christian Churches vary widely in their teachings about the Lord's Supper, we ask that **all guests please speak to the Pastor prior to approaching the Altar.** All communicants are asked to sign the Registration sheet in the Narthex.

**WORSHIP NOTES:** The Chasuble is a Eucharistic Vestment which the Pastor puts on before preparing the Sacramental vessels. It is a visual mark indicating that in the transition from the Service of the Word to the Service of the Sacrament something extraordinary is about to take place. The use of such a vestment is in keeping with both Lutheran tradition and practice; as our Lutheran Confessions state (*Ap XXIV*).

**THE PASCHAL CANDLE** symbolizes the presence of the risen Christ among us. On Easter and the Sundays following it was placed by the Altar and was lighted each week as a reminder that Christ is our Resurrection Light that shatters the darkness of sin and death. Now, the Sunday after the Ascension, the candle has been extinguished and is moved back to the baptismal font for use at baptisms and at funerals. The Paschal candle is decorated with the following symbols: Alpha and Omega (Christ is unchangeable, the beginning and end of all things); and Five nails (the wounds of Christ bring us healing).

**THE EASTER CROSS** in the chancel is made from Christmas tree trunks. It is now draped in white, the color for Christ, and adorned with butterflies, a symbol of the resurrection. It is a reminder that the Savior whose birth we celebrated at Christmas was born to suffer and die on the cross and then rise to life to accomplish our redemption from sin and death.

**AS WE COME INTO THE SANCTUARY** - let us be sensitive to the needs of those who use the quiet and reverence of the Prelude as a time to prepare their hearts and minds for the Divine Service. **ALSO:** Out of respect for God's House and courtesy for other worshippers, please turn off all cell phones. Please also encourage one another to show respect to God, His Word, our fellow-worshippers, and our Pastor by limiting movement during Scripture Readings, Sermon & prayers. Thank you.

**THE CHANCEL FLOWERS** this Sunday are given to the Glory of God by Paul and Pat Stephenson and in celebration of Paul's birthday and their wedding anniversary!

**CHURCH PICNIC:** Plan to stay after Divine Service today for a picnic. Hamburgers/hotdogs will be provided. There will be games to play and fun fellowship with your church family.

**TODAY'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON** is the account of "Jacob and Esau". It is a story of competition and bad feelings between brothers, parental favoritism, and family squabbling. Amidst this chaos, God acted with grace toward all of them—and to us. Parents might ask, "How do these sins afflict every family? Why is forgiveness important in families?"

**SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE STUDY: "Leviticus: Life in the Blood"** -- Holiness. What is it? Leviticus shows how God goes to great lengths not only in defining true holiness, but also in sharing His holiness with his redeemed and ransomed people.

**MIDWEEK ACTIVITIES** include a pot luck supper at 6:00 PM, and Bible classes at 7:00 PM. The Adults will begin a new study entitled: **"The Good the Bad, & The Ugly"** ... a study of the Joseph in the Old Testament Book of Genesis. Join us for this informative study. All members and friends of **Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church** are invited to attend.

**NEWSLETTER** –The **MAY** edition of *The Bethlehem Star* newsletter is in your mailbox in the narthex. Make sure you have picked up your copy.

**LARRY AND JULIE SCHOPPE:** If you would like to send an encouraging note: Megan Schoppe Perez 104 Howard Lane, Liberty Hill, TX 78642.

**THANK YOU** to all who purchased Yankee Candle items for the Higher Things youth fund raiser!

**PORTALS OF PRAYER** devotion booklets for April through June are on the shelf in the narthex. Make sure you have one and pick up an extra copy for a friend!

**"RENT A YOUTH":** The youth are once again offering their services. This project provides an opportunity for middle and high school students, (grades 6 through 12), to assist older adults in completing routine light-duty household chores AND to foster fellowship between older adults and the youth in our church. If you have any questions, please see Yanneth Harris.

**GREETING CARDS:** Check out the Mother's Day, Father's Day and Graduation cards on the card rack, along with birthday, get well, sympathy and others for a 50 cent donation to mites.

**A SCHOLARSHIP FUND** has been established for Aaron Jackson's college expenses. Aaron is attending Concordia University/Seward, NE to prepare for full-time Church Work as a Minister of Music. If you would like to contribute, please indicate on your check and place it in the offering plate. You can also send Aaron an encouraging note at: Concordia University, Aaron Jackson, 800 North Columbia Ave., Seward, NE 68434-1500.

**ABOUT THE COVER:** Jesus commands that we love one another just as He has and still loves us. Jesus loves us unconditionally, sacrificially. He loves us not because He expects anything from us, but simply for the sake of God's love for His creation. We must struggle as humans to love that deeply, but by God's grace, through Christ, we are enabled to truly love our neighbor.

<b>OUR STEWARDSHIP LAST WEEK</b>			
<b>OFFERINGS</b>		<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	
General Offering	\$3486.00	Sunday School	34
[ <u>Needed per week</u> ]:	\$2,668.00]	Divine Service	70
Building Fund	\$.00	Communion	62
[ <u>Needed per week</u> ]:	\$350.00]	Mid-Week (5/2)	17

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK:** Acts 1:12-26; 1 John 5:9-15; St. John 17:11b-19.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY THIS WEEK

<b>Sunday (05/06)</b>		<b>Easter 6 (Rogate)</b>	
	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Sunday School &amp; Bible Classes</b>	
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Divine Service (Setting 1) / Holy Communion</b>	
	Acolyte/Crucifer:	Kristen Harris	
	Organist:	Mary Bowden	
	Altar Guild:	Lori Fortner & Lana Bowden	
	Duty Elder:	Albert Harris	
	After Church:	Church Picnic	
<b>Tuesday (05/08)</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>	<b>Board of Elders</b>	
	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Church Council</b>	
<b>Wednesday (05/09)</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Potluck Supper</b>	
	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Bible Classes</b>	
<b>Sunday (05/13)</b>		<b>Easter 7 (Exaudi)</b>	
		<b>Mother's Day</b>	
	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Sunday School &amp; Bible Classes</b>	
	<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Divine Worship (Prayer and Preaching)</b>	
	Acolyte:	Sara Kimbrough	
	Pianist:	Sylvia Frenzel	
	Altar Guild:	Lori Fortner & Lana Bowden	
	Duty Elder:	Albert Harris	

**IN THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:**

**National Leadership and Military:** including members Kyle Lawson and Kyle Shepherd, as well as Robert Garcia [Juanita's son], and Jeremy Stafford [Marcy Hogan's nephew]

**Health needs - Members:** Albert Harris, George Nelson; Julie Schoppe (4/22)

**Homebound - Members:** Dorothy Jackson, Martha Kaudelka, Ardelle Samford, Johnnie Weaver

**Comfort: family and friends of Lori Fortner's aunt**

**Celebrating this week: Birthdays:** Hailee Sheridan ... **Baptismal Birthdays:** Paul Tugwell...

**All who commune**

**NOTE:** New prayers requests are in **BOLD**. Prayers submitted will stay on the prayer list for two weeks unless updated. Please inform the Pastor and the Church Office regarding the status of submitted prayers so we may be timely and up-to-date in petitions to our gracious God.

**TO ADD PETITIONS TO OUR PRAYER CHAIN CALL LEA ROSIER AT (903) 729-1879 or (903) 391-5678**

**Note:** The Letters in parentheses after the Hymn number indicate hymns selected because of direct connection to the Propers (i.e., Scripture Readings) for the day ... OT=Old Testament, FR=First Reading, SR= Second Reading , Ps=Psalm; V=Verse; E=Epistle, G=Gospel. Hymns with no such indication are hymns that, while having no direct connection to the Propers, still support the theme of the day.

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Sunday School: 9:00 AM  
Adult Bible Class: 9:00 AM  
Divine Service: 10:15 AM

“To Give Light to Those who Sit in Darkness”

