

As We Gather: Lutherans remember the saints with thanksgiving, witness God’s work in their lives, and see them as models of faith and endurance. Jesus said that of all those born of woman, John was the greatest. Truly John was the greatest, the prophetic bridge between the old covenant and the new covenant fulfilled in Christ. But the least in the Kingdom is greater than John. This does not detract from John but acknowledges his role as the one to prepare the way of the Lord. We have all kinds of people prepare us for good news and for bad. We have pastors who proclaim God’s Word to us, Gospel and Law. The goal is to point us to Jesus. As John once pointed to Christ, the Lamb of God, so do we point to Jesus today and proclaim what He has done to all the ends of the earth—even to you!

✠ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ✠

Greeting

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

Hymn of Invocation “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” #344 (OT, E)

Invocation, Confession of Sins and AbsolutionPage 151

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

Introit and Gloria Patri^① *St. Luke 1:68, 76-79; antiphon: Mal. 3:1*



P Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way be- | fore me.*
And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his | temple.

C Blessèd be the Lord God of | Israel,*
for he has visited and redeemed his | people.

P And you, child, will be called the prophet of the | Most High;*
for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare his ways,

C to give knowledge of salvation to his | people*
in the forgiveness | of their sins,

P because of the tender mercy | of our God,*
whereby the sunrise shall visit us | from on high

C to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shad- | ow of death,*
to guide our feet into the | way of peace.

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 “Introit” is pronounced “in-troh-it” – it is 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 Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me.*
And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.

Kyrie^① *omitted on Sundays after Pentecost until Christ the King*

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

Salutation and Collect of the Day^②Page 156

P [♪] Almighty God, through John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, You once proclaimed salvation. Now grant that we may know this salvation and serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C [♪] **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading.....**Isaiah 40:1–5**

[Comfort My people with the promise of forgiveness.]

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

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

Gradual^③ and Verse *Jer. 1:5, 9b; St. Luke 1:17a, d*

P Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,

C **and before you were born I consecrated you;**

P I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

C **Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.**

P He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah

C **to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.**

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.

[John proclaimed a Baptism of repentance to prepare the way of the Savior.]

Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem, but they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent a message to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.” So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said:

“Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. And for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, ‘I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.’ Of this man’s offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. Before his coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was finishing his course, he said, ‘What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but behold, after me one is coming, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’

“Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation.

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

Sequence Hymn “By All Your Saints in Warfare” #518:1, 18, 3 (G)

Gospel Acclamations Page 157

Holy + Gospel^① St. Luke 1:57-80

[You, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before Him to prepare His way.]

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, but his mother answered, “No; he shall be called John.” And they said to her, “None of your relatives is called by this name.” And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with him.

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;

^① In the “Gospel” we hear a reading from the New Testament accounts of Jesus’ life and message. In Lutheran Worship we believe that in the Reading of the Gospel Christ is in our midst, and so we stand to honor His presence. We also sing short verses before (to greet Christ) and after (to offer our joyful praise) the reading.

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

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

Children’s Message

Hymn of the Day “When All The World Was Cursed” #346

Sermon “Messenger of the Lord” Acts 13:13-26

1. God’s _____
2. God’s _____
3. God’s _____

Apostles’ CreedPage 159

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

Offertory^① ~ *What Shall I Render to the Lord*Pages 159-160

Lord’s Prayer and Closing Collect



C A - men.

BenedictionPage 166



C A - men.

Hymn of Departure “Sing Praise to the God of Israel” #936 (G)

This hymn is a versification of the Benedictus: The Song of Zechariah recorded in our Gospel Reading today.

Silent Prayer

Announcements

Sending:

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

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)

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!

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 Jody and Mary Bowden and in celebration of their wedding anniversary today!

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL: Our theme this summer is **Delivered: God's Gift of Grace**. These consist of all New Testament lessons. Please prayerfully consider leading a Sunday School class this summer. The sign-up sheet is located in the narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Melanie Jackson.

IN TODAY'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON students will learn how God gives them faith to believe His promises in Baptism as they study the account "Paul Baptizes the Philippian Jailer." As a family, you could discuss, "How did God use Paul's imprisonment to continue the spread of the Gospel? Tell about a time you had the opportunity to share the message of Jesus with someone."

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE STUDY: "Job: Confident in Calamity" -- Why do the just suffer? Where is God in the midst of loss, illness, ridicule and defeat? In this informative study we will also consider the purpose of adversity in the lives of the faithful and the role of Satan regarding our relationship with God.

SERVICE OF INSTALLATION: Rev. Keith Bowman will be installed as Pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Church, 171 Hwy 75 N, in Centerville, in a special service today at 4:00 p.m. Following the service, a meal will served in their Fellowship Hall. You are invited to attend.

PASTOR ADLER WILL BE ATTENDING A CLASS in Plano this week (Tuesday-Friday). This is a continuing education class for Pastors provided by Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. This class is "*Confronting Current Christological Controversy*," taught by Dr. Charles A. Gieschen, Professor of Exegetical Theology and Academic Dean. Since Pastor Adler will not be in the office this week, please contact your Elder in case of emergencies.

NEWSLETTER --The **JUNE/JULY** edition of *The Bethlehem Star* newsletter is in your mailbox in the narthex. Make sure you have picked up your copy.

DID YOU FORGET? If you have not yet paid for your Lutheran Witness subscription, New Small Lutheran Catechism book or Easter lilies, please contact the church office. Thank you!

PRAYER CHAIN: There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex if you would like to participate in the prayer chain.

NEW PORTALS OF PRAYER devotion booklets for July through September 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.

FROM THE YOUTH: We are collecting books to send to the prison so that the school there can have reading materials. Also, we are still collecting old, used phones to donate to victims of abuse. Questions? Please see Yanneth Harris.

TRAVELING THIS SUMMER? If you are traveling and you would rather not attend an LC-MS church where there is no historic liturgy and hymnody ... visit lutheranliturgy.org to find an orthodox and liturgical congregation to visit.

LWML CONVENTION will be held in Waco July 5-8. We are collecting items to take with us to help organizations in the Waco area. For information on how you can assist we have provided bright colored sheets in the Narthex with items being collected. Thanks for your assistance with this project!

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.

STEWARDSHIP VIEWPOINT: St. Mark 4:40 – "He said to them, 'Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?'" Faith means trust. If we trust the Lord, what do we have to be afraid of? Isn't it fear that holds us back in our stewardship? Isn't it fear that stops us from following the Lord's Word to give generously toward His work in the Church? Well ... "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" The Lord has proved His trustworthiness by His cross. You can trust Him.

LIFE QUOTES: "When we see the young woman in a crisis pregnancy ... vulnerable, helpless, feeling destined to make only one choice—we are compelled to speak and defend and help because it is the Christ thing to do ... We lift her up and offer Christ's compassion in real, practical ways." *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, former executive director of Lutherans For Life • www.lutheransforlife.org*

ABOUT THE COVER: As God had foretold, John was born to be the forerunner of Jesus. Zechariah learned firsthand that God indeed keeps His promises to all mankind. While we may not experience God the way Zechariah did, we do have God's sure and certain Word to show us God's love for us and that He keeps His promises to us through Christ Jesus, His Son, our Savior.

OUR STEWARDSHIP LAST WEEK			
OFFERINGS		ATTENDANCE	
General Offering	\$3,399.00	Sunday School	37
[<u>Needed per week:</u>	\$2,668.00]	Divine Service	79
Building Fund	\$.00	Communion	70
[<u>Needed per week:</u>	\$350.00]		

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY THIS WEEK		
Sunday (06/24)	9:00 AM	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
	10:15 AM	Sunday School & Bible Classes
	Acolyte:	Matthew Jackson
	Organist:	Aaron Jackson
	Altar Guild:	Donna Hughes & Lea Rosier
	Duty Elder:	Devin Jackson
Sunday (07/01)	9:00 AM	Pentecost 6 [Proper 8]
	10:15 AM	Sunday School & Bible Classes
		Divine Service (Setting 1) / Holy Communion
	Acolyte/Crucifer:	Jessica Bowden
	Organist:	Aaron Jackson
	Altar Guild:	Sandy Smith & Natalie Byrd
	Duty Elder:	Burl Gruetzner
	After Church:	Evangelism Board

N 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: Shelia Flynn (6/24); Albert Harris, George Nelson; Julie Schoppe

Homebound - Members: Dorothy Jackson, Martha Kaudelka, Johnnie Weaver

Celebrating this week: Birthdays: DeAnne Atkinson, David Byrd, Kathy Green, Dot James, Larry Schoppe ...

Baptismal Birthdays: Dorothy Jackson ... **Wedding Anniversaries:** Jody & Mary Bowden, Danny & Vicki Howard

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”

