

Faith ALIVE

May 14, 2023 + Sixth Sunday of Easter
First Communion Sunday

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold**.

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

we GATHER

Prelude — “Let Us Break Bread Together”

Setting by Mark Hayes
Sophie Martinez, organ

***Words of Welcome**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed!** Alleluia!

***Gathering Hymn** — no. 396

“Spirit of Gentleness”

***Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life. Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported
as citizens of the new creation.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring. In mercy and
might you have freed us from death and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.
In baptismal waters our old life is washed away, and in them we are born anew.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes, for rivers and streams. Honor to you for waters that
wash us clean, quench our thirst, and nurture both lands and creatures. Praise to you
for the life-giving water of baptism, the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

**Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you. Empower our witness to
your resurrection. Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.**

*This
Gathering
Hymn tells the
story of God's
people and of
Christ's birth
and ministry
through the
lens of the
Spirit. How
many actions
of the Spirit can
you count in
this text?*

Satisfy the world's need through this living water. Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment. Where despair prevails, grant hope. Where chaos reigns, bring peace. We ask this through Christ, who with you and the Spirit reigns forever. **Amen.**

***Canticle of Praise** — page 140, front of hymnal, from ELW Setting Three

***Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

we LISTEN and RESPOND

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles — Acts 17:22-31

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we too are his offspring.'

Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 66:8-20

The psalm will begin with a simple tone being demonstrated by the leader, and the congregation are invited to sing responsively by verse.

Bless our | God, you peoples;

let the sound of | praise be heard.

Our God has kept us a- | mong the living

and has not allowed our | feet to slip.

For you, O God, have | tested us;

you have tried us just as sil- | ver is tried.

You brought us in- | to the net;

you laid heavy burdens up- | on our backs.

You let people ride over our heads; we went through | fire and water,

but you brought us out into a place | of refreshment.

I will enter your house | with burnt offerings

and will pay | you my vows—

those that I promised | with my lips

and spoke with my mouth when I | was in trouble.

I will offer you burnt offerings of fatlings with the | smoke of rams;

I will give you ox- | en and goats.

Come and listen, all you | who believe,
 and I will tell you what God has | done for me.
I called out to God | with my mouth,
and praised the Lord | with my tongue.
 If I had cherished evil | in my heart,
 the Lord would | not have heard me;
but in truth | God has heard me
and has attended to the sound | of my prayer.
 Blessed be God, who has not reject- | ed my prayer,
 nor withheld unfailing | love from me.

A Reading from the First Letter of Peter — 1 Peter 3:13-22

Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation — from ELW Setting Three**

“Alleluia”

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.

***Gospel — John 14:15-21**

The Gospel of John, the 14th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

*In the gospel,
Jesus tells his
disciples that
God will
provide an
Advocate to be
their guide.
This hymn
portrays the
Spirit of God as
a loving parent
and friend,
similar to the
way Jesus
comforted his
disciples on the
night he was
arrested.*

Sermon

Pastor Chris Culuris

*Hymn — no. 397

“Loving Spirit”

*The Apostles’ Creed

P: Let us confess our faith together:

**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 power of 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

A: United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

God our faithful companion, you provide the true bread from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we who receive the sacrament of his body and blood may abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the power of his endless life. We thank you that we are celebrating a milestone with our communion class as they partake in their First Communion this morning. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

All the earth sings praises to you. Grant your care to the creatures, plants, and places that are suffering, and equip us to respond to their song. Make us agents of restoration and refreshment for all your beloved creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You call all people of the world your children. Judge the nations justly, show mercy to all who are oppressed, and speak truth to power through your prophets. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nurturing Lord, you sent your Spirit to grant us peace. Make your presence known to those who feel abandoned or alone, and to all who are sick or grieving. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You hold us in your loving care. We thank you for our mothers and all mothering figures. Console all who long to be mothers, anyone grieving the death of a mother, and mothers who have lost a child. Support all for whom this day is difficult. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Almighty God, you give life and breath to all things. We give thanks for the apostle Matthias and all your saints. Sustain us by your love until we join the saints in glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Rejoicing in the joy of Christ’s resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. **Amen.**

This song from the 1990s reflects on the words that Jesus spoke at the Last Supper, words that 'instituted' our practice of communion.

Offering

Music During Offering
"In Remembrance of Me"

Cheri Keaggy
Rebekah Roemhildt, voice

***Offering Prayer**

A: Generous God, in this meal you offer your very self. We give thanks for these gifts of the earth. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Savior. Amen.

we SHARE the meal

***Great Thanksgiving & Preface** — *page 144, front of hymnal, from ELW Setting Three*

***"Holy, Holy, Holy"** — *page 144, front of hymnal, from ELW Setting Three*

***Words of Institution and The Lord's Prayer**

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Celebrating this meal in the joy of our risen Savior, we pray: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

All people are welcome to take communion at FLC. We will receive communion at the rail this morning; First Confirmation students and their families will go first. We sing two familiar communion hymns and proclaim that "The Spirit of the risen Christ" is "alive among us here."

***Invitation to the Table**

P: Come and know Christ, broken and poured out for you. **Thanks be to God.**

Distribution of Communion

"Lamb of God" — *page 146, front of hymnal, from ELW Setting Three*

Hymn — no. 491

"Come, Let Us Eat"

Hymn — no. 482

"I Come with Joy"

Prayer After Communion

P: Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together. Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name. Amen.

we DEPART to serve the world

Announcements

What do you do with the light of the Spirit kindling in you? How do you “let it shine” in our surrounding community?

***Sending Hymn** — no. 677

“This Little Light of Mine”

***Mother’s Day Litany**

To those who gave birth this year to a child—**we celebrate with you.**

To those who lost a child this year—**we mourn with you.**

To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of food stains—**we appreciate you.**

To those who experienced loss this year through miscarriage, failed adoptions, or running away—**we mourn with you.**

To those who walk the hard path of infertility, fraught with pokes, prods, tears, and disappointment—**we walk with you. Forgive us when we say foolish things. We don’t mean to make this harder than it is.**

To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, and spiritual moms—**we need you.**

To those who do not have a mother but who have two dads, a single parent, or other kinds of parental figures—**we support and affirm you.**

To those who have warm and close relationships with your children—**we celebrate with you.**

To those who have disappointment, heart ache, and distance with your children—**we sit with you.**

To those who lost their mothers this year—**we grieve with you.**

To those who experienced abuse at the words or actions of your own mother—**we acknowledge your experience.**

To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year—**we grieve and rejoice with you.**

To those who have chosen a path without children but who nurture in many and various ways—**we accept you.**

And to those who are pregnant with new life, both expected and surprising—**we anticipate with you.**

We lift up all mothers, mother figures, guardians, nurturers of life, and care-givers, that they may follow in the mothering ways of our God—**we say Amen!**

***Blessing & Dismissal**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The God of all, who raised ☩ Jesus from the dead,

bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation. Amen.

A: Go in peace. Serve the Risen One. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

***Postlude** — “Komm Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist” BWV 631

J.S. Bach

Sophie Martinez, organ

Acknowledgements

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Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Assisting Minister: Larry Kiewel

Audio/Video: Brett Petersen

Reader: John Malm

Ushers: John Nadeau, Tom Thorkelson

Musicians: Sophie Martinez, GAC Music Scholar;

Rebekah Roemhildt

Communion Preparers:

Communion Servers: John Malm, Cindy Nadeau

Announcements

- We extend a big thank you to Sophie Martinez this morning for her time with us as GAC Music Scholar. She served us in the fall of 2021, extra during the fall of 2022 while Emily was away, and again this spring of 2023. She is graduating from Gustavus this month and then will be moving to New Jersey to begin her Master of Theological Studies degree at Princeton Theological Seminary. We wish her the best in her continued studies! You are all invited to her upcoming senior recital at Christ Chapel on Friday, May 26 at 3:00 p.m. and to her graduation party, which will be right here in the FLC Dining Room on Saturday, May 27th!
- Flowers for the altar are given today by Cheryl and Bill Kautt in honor of their new granddaughter Evelyn Ruth.
- Fellowship refreshments will be served by the Worship & Arts committee today.
- Congratulations to our youth who are receiving Christ for the first time today in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We are so happy to welcome you to the Lord’s Table!
- Please join us today following worship for our First Forum on the “State of the City.” Our presenter is our City Administrator, Todd Prafke.
- Next Sunday we will have a graduate blessing during worship. Please join us to congratulate these grads on their hard work and wish them well in the next chapter of their lives.
- There will be no Bible study tomorrow.
- All are invited to come celebrate Gene Lund’s birthday with her from 2-4pm, on May 23rd, in the Three Crowns Room at the GAC Dining Hall.
- Six First Lutheran Youth traveling to the Boundary Waters June 26-30 and are in need of some equipment. Do you have any of the following (they will borrow and return): DULUTH PACKS or some CANOE/PORTAGE BACKPACKS (~5 needed), TENTS--2-4 person size; lightweight and compact (~2 needed), BUTANE STOVE (single burner), MESS KIT (larger pot being ~3-4L), WATER FILTER (1-2 that can quickly filter and fill 1-L water bottles), BEAR BARREL (just in case someone has one---60-L size), Please call or text Mark Szybnski at 507-380-9180 or email markszybnski@gmail.com

Prayers

- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Glenn Stryker, Erika Schuldt, Ursula McRostie, Karen Wendroth, Allen Storkson, Gene Roemhildt, Karen Smithers, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Claire Cardwell, and Ella Twaddle.
- We pray for Kathryn Christenson’s sister-in-law, Faye Christensen, who is recovering from surgery and mourning the loss of her sister.
- We pray for Bill and Cheryl Kautt as they mourn the loss of Bill’s father, William.
- We pray for the family of Robert Samuelson, who recently died.

Celebrate FLC's 2023 First Holy Communion Class



Name: Asher Dale Hoenke

Parents: Shawn & Jessica Hoenke

Godparents: Vern & Rachel Brown, Jonathan Hofland

"My favorite thing about FLC is talking about God."



Name: Liam Leonard Hoenke

Parents: Shawn & Jessica Hoenke

Godparents: Derrick & Darcie O'Donnell, Aaron & Kristin Helland

"My favorite thing about FLC is Sunday School"



Name: Harper Dean Honetschlager

Parents: Rachel & Chad Honetschlager

Godparents: Logan & Lucas Hickey

"My favorite thing about FLC is the communion classes."



Name: Rogen Kuhlman

Parents: Ryan & Alli Kuhlman

Godparents/Sponsors: Sarah & Nathan Rolling, Laurie Schultz, Luke Arnold

"My favorite thing about FLC is learning the stories of the Bible and the songs we sing at Sunday School!"



Name: Ambriela Emily Linsmeier

Parents: Brandon & Angie Linsmeier

Godparents: Jesse & Tammy Samuelson, Pete & Shannon Fay

"My favorite memory at FLC thus far is the music and singing!"