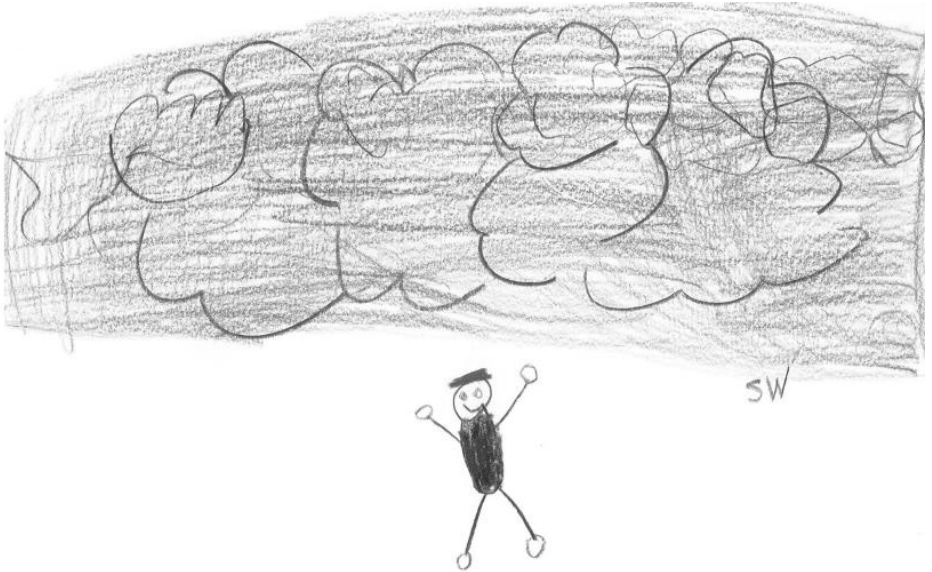


*Welcome to Worship*

at

# St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

**a reconciling in Christ congregation**



## *Ascension of Our Lord*

May 21, 2023

10:30 am

**Pastor:** The Reverend Susan D. Ruggles

**Vicar:** Vanessa Storlie

**Director of Music:** Jessica Madow

330 Ferry Street; Easton, PA 18042-4500

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## Statement of Welcome

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.—Galatians 3:28*

As a community of God striving to be open to all people, we at St. John's Lutheran Congregation believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, to be shared unconditionally. We welcome all to join us as we struggle to better understand the mysteries of God's teachings. We are challenged by Christ to care for, to love, to understand, and to listen to each other, regardless of race, age, gender, marital status, physical and mental abilities, sexual/affectional orientation, national origin, or economic status. We celebrate together our unity as God's people. St. John's Lutheran Congregation is a place for each person to shine in their own unique gifts.

## Statement of Mission

St. John's Lutheran Church is a downtown, community-oriented, congregation of Christians. We worship God, strive to welcome, and wholly accept everyone, and reach out with and in God's love.

~

**Communion** is a time we invite all baptized Christians who believe that our Lord Jesus is truly present in the bread and wine of the Sacrament. If this is your belief, there are instructions to follow at the time of Communion later in the bulletin.

**Nursery** – A staffed nursery person is available in the nursery following Children's Chat . . .

**Service Notes** – \* (asterisk) indicates, please stand as you are able.

- Page # indicates the front of the hymnal is used . . .
- Hymn # indicates the back of the Hymnal is used . . .

# Gathering

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

## Announcements

**Prelude**            *“Hyfrydol”* arr. Wilbur Held

## \* Confession & Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

P: Most merciful God,

**C: We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

## \*Gathering Hymn

ELW # 392 *“Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”*

*Please follow along in your hymnals as the service continues with Setting 4 on page 147.*

\*Greeting - page 147

\*Kyrie - page 147

\*Canticle of Praise *“This is the Feast . . .”* - page 149

## \*Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray. Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

# Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## First Reading

**Acts 1:1-11**

<sup>1</sup>In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning <sup>2</sup>until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; <sup>5</sup>for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

<sup>6</sup>So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup>He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” <sup>9</sup>When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup>They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

A: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## Responsive Reading:

## Psalm 47

<sup>1</sup>Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
shout to God with a joyful sound.

<sup>2</sup>**For the LORD Most High is to be feared:  
a great king over all the earth,**

<sup>3</sup>who subdues the peoples under us,  
and the nations under our feet;

<sup>4</sup>**who chooses our inheritance for us,  
the pride of Jacob, whom God loves.**

<sup>5</sup>God has gone up with a shout,  
the LORD with the sound of the ram's horn.

<sup>6</sup>**Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
sing praises to our king, sing praises.**

<sup>7</sup>For God is king of all the earth;  
sing praises with a song.

<sup>8</sup>**God reigns over the nations;  
God is enthroned on high.**

<sup>9</sup>The nobles of the peoples have gathered as the people of the God  
of Abraham.

The rulers of the earth belong to God, who is highly exalted.

## Second Reading

**Ephesians 1:15-23**

<sup>15</sup>I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup>so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>20</sup>God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. <sup>22</sup>And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

A: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation**

*“Alleluia . . .”*

*- page 151*

## \* Gospel

Luke 24:44-53

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>44</sup> “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”<sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, <sup>46</sup>and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup>and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

<sup>50</sup> Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them; he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; <sup>53</sup> and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Children’s Chat

**Sermon:** The Reverend Susan D. Ruggles

**\*Hymn of the Day –**

ELW # 393 “*A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!*”



## ***\*Apostles' Creed***

**C: 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 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: Let us pray. Ever-present God, root the church firmly in you. Let us neither become entranced staring up into the heavens, nor distraught by the suffering of the world. Teach us to see you in every face, every place, and every moment. Hear us, O God.**

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**A: God of the cosmos, you cradle creation in your loving arms and anoint it with signs of your presence. In the budding of flowers, the birth of a baby, and the formations of the land and sky, reveal your abundant life. Hear us, O God.**

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: God of companionship, provide clarity and direction for those experiencing life transitions—in births and deaths, new employment and new relationships, divorces, and departures. We pray for those receiving new diagnoses or undergoing treatment for illness or injury including *those we mention on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or in our hearts . . .* Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Immanent God, in you we live, move, and be. Draw us closer to you and clothe us in your power. Encourage members of this congregation to set goals and reach new heights. Hear us, O God.

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A: Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**C: Amen.**

### **\* *The Sharing of the Peace***

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

# Meal

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

*(Ushers now proceed to the Altar to receive the offering plates...)*

**Offertory** “*Canon of Praise*” set by Hal H. Hopson  
sung by the Wittenberg choir

## **\*Presentation of Gifts**

*(Ushers now bring the offering plates forward.)*

## **\*Offertory Hymn**

ELW #184 “*Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*”

## **\*Offertory Prayer**

A: Let us pray. 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 Lord.

**C: Amen**

## **\*Great Thanksgiving**

- page 152

## **\*Preface**

*(Leader continues . . .)*

**\*Holy, Holy, Holy** - page 153

**\*Communion Form** (*Leader continues . . .*)

**\*Lord's Prayer** - page 154

**\*Lamb of God** - page 154

**Holy Communion** - *If you are baptized and believe that it is the real blood and body of Christ, we welcome you at the Lord's table.*

*\*At the invitation of the usher, please proceed to the front to receive communion.*

*Please remain at the front until you are dismissed.*

*Communion is also available in your pew, please let an usher know.*

*Gluten free wafers and grape juice are available upon request.*

## **Communion Hymns**

ELW # 472 ***“Eat This Bread”***

ELW # 474 ***“Bread of Life from Heaven”***

ELW # 471 ***“Let Us Break Bread Together”***

**\*Post Communion Canticle** ***“Now Lord . . .”*** - page 113

## **\*Prayer after Communion**

A: Let us pray. 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.

**C: Amen.**

## **Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## **\*Blessing**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

## **\*Sending Hymn**

ELW # 553 *“Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies”*

## **\*Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Postlude**

Thank you to our Worship Volunteers . . .

**Worship Assistant** – Chris Orem

**Ushers** – Helen & John Border

**Reader** – Lynn Kutch

**Altar Guild** – Barbara Horinko / Sylvia Orem

**This Week at St. John's: May 21<sup>st</sup> – May 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Today** (5/21/23) – Ascension of Our Lord Worship, 10:30 am

**Today** (5/21/23) – Art Gallery Open, 12-2:00 pm

**Monday** (5/22/23) – Choir Practice, 1:00 pm

**Tuesday** (5/23/23) - Bible Study, 1:30 pm – Hosp. Rm.

**Wednesday** (5/24/23) – Sight and Sound Trip

**Thursday** (5/25/23) – Prayer Group, 9:30 am

**Friday** (5/26/23) – Newsletter Folding, 9:30 am

**Sunday** (5/28/23) — Sunday School Breakfast 8:30 am,  
Classes: 9:00 am (Last Day of S.S.)

**Sunday** (5/28/23) – Pentecost Sunday, Worship, 10:30 am

**Sunday** (5/28/23) – Meetings following worship:  
Rachel's Circle

**Sunday** (5/28/23) – Art Gallery Open 12-2:00 pm, Show Closing

**Monday** (5/29/23) – Memorial Day, Office Closed

**Monday** (5/29/23) – Memorial Day, No Choir



*Vicar Vanessa Graduated from “Luther Seminary” yesterday in Minnesota. There is a basket in the Narthex for notes of Congratulations and well wishes. Stop and leave a quick message . . .*



ACTS 1:8

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**Attendance:** 75

Last Sunday's Envelope / Plate Offering:	\$1,829.00
Weekly amount needed to reach our Budget:	\$2,234.00
Year to Date Envelope / Plate Offering:	\$46,724.00

*(These totals do not include special envelopes.)*

*Prayer Concerns:* Bonita, Chuck, Deanna, Earl, Sandy, Richard, Christopher, Kara, Kenny, Mary, David, Earl, Terry, Pamela, Our Homebound Family and Friends, and the Family and Friends of Joan Johnson & Jeanette Seaman.

*Altar Flowers today are dedicated to the Glory of God and finding his presence among us.*

**Last Day of Sunday School - May 28<sup>th</sup> . . .**



**Join Us . . .**

**Easton / Bethlehem Mission District  
Night at the Iron Pigs**

**July 14<sup>th</sup>  
- 7:05 pm  
\$12.00 /Ticket**



**Reservations and  
Money due  
- May 21<sup>st</sup>  
Contact the  
church office.**



**Bulletin Cover Art Today  
by - Scarlett Weber**

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5. "Bread of Life from Heaven" (ELW #474, Text: Susan Briehl; Music: Argentine trad., refrain Marty Haugen; Text and music © 2001 by GIA Publications, Inc.)

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