

May 14, 2023  
Sixth Sunday of Easter

A decorative graphic featuring a field of golden wheat stalks in the foreground, with a bright sun setting or rising in the background, creating a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid on this scene.

ALWAYS  
BE  
PREPARED  
TO  
GIVE AN ANSWER



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## ✠ Opening Prayer ✠

Hymn: TLH #198

"He's Risen, He's Risen"

**P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** Pastor

**C** Congregation

### Confession of Our Sins

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*We come before God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.*

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**P** God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

**C** If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

**P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**C** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**P** Let us pray.

**C** Almighty God, merciful Father, we are sinful by nature, and have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. But we are sorry for our transgressions and pray You, of Your bountiful mercy, to be gracious and merciful unto us. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, renew us by Your Spirit, and lead us in the way everlasting. Amen.

### Absolution from Our God

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*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)*

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**P** Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. We are forgiven. With boldness and confidence we may approach the throne to find grace to help in time of need. In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Response: TLH #644

"Praise God, from Whom..."

**C**        ♪ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
             Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
             Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:  
             Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

## The Introit

Ps. 119:89-93, 105

*A collection of passages that set the tone for the service.*

- P** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- C** **Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.**
- P** Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.
- C** **By your appointment they stand this day, for all things are your servants.**
- P** If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.
- C** **I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life.**
- P** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
- C** **As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## The Gloria Patri

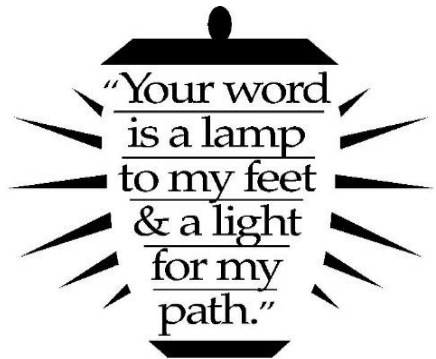
TLH 23:4

*Latin for "Glory be to the Father."*

- C** ♪ **Hallelujah! Let praises ring!**  
**Unto our Triune God we sing;**  
**Blest be His name forever!**  
**With angel hosts let us adore**  
**And sing His praises more and more**  
**For all His grace and favor!**  
**Singing, ringing: Holy, holy, God is holy,—**  
**Spread the story; of our God, the Lord of Glory!**

## Collect Prayer of the Day

- 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.**



## **John 14:15-21**

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, <sup>17</sup> even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. <sup>18</sup> "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. <sup>19</sup> Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

## **1 Peter 3:15-22**

...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. <sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup> in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup> because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. <sup>21</sup> Baptism, which corresponds to this, 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, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

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*The Apostles' Creed is a summary of Christian faith as taught by the Apostles. We boldly confess what God has taught us to believe.*

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**I BELIEVE...**

**in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;**

**And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Hymn: TLH #349:1-2, 5-7**

*"Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me"*



**Acts 17:22-34**

So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. <sup>26</sup> And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, <sup>27</sup> that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, <sup>28</sup> for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring." <sup>29</sup> Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by

the art and imagination of man. <sup>30</sup> The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." <sup>32</sup> Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." <sup>33</sup> So Paul went out from their midst. <sup>34</sup> But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

### The Unknown God

- I. Gives us hints so that we seek Him
- II. Reveals Himself so that we know Him

### The Offertory

*In this prayer we offer our hearts, asking God for the best gift, the Holy Spirit.*

**G** *♩ Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a right spirit within me Cast me not away from Thy presence; And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; And uphold me with thy free spirit. Amen.*

### ✠ The Offering of Thankful Hearts ✠

**Sermon Hymn: TLH #381**

*"I Know My Faith is Founded"*

### Prayers, Lord's Prayer, and Benediction

*Numbers 6:24-26*

*The blessing given by God for His people.*

**P** The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.

**G** Amen.

**Closing Hymn: TLH #400**

*"Take My Life and Let It Be"*



**CLC Subscription Renewals:** Annual renewals for both the *Daily Rest* devotional and *The Lutheran Spokesman* are due soon. The cost renewal cost breakdown is below:

- *Lutheran Spokesman* - \$14 for 12 monthly issues
- *Daily Rest* - \$15 for 4 quarterly devotional booklets

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If you would like to cancel your subscription OR if you would like to subscribe to one of these periodicals, please speak with Pastor, and he can assist you in this.

**The Branches** is a Christian Women's magazine which is published quarterly by women of the CLC. Subscriptions are available for the 2023-2024 subscription year (July through June). The Branches staff prays that, through this publication, we serve:

- to encourage you in your personal and family Bible study
- to edify you in your daily walk with Christ
- to provide a means to use and share your God-given gifts
- to celebrate and reflect upon God's gift of Christian sisters, near and far

Consider a subscription for yourself and/or gift subscriptions for women in your life! The cost is \$15.00/year for 4 issues. Checks are payable to, "The Branches" and should be sent to: Sandy Hulke, Subscription Manager, 29985 Norway Ave, Lindstrom, MN 55045. Online payments are also available via PayPal - you may contact Sandy Hulke at thebranchesmagazine@gmail.com.

<b><u>May 7<sup>th</sup> Offerings:</u></b>	\$ 1,672.75
Weekly Offerings needed for budget	\$ 1,661.54
General Fund Balance	\$18,958.34
Faith-Blue Springs Balance	\$37,394.59
<b>Total Cash All Funds</b>	<b>\$71,718.77</b>

## Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions; May 15 - 20, '23

**Mon Luke 11:5-13** Jesus encourages us to pray by reminding us that even a friend who doesn't want to be bothered will respond to requests when His heart is not in it. But God wants us to ask, seek, and knock. And while sinful human fathers give good gifts, our heavenly Father will give the greatest gifts.

**Tues 1 Timothy 2:1-6** The apostle urges prayers for ALL people, even for those in high positions whom we may never meet. The goal of our prayers will be the same as God's own goal: conditions favorable to the salvation of ALL people, as they come to know the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Jesus Christ.

**Wed Isaiah 55:6-11** The LORD wants His people to approach Him, seeking His compassion and forgiveness. The thoughts and ways of sinful man lead to destruction, but the thoughts and ways of the LORD lead to salvation. This gift of life is brought to us by His word, like water bringing life to the earth.

**Thur Luke 24:50-53** Luke closes His Gospel with Jesus' ascension. The last time the disciples see Him, His hands are uplifted in blessing, which brings their response of joyous worship as they return to Jerusalem in accord with their Lord's instructions.

**Fri Colossians 3:1-4** The ascended Lord directs our attention heavenward as we await His glorious return. Although our life is still hidden with Christ in God (v3), it is nonetheless glorious, far more glorious than things that are on earth (v2).

**Sat John 17:11-26** Jesus is on a path to the Father that will pass through suffering and death on the cross. He prays for His disciples and for all who will believe through their testimony (v20). His prayer is for unity and love among those who follow Him to the Father, whom they have learned to know through Him.