

# **THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Saturday, May 17, and Sunday, May 18, 2025



# Bethlehem

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LUTHERAN CHURCH

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*We are so glad you're here! Bethlehem is a caring community of believers committed to being a birthplace of hope in southeast Fort Wayne. We are a congregation of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, where Christ's sacrificial love shapes who we are and how we serve.*

*Our worship centers on God's gifts to us in His Word and Sacraments. Here, Jesus meets us through His promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and we respond with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Whether this is your first time worshiping with us or your spiritual home, you are part of our family today.*

*Thank you for joining us as we rest in God's grace and grow in His love. May you be refreshed by the beauty of Christ's sacrifice and sent out to reflect His light in the world!*

## **HOLY COMMUNION EXAMINATION**

In the Bible the Apostle Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (I Corinthians 11:28) In order to examine yourself before attending the Lord's Supper, ask yourself the following questions:

Do I believe that I am a sinner, and am I sorry for my sins?  
(Proverbs 28:13; Romans 3:23; I John 1:8-9)

Do I believe that Jesus Christ by His death offers me forgiveness for all my sins?  
(Romans 5:8; Colossians 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; I John 1:7)

Do I believe that I receive the body and blood of Christ in and with the bread and wine (not merely symbolically present)?  
(Matthew 26:26-28; I Cor. 10:16; I Cor. 11:24-25)

Do I desire to turn from my sinful ways and live a God-pleasing life?  
(Isaiah 1:16; John 8:11; Romans 6:12)

If you are unable to answer "yes" to these questions or believe further instruction is needed, please talk to a pastor or an elder before communing as participating without a proper understanding of Holy Communion can be spiritually harmful (I Corinthians 11:27-29). If you can answer "yes" to these questions, then come with a repentant heart and join us in the reception of the Lord's Supper. If not, adults and children who have not yet taken part in communion instruction classes are invited to come forward for a blessing and are asked to keep their arms folded over their chest during the distribution.

***(Children's Activity bags are available in the Narthex.  
Please remember to return them to the rack after the service.)***

# + PREPARATION +

## PRESERVICE MUSIC

## WELCOME

## RINGING OF THE BELLS

## OPENING HYMN

LSB #822

### ALLELUIA! LET PRAISES RING



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais-es ring! To God the Fa -  
2 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais-es ring! Un - to the Lamb  
3 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais-es ring! Un - to the Ho -  
4 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais-es ring! Un - to our tri -



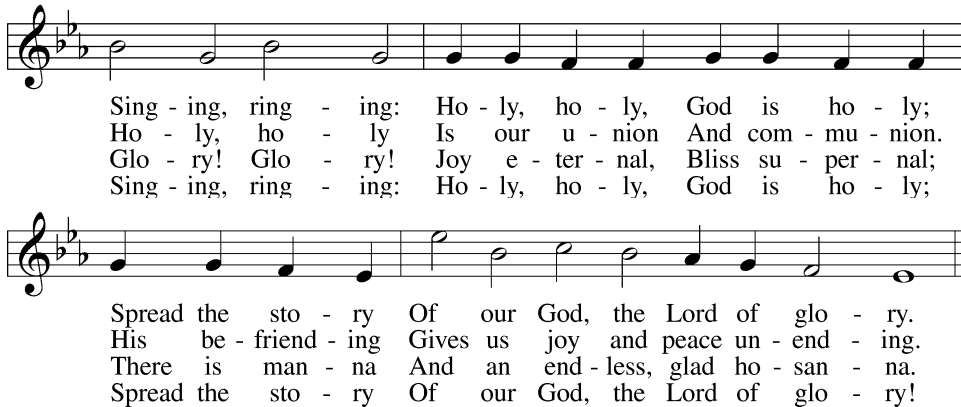
ther let us bring Our songs of ad - o - ra - tion.  
of God we sing, In whom we are e - lect - ed.  
ly Ghost we sing For our re - gen - er - a - tion.  
une God we sing; Blest be His name for - ev - er!



To Him through ev - er - last - ing days Be wor - ship, hon -  
He bought His Church with His own blood, He cleansed her in  
The sav - ing faith in us He wrought And us un - to  
With an - gel hosts let us a - dore And sing His prais -



or, pow'r, and praise, Whose hand sus - tains cre - a - tion.  
that bless - ed flood, And as His bride se - lect - ed.  
the Bride-groom brought, Made us His cho - sen na - tion.  
es ev - er - more For all His grace and fa - vor!



Text: Geistreiches Gesang-Buch, 1698, Darmstadt; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.  
 Tune: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608 Text and tune: Public domain

*(Stand)*

## INVOCATION AND OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation Amen.**

Pastor Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

**Congregation His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.**

Pastor The LORD has made known His salvation;

**Congregation He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

Pastor Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

**Congregation break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor We have come together to praise and thank God for His overwhelming grace and mercy. Singing and rejoicing are natural for us, but we cannot come to God with our sins and failures. Let us therefore confess our sins and ask for mercy for the sake of Christ.

**Congregation Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor God has called you to life, He has given His Son to pay for your sins, and He has given you and all believers in Christ the faith to trust all His promises. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

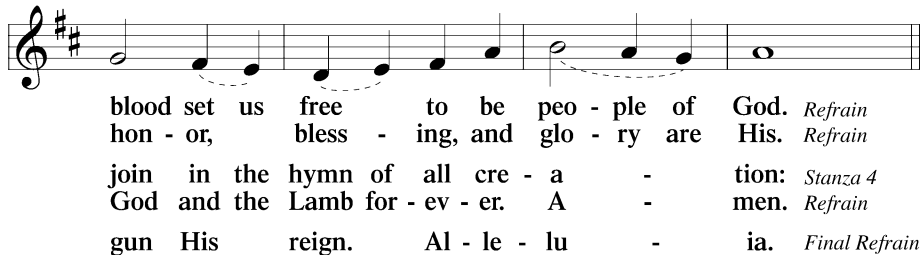
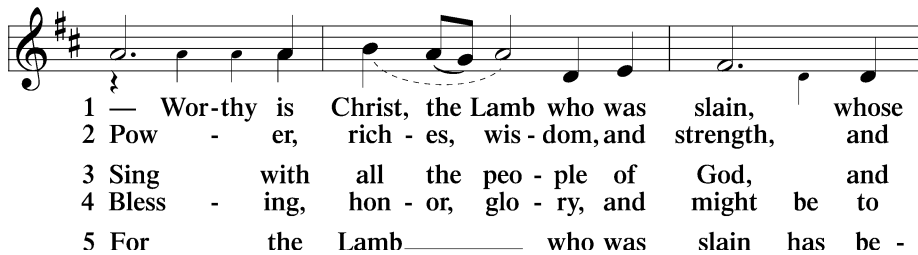
**Congregation Amen.**

# + SERVICE OF THE WORD +

## HYMN OF PRAISE

LSB pg. 155

### THIS IS THE FEAST



## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor                    The Lord be with you.

**Congregation        And also with you.**

Pastor                    Let us pray. O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Congregation        Amen.**

*(Sit)*

## **FIRST READING**

Acts 11:1–18

<sup>1</sup>Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. <sup>2</sup>So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, <sup>3</sup>“You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” <sup>4</sup>But Peter began and explained it to them in order: <sup>5</sup>“I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. <sup>6</sup>Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup>And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ <sup>8</sup>But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ <sup>9</sup>But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ <sup>10</sup>This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. <sup>11</sup>And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. <sup>12</sup>And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup>And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup>he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ <sup>15</sup>As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup>And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup>If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” <sup>18</sup>When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

Leader                    This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation        Thanks be to God.**

## EPISTLE

Revelation 21:1–7

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

<sup>5</sup>And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” <sup>6</sup>And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. <sup>7</sup>The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

Leader This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation Thanks be to God.

(Stand)

## ALLELUIA AND VERSE



## HOLY GOSPEL

John 13:31-35

<sup>31</sup>When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup>Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ <sup>34</sup>A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Pastor This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Congregation Praise to You, O Christ.

(Sit)

## HYMN OF THE DAY

LSB #644

### THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION



1 The Church's one foun-da-tion Is Je-sus Christ, her Lord;  
2 E-lect from ev-'ry na-tion, Yet one o'er all the earth;  
3 Though with a scorn-ful won-der The world sees her op-pressed,  
4 Through toil and trib-u-la-tion And tu-mult of her war  
5 Yet she on earth has u-nion With God, the Three in One,



She is His new cre-a-tion By wa-ter and the Word.  
Her char-ter of sal-va-tion: One Lord, one faith, one birth.  
By schisms rent a-sun-der, By her-e-sies dis-tressed,  
She waits the con-sum-ma-tion Of peace for-ev-er-more  
And mys-tic sweet com-mu-nion With those whose rest is won.



From heav'n He came and sought her To be His ho-ly bride;  
One ho-ly name she bless-es, Par-takes one ho-ly food,  
Yet saints their watch are keep-ing; Their cry goes up, "How long?"  
Till with the vi-sion glo-rious Her long-ing eyes are blest,  
O bless-ed heav'n-ly cho-rus! Lord, save us by Your grace



With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.  
And to one hope she press-es With ev-'ry grace en-dued.  
And soon the night of weep-ing Shall be the morn of song.  
And the great Church vic-to-rious Shall be the Church at rest.  
That we, like saints be-fore us, May see You face to face.

Text: Samuel J. Stone, 1839–1900, alt.

Tune: Samuel S. Wesley, 1810–76

Text and tune: Public domain

## SERMON

*“Radical Love”*



*(Stand)*

**NICENE CREED**

LSB pg 158

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;**

**who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried.**

**And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.**

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come.  
Amen.**

*(Sit)*

**OFFERING**

## I AM JESUS' LITTLE LAMB



1 I am Je - sus' lit - tle lamb, Ev - er glad at  
 2 Day by day, at home, a - way, Je - sus is my  
 3 Who so hap - py as I am, E - ven now the



heart I am; For my Shep - herd gent - ly guides me,  
 staff and stay. When I hun - ger, Je - sus feeds me,  
 Shep - herd's lamb? And when my short life is end - ed,



Knows my need and well pro - vides me, Loves me ev - 'ry  
 In - to pleas - ant pas - tures leads me; When I thirst, He  
 By His an - gel host at - tend - ed, He shall fold me



day the same, E - ven calls me by my name.  
 bids me go Where the qui - et wa - ters flow.  
 to His breast, There with - in His arms to rest.

Text: Henrietta L. von Hayn, 1724–82; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941


Tune: Choral-Buch . . . Brüder-Gemeinen, 1784, Leipzig

Text and tune: Public domain

*(Stand)*

## OFFERTORY

LSB pg 159.



**C** What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to  
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will  
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-  
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my  
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the  
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

*(Sit)*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

## *+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +*

### **PREFACE**

LSB pg. 160

Pastor                The Lord be with you.

**Congregation    And also with you.**

Pastor                Lift up your hearts.

**Congregation    We lift them to the Lord.**

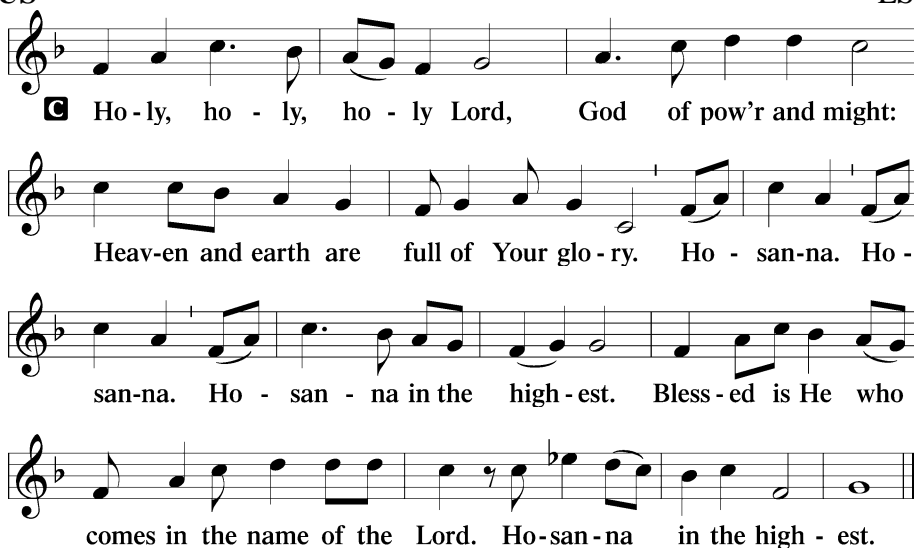
Pastor                Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Congregation    It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

### **PROPER PREFACE**

### **SANCTUS**

LSB pg. 161



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:  
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

LSB pg. 162

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

### PAX DOMINI

LSB pg. 163

Pastor The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Congregation Amen.

### AGNUS DEI

LSB pg. 163

**G** Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Sit)

### DISTRIBUTION

### PRAYERFUL MEDITATION

(Stand)

## POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

LSB pg. 164

### THANK THE LORD



**C** Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re - calls His prom - is - es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

## POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

### BENEDICTION

LSB pg. 166

Pastor

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Congregation

Amen.

## IN THEE IS GLADNESS



1 In Thee is glad - ness A - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus,  
2 Since He is ours, We fear no pow - ers, Not of

sun - shine of my heart. By Thee are giv - en The gifts of  
earth nor sin nor death. He sees and bless - es In worst dis -

heav - en, Thou the true Re - deem - er art. Our souls Thou  
tress - es; He can change them with a breath. Where - fore the

wak - est, Our bonds Thou break - est; Who trusts Thee sure - ly Has built se -  
sto - ry Tell of His glo - ry With hearts and voic - es; All heav'n re -

cure - ly; He stands for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are  
joic - es In Him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for

pin - ing To see Thy shin - ing, Dy - ing or liv - ing  
glad - ness, Tri - umph o'er sad - ness, Love Him and praise Him

To Thee are cleav - ing; Naught can us sev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!  
And still shall raise Him Glad hymns for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549–1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Tune: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, c. 1556–c. 1622 Text and tune: Public domain

## **MINISTRY TEAM**

### **The Reverend Ben Ahlersmeyer**

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Email ..... [pastorben@bethlehemlcms.com](mailto:pastorben@bethlehemlcms.com)

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### **Sharon Shediack, Accounting Manager**

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### **Kasey Needham Hapner, Music Director**

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### **Janelle Deal, Organist**

Email ..... [janelle.buford@my.wheaton.edu](mailto:janelle.buford@my.wheaton.edu).

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President – Greg Shediack**

**Vice President – Evans Branigan**

**Secretary – John Stafford**

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## **At Large Members:**

**Dan Bates**

**Rachelle Dance**

**David Schult**

**Blake Sebring**

## **SCHOOLS**

**Lutheran South Unity School.....[lsusfw.org](http://lsusfw.org).....744-0459**

**Concordia Lutheran High School....[clhscadets.com](http://clhscadets.com).....483-1102**

## **COUNSELING NEEDS**

*Please talk to Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer for a referral for counseling to Cross Connections.*

## **BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH**

3705 South Anthony Boulevard, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46806-4329

[www.bethlehemlcms.org](http://www.bethlehemlcms.org)

Church Office, (260) 744-3228 Fax Number, (260) 744-3229

Office Hours: 10:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Friday)

### ***Our Worship Schedule:***

*Saturday Afternoon Worship Service at 4:00pm*

*Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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