



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

HOLY COMMUNION

Fifth Sunday of Easter
April 28, 2024

You are welcome here! As a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the ELCA, we believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, shared unconditionally and without regard to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic or family status, age, physical or mental abilities, outward appearance, or religious affiliation. We seek racial equality and justice. In this way, we live into the truth written in Ephesians (2:14)—that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

Gathering

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

Prelude: *Crossover Blues*

Peter Saberton

Welcome

Joys & Concerns

**** Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the wellspring of grace,
our Easter and our joy.

Amen.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

Immersed in the promises of baptism,...entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John...in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

**** Gathering Hymn**

Take Me to the Water

ACS 957

1 Take me to the wa - ter, take me to the wa - ter,
2 I . . . love . . Je - sus, I . . . love . . Je - sus,
3 He's . . my . . Sav - ior, he's . . my . . Sav - ior,
4 Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah.

take me to the wa - ter to be bap - tized.
I . . . love . . Je - sus, oh, yes, I do.
he's . . my . . Sav - ior, oh, yes, he is.
Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah to be bap - tized.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: TAKE ME TO THE WATER, African American spiritual; arr. Horace Clarence Boyer, 1935–2009

Arr. © 1992 Horace Clarence Boyer, admin. Augsburg Fortress

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

**** Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of



God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and

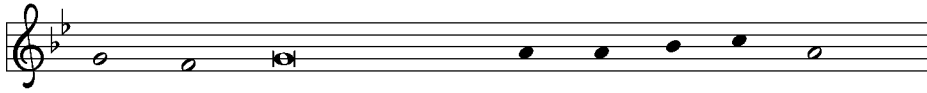
** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.



praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

** Hymn of Praise



Refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav'n-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.



2 Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of



God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



Refrain
Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



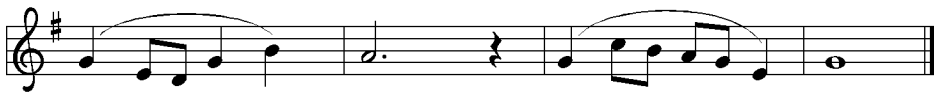
3 For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the



Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.



A - men, a - men.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

**** Prayer of the Day**

Assisting Minister leads the prayer of the day and the assembly responds: Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

First Reading

Acts 8:26-40

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 22:25-31

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied;**
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.
May your hearts live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD,**
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.

³⁰**Posterity will serve him;**
future generations will be told about the LORD,

³¹and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Second Reading

1 John 4:7-21

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

** Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

** Gospel

John 15:1-8

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you O Lord.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

** Gospel Acclamation

Please see gospel acclamation above.

Sermon

The Rev. Christine Therriault-Merkel

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

**** Hymn of the Day**

The Rice of Life

ACS 965



1 The rice of life from heav - en came to
2 True rice the hun - gry world has fed, the
3 The rice of God for all is meant; no
4 The liv - ing rice, for all a sign, came



bring true life from God a - bove. Re - ceive this gift; God's
rice re - quired for life be - low. Pro - vide this gift; God's
one who comes is turned a - way. Be - lieve in Christ whom
down e - ter - nal life to give. A - bide in Christ, the



mer - cy claim; in joy and pain give thanks for love.
mer - cy spread; in weak - ness God's com - pas - sion show.
God has sent; in hum - ble trust God's will o - bey.
liv - ing vine; in Christ, with peo - ple, die and live.

Text: J. Andrew Fowler, b. 1935

Music: BĪ-NĪU, I-to Loh, b. 1936

Text and music © 1990 Christian Conference of Asia, admin. GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

**** Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

** Offering Song

Now the Green Blade Rises

ELW 379



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,
2 In the grave they laid him, love by ha - tred slain,
3 Forth he came at Eas - ter like the ris - en grain,
4 When our hearts are win - try, griev - ing, or in pain,



wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;
think - ing that he would nev - er wake a - gain,
he that for three days in the grave had lain;
your touch can call us back to life a - gain,



love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps un - seen;
raised from the dead, my liv - ing Lord is seen;
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

Text: John MacLeod Campbell Crum, 1872–1958

Music: NOËL NOUVELET, French carol

Text from *Oxford Book of Carols*, © Oxford University Press 1928. All rights reserved.

** Offering Prayer

Assisting Minister leads the offering prayer and the assembly responds: Amen.

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

** Dialogue

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

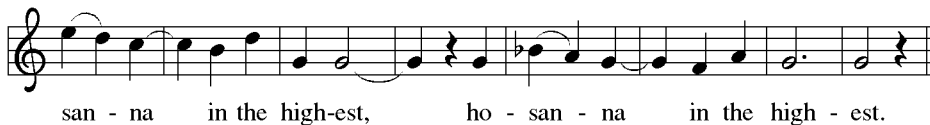
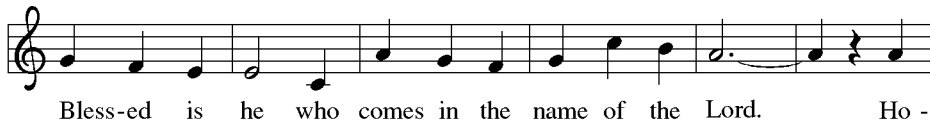
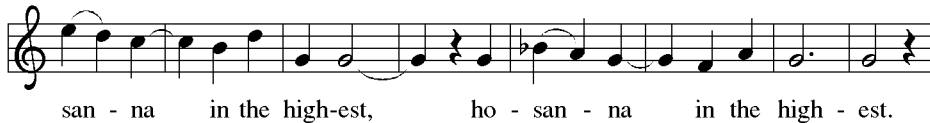
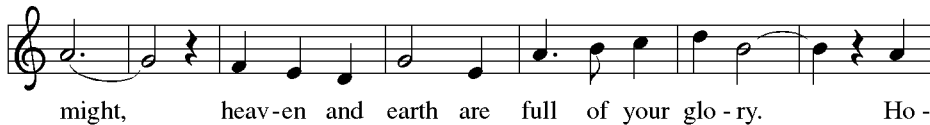
And also with you.

We lift them to the Lord.

It is right to give our thanks and
praise.

** Preface

** Holy, Holy, Holy



** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

**** Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed,.... we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your spirit...in your church without end. **Amen.**

**** Lord's Prayer**

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.

Invitation to Communion

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Lamb of God



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, grant us peace.

Communion

Holy Communion is a free gift of God's grace and love. Everyone is welcome to share in this meal. If you wish to receive words of blessing, instead of or in addition to the Bread and Cup, simply tell the minister. Wheat and GF wafers are available as are red wine and amber juice.

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Communion Hymn

Let Us Break Bread Together

ELW 471

1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;
2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;
3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;

let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.
let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.
let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.

Refrain

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "sun, O Lord, have mercy on me." The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence.

Text: African American spiritual
 Music: BREAK BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

Communion Blessing

**** Post Communion Prayer**

Together, let us pray.

Shepherding God,
 you have prepared a table before us
 and nourished us with your love.
 Send us forth from this banquet
 to proclaim your goodness
 and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,
 our redeemer and friend.
 Amen.

Announcements

**** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Sending

We are sent into the world to serve.

** Blessing

The God of resurrection power,
the Christ of unending joy,
and the Spirit of Easter hope
✠ bless you now and always.

Amen.

** Sending Hymn

To Christ Belong, In Christ Behold

ACS 958



1 To Christ be - long, in Christ be - hold God's
2 The brood - ing Spir - it moves un - seen as
3 Re - joic - ing in God's prom - ise strong, our



won - ders still un - fold: the bur - ied
liv - ing wa - ters stream to quench all
trea - sure and our song, in faith we



grain springs forth a - gain with fruit one hun - dred - fold.
thirst and bring to birth a new com - mu - ni - ty.
cling, and glad - ly sing: to Christ we now be - long.

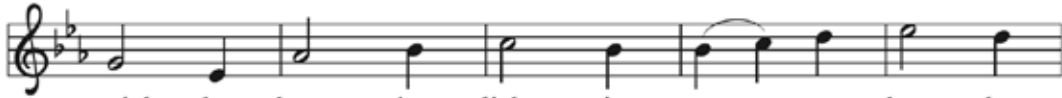


Bap - tized in - to the death of Christ, with
The bind - ing shroud is here re - leased, the
In Christ a - bide, in Christ be - hold the

** Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.



Christ from death we rise, drawn through the
 veil of sin and grief, and in their
 world be - loved and whole. In love re -



night by dawn - ing light in - to a - bun - dant
 place a wreath of grace and robes of joy and
 main, by love pro - claim God's won - ders still un -



life, in - to a - bun - dant life.
 peace, and robes of joy and peace.
 told, God's won - ders still un - told.

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952
 Music: WONDERS, Robert Buckley Farlee, b. 1950
 Text © 2011 Susan R. Briehl, admin. Augsburg Fortress
 Music © 2011 Robert Buckley Farlee, admin. Augsburg Fortress

**** Dismissal**

Go in peace,
To Love, To Invite, To Serve.

Christ is Risen!
Thanks be to God.

Postlude: *Lemon Cornette*

Nikki Iles

*Chancel flowers are given by Chuck & Carol Landry
 in honor of Kelly, Kathleen and Cheryl*

** Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

Participants in Today's Service

Pastor:

The Rev. Christine Therriault-Merkel

Music Director:

Claudio Espejo

Assisting Minister/Lector:

John Gordon

Usher:

John Rodammer

Altar Guild:

Michele Torchia

Camera:

Michael Lehm

Ministers:

The people of St. Stephen's

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Text the word "welcome" to 855-965-5200 to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

May God go with you today and every day.

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