

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Prepared to Make a Defense
May 13 & 14, 2023
5:00pm & 9:00am

AS WE GATHER

We live in a world where we increasingly hear strange ideas. The people we work, play, and live near increasingly consider the truths that our God created this world and redeemed us to be strange. Jesus, Peter, and Paul lived in a world that had some striking similarities to our own. As we live out our Baptism, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to love Jesus and keep His commands. We are urged to always be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). As we do so, it is easy to fall into the angry, divisive, argumentative patterns that we hear in the political realm. Yet, we are called to share our hope with gentleness and respect, so that we keep a clear conscience and suffer for doing good rather than evil.

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

WELCOME

MINISTRY MOMENT – LIFEWALK 2023 – Kate Hoffmann

But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father,
the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

And you also will bear witness,
because you have been with me from the beginning.

John 15:26-27

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #578

“Thy Strong Word”

Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; At Thy speaking it was done.
For created light we thank Thee, While Thine ordered seasons run.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, Dark as night and deep as death,
Broke the light of Thy salvation, Breathed Thine own life breathing breath.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness,
Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives, our hopes confess.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

From the cross Thy wisdom shining Breaketh forth in conqu’ring might;
From the cross forever beameth All Thy bright redeeming light.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Give us lips to sing Thy glory, Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us, Mouths to speak Thy holy name.

Alleluia, alleluia! May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias, Alleluias without end!

God the Father, light-creator, To Thee laud and honor be.
To Thee, Light of Light begotten, Praise be sung eternally.

(Rise)

Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to Thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the holy Trinity!

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor: Jesus said, "Because I live, you also will live."

People: In Him we live and move and have our being.

Pastor: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

People: We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father, seeking His forgiveness through our risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

People: Heavenly Father, creator of all that was, is, and will ever be, we confess to you that we fall short of the calling that we have received from you, as your dearly loved children. We have struggled to share the reason for the hope we have in you. We have not always responded to others with gentleness and respect. We have failed to live and share the love we have first received from you. Forgive our sins, for Jesus' sake, and lead us to live lives that reflect your indwelling presence.

Pastor: Our God hears our prayers and forgives our sins because of Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection. At the command of Christ and through the power of the cross and the empty tomb, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Go in peace!

People: Alleluia! Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Gloria in Excelsis"

Pastor: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.

People: (sung)

Lord, God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:

We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:

You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, you are the Creator of all things in heaven and on earth, and you have claimed and cleansed us to be your people through the waters of Baptism.

People: By your Spirit, give us hearts and minds to hear your Word.

Pastor: Give us eyes and ears to see and listen to our world as you view and hear it.

People: Give us words and actions to share the hope we have in you;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord, who lives eternally with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

5:00 BAPTISM SONG #593 "See This Wonder in the Making"

See this wonder in the making: God Himself this child is taking

As a lamb safe in His keeping, His to be, awake or sleeping.

Miracle each time it happens As the door to heaven opens
And the Father beams, "Beloved, Heir of gifts a king would covet!"

Far more tender than a mother, Far more caring than a father,
God, into Your arms we place them, With Your love and peace embrace them.

Here we bring a child of nature; Home we take a newborn creature,
Now God's precious son or daughter, Born again by Word and water.

5:00 BAPTISM of Millie Marie Nowland

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✠ WORD ✠

FIRST READING *Acts 17:16–31* (Paul witnesses about the one true God.)

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbling wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." ²¹ Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. ²² So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ 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. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ 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, ²⁷ 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, ²⁸ 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." ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ 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."

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 Peter 3:13–22* (Be prepared to share your faith with gentleness and respect.) ¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ 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, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. ¹⁸ 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, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

"Be Strong and Courageous"

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 14:15–21* (Jesus is with us, now and forever.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourteenth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ 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."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S SONG & CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

"Father I Adore You" Terrye Coelho

Father, I adore You and I lay my life before You, How I love You!

Jesus, I adore You and I lay my life before You, How I love You!

Spirit, I adore You and I lay my life before You, How I love You!

Three-in-one, I adore You and I lay my life before You, How I love You!

SERMON HYMN #644 "The Church's One Foundation"

The Church's one foundation Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;

She is His new creation By water and the Word.

From heav'n He came and sought her To be His holy bride;

With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, Yet one o'er all the earth;

Her charter of salvation: One Lord, one faith, one birth.

One holy name she blesses, Partakes one holy food,

And to one hope she presses With every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder The world sees her oppressed,

By schisms rent asunder, By heresies distressed,

Yet saints their watch are keeping; Their cry goes up, "How long?"

And soon the night of weeping Shall be the morn of song.

Through toil and tribulation And tumult of her war

She waits the consummation Of peace forevermore

Till with the vision glorious Her longing eyes are blest,

And the great Church victorious Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth has union With God, the Three in One,

And mystic sweet communion With those whose rest is won.

O blessed heav'nly chorus! Lord, save us by Your grace

That we, like saints before us, May see You face to face.

SERMON "Always Be Prepared to Speak the Truth in Love" 1 Peter 3:13-22

(Rise)

9:00 NICENE CREED

People: 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.

(Be seated)

OFFERINGS As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder**

located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

STUDENT WORSHIP TEAM MUSIC DURING OFFERING

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Silence for personal intercession

Pastor: O Lord, you bless and protect your people in a world where many false gods, known and unknown, are worshiped. Give your saints a clear and bold proclamation of Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, your Son suffered on our behalf to win salvation for us. Grant that we may have the privilege not only of believing in Him but also of suffering for His sake. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Giver of every good gift, on this Mother's Day weekend we rejoice especially in the gift of mothers. Fill us with thankfulness that through their womb you gave each of us life. Fill us with awe and wonder at the mystery of the gift of life. Be their strength in both joys and burdens. Bless the Weil family as they remember Eleanor and Judy. Help us all to love, treasure, support, and forgive our mothers each and every day. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord of heaven and earth, you have given the Spirit of truth to dwell in us through Holy Baptism. Bless Millie Marie as she is baptized into Christ and empower Brennen and Kacey to raise her in the Christian faith day by day. Grant your Spirit's steadfast guidance, that the people of this congregation may not slip into sin and unbelief, but live always in praise of you before the world. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord of life and love, we praise you for creating us male and female and instituting holy marriage. Bless especially Howard and Debbie as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. Bless them and all Christian couples to live in your love and grace, day by day. Grant your blessing and joy to Elizabeth as she celebrates her birthday. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer

Pastor: Creator, you made from one man all the nations of the earth, and still you sustain us. Grant good leaders in every land who will seek peace and serve justice. Frustrate the causes of evil, violence and oppression. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, you promised not to abandon us in our need nor leave us as orphans. Send forth your Spirit and work through us, your people, to love and support the lonely, the poor, the homeless and all those around us. Fill us all with your presence and the power of your love. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Grant healing according to your will, and sustain in faith those for whom we pray especially Chris, Ardis, Noah, Joyce, Guy, Marga, Mike, Don, Pat, Shirley, Tom, Jill, Paulette, Janet, Norma, Vern, Amy, Cathy, Cindy, Dorothy, Helga, Carol, June, Jerry, Shirley and Sarah. Be their comfort and hope, their healing and their strength. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We give you thanks for the salvation and life you give us through Christ Jesus. You do not leave your people as orphans but strengthen the penitent with the body and blood of your Son. Help us to receive what you offer here for our good, that this Holy Communion may strengthen our faith and equip us for your service. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: All these things and whatever else you know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

People: Amen.

9:00 THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

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Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

HYMN #837 "Lift High the Cross"

**Refrain: Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
Till all the world adore His sacred name.**

Come, Christians, follow where our Captain trod,
Our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. Refrain

Led on their way by this triumphant sign,
The hosts of God in conqu'ring ranks combine. Refrain

All newborn soldiers of the Crucified
Bear on their brows the seal of Him who died. Refrain

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
As Thou hast promised, draw us all to Thee. Refrain

Let ev'ry race and ev'ry language tell
Of Him who saves our lives from death and hell. Refrain

So shall our song of triumph ever be;
Praise to the Crucified for victory! Refrain

HYMN #533 "Jesus Has Come and Brings Pleasure"

Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal,
Alpha, Omega, Beginning and End;
God-head, humanity, union supernal,
O great Redeemer, You come as our friend!
Heaven and earth, now proclaim this great wonder:
Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal!

Jesus has come! Now see bonds rent asunder!
Fetters of death now dissolve, disappear.
See Him burst through with a voice as of thunder!
He sets us free from our guilt and our fear,
Lifts us from shame to the place of His honor.
Jesus has come! Hear the roll of God's thunder!

Jesus has come as the mighty Redeemer.
See now the threatening strong one disarmed!
Jesus breaks down all the walls of death's fortress,
Brings forth the pris'ners triumphant, unharmed.
Satan, you wicked one, own now your master!
Jesus has come! He, the mighty Redeemer!

Jesus has come as the King of all glory!
Heaven and earth, O declare His great pow'r,
Capturing hearts with the heavenly story;
Welcome Him now in this fast fleeting hour!
Ponder His love! Take the crown He has for you!
Jesus has come! He, the King of all glory!

HYMN #632 "O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee"

O Jesus, blessed Lord, to Thee My heartfelt thanks forever be,
Who hast so lovingly bestowed On me Thy body and Thy blood.

Break forth, my soul, for joy and say: What wealth is come to me this day!
My Savior dwells within my heart: How blessed am I! How good Thou art!

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We thank you, our Maker, for creating us and for re-creating us through the cleansing waters of Baptism. We specifically thank you this day for serving us the body and blood of Jesus, in bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins. Empower us to join you in the work you are doing in our world; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and rules with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor: The almighty God—Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit—bless you, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #922 “Go, My Children, With My Blessing”

Go, My children, with My blessing, Never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; You are my own.
In My love’s baptismal river I have made you Mine forever.
Go, My children, with My blessing – You are My own.

Go, My children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure.
Here you heard My dear Son’s story; Here you touched Him, Saw His glory.
Go, My children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.

Go, My children, fed and nourished, Closer to Me;
Grow in love and love by serving, Joyful and free.
Here My Spirit’s power filled you; Here His tender comfort stilled you.
Go, My children, fed and nourished, Joyful and free.

I the Lord will bless and keep you And give you peace.
I the Lord will smile upon you And give you peace;
I the Lord will be your Father, Savior, Comforter, and Brother.
Go, My children; I will keep you And give you peace.

9:00 ANTHEM

“The Blessing”

Preacher

Liturgist

Organist

Pastor Harold Bender

Pastor Joshua Grotelueschen

JoLynn Bender

Student Worship Team:

Ryan Allmann, Micah Baars, Annalise Carson, Eliza Carson, Gus Carson, Lillia Carson, Mariana Fimreite, Eli Galindo, Nadia Galindo, Abigail Gennerman, Liam Gennerman, Cooper Klich, Ainsley Kosek, Blake Kosek, Emilia Kosek, Alexander Meeks, Alysse Partl, Lance Romano, Logan Romano, Mason Rowell, Henry Sanchez, Miriam Sanchez, Vincent Sanchez, Audrey Segura, Joseph Segura, Leyna Sleik, Maia Sleik, Nicholas Ulbing, Madison Vogt