

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 17 & 20, 2026

As We Gather

Today's message centers on what it means to be a church that truly pleases God. In a world that often defines Christianity by judgment or division, Jesus calls His people to something different—to love as He has loved us. This love is not something we create on our own, but something Christ gives to us and works through us. As we hear His Word today, we are reminded that His love changes us, carries us, and sends us out to make room for one more.

✠ WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP ✠

Hymn Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (LSB 700) *sts. 1–2*

Invocation

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

Opening Sentences *Psalm 124:8; John 14:18; Hebrews 13:6*

P Our help is in the name of the LORD,
C **who made heaven and earth.**

P Jesus said, "I will not leave you as orphans;
C **I will come to you."**

P So we can confidently say,
C **"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"**

Confession and Absolution *John 14:19*

P We confess: Father, we have neglected You and Your commandments.
C **Forgive us, Lord.**

P Jesus, we have doubted Your Word and failed to display Your love to others.

C **Forgive us, Lord.**

P Spirit, we have trusted our own sinful hearts rather than seeking Your truth.

C **Forgive us, Lord.**

P O Triune God, look on us in mercy and make Your dwelling within us.

C **Restore us as Your rescued people to seek Your holy will. Amen.**

P To save you from sin, the Father gave you His very own Son. On His cross, Jesus paid your debt and rose to declare, "because I live, you also will live." By the Spirit's power, we trust in the pardon won for us by Christ, our Lord. In the stead and by the command of Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

WORD

Introit

Psalm 119:89–93; antiphon: v. 105

C **Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.**

P Forever, O LORD,
Your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.

Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
You have established the earth, and it stands fast.

By Your appointment they stand this day,
for all things are Your servants.

If Your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.

I will never forget Your precepts,
for by them You have given me life.

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son**
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

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Kyrie *LSB 204*

C **Lord, have mercy;**
Christ, have mercy;
Lord, have mercy.

Gloria in Excelsis *LSB 204*

C **1 To God on high be glory**
And peace to all the earth;
Goodwill from God in heaven
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!
We praise and bless You, Father;
Your holy name, we sing—
Our thanks for Your great glory,
Lord God, our heav'nly King.

2 To You, O sole-begotten,
The Father's Son, we pray;
O Lamb of God, our Savior,
You take our sins away.
Have mercy on us, Jesus;
Receive our heartfelt cry,
Where You in pow'r are seated
At God's right hand on high—

3 For You alone are holy;
You only are the Lord.
Forever and forever,
Be worshiped and adored;
You with the Holy Spirit
Alone are Lord Most High,
In God the Father's glory.
"Amen!" our glad reply.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.
O Holy Trinity, in concert You have written Your truth into the foundations of all existence. Help us to declare Your works, live by Your wisdom, work for Your glory, and rest in Your grace, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

First Reading *Acts 17:16–31*

While Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. 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. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. And they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 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. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 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, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 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.'

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. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 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."

L This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

1 Peter 3:13–22

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts regard 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, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

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, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, 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. 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, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

L This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

John 19:25–30

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the nineteenth chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Hymn Where Charity and Love Prevail (LSB 845)

sts. 1, 5–6 (Tune 528)

Series: Faith that Honors God

Sermon: A Church that Loves *John 14:15–21*

Apostles' Creed (found on the back cover of hymnal)

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**
maker of heaven…

Prayer of the Church (Hear our prayer)

P ... Lord in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

Offering

I Love Your Kingdom, Lord (LSB 651) *sts. 1, 3, 5*

1 I love Your kingdom, Lord,
The place of Your abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.

3 I love Your Church, O God,
Your saints in ev'ry land,
Dear as the apple of Your eye
And graven on Your hand.

5 Sure as Your truth shall last,
To Zion shall be giv'n
The brightest glories earth can yield
And brighter bliss of heav'n.

Text: Timothy Dwight, 1752–1817, alt.



✠ THE LORD'S SUPPER ✠

We follow the liturgy on Pages 208-212 in the hymnal.

Preface *LSB 208*

Proper Preface

Sanctus *LSB 208*

Prayer of Thanksgiving *John 14:19*

Lord's Prayer

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini

Agnus Dei *LSB 210*

Distribution Hymns

Children of the Heavenly Father (LSB 725)
O God, My Faithful God (LSB 696)
Fruitful Trees, the Spirit's Sowing (LSB 691)
My Faith Looks Up to Thee (LSB 702)

Sit

Lord's Supper Dismissal

P Now may this eating and drinking, of our Savior's precious body and blood, Strengthen you, preserve you, and keep you in the one true Christian faith that leads you to eternal life. Know in peace, and joy, that your sins are T forgiven you.

C **Amen.**

Stand

Nunc Dimittis *LSB 211*

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

Benediction

Closing Hymn

Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me (LSB 722)

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 2.
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