



# THE LUTHERAN CENTER

**Sunday May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**

\*denotes that the congregation is standing

## **Welcome**

*(We gather in the name of Jesus Christ, remembering together the promise of baptism.)*

**P** Friends in Christ: Today we give thanks to God and seek God's blessing as we commend and celebrate those who are graduating so that as they go forth they may proclaim your Word and be a living presence of your grace.

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, for all of life  
and for our common calling as your servants,  
given through the gift of baptism,  
for the work of your church  
and for the ministries of word, sacrament, and service.

We give you thanks for all your children  
whom you call to be leaders in your church  
and for teachers who form them for service.

Through the witness and mission granted by new beginnings,  
may the church commission those whom complete their course of study this year  
so that they may courageously enact your work of compassion, mercy, justice, and peace;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C Amen.**

## **\*Thanksgiving for Baptism**

**A** As we celebrate all our graduates this day, we remember the gift of new life that you gave us in baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,  
the fountain of living water,

the rock who gave us birth,  
our light and our salvation.

**C Amen.**

**A** Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

**C We give you thanks, O God,  
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world,  
calling forth life in which you took delight.**

**A** Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By water and your Word you claim us as your children,  
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

**C We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit,  
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.**

**A** To you be given honor and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

### **\*Greeting**

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

**C And also with you.**

### **\*Kyrie**

**A** In peace, in peace let us pray to the Lord.

**R Kyrie eleison, Lord have mercy upon us.  
Christe eleison, Christ, have mercy upon us.**

**A** For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **R**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all,  
let us pray to the Lord. **R**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **R**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**C** Amen, amen.

**\*This is the Feast**

This is the feast of victory for our God  
This is the feast of victory for our God  
Alleluia Alleluia

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain  
Whose blood set us free to be people of God  
Power, riches, wisdom, and strength  
And honor, blessing, and glory are His

This is the feast of victory for our God  
This is the feast of victory for our God  
Alleluia Alleluia

Sing with all the people of God  
And join in the hymn of all creation  
Blessing, honor, glory and might  
Be to God and the Lamb forever, amen  
This is the feast of victory for our God  
This is the feast of victory for our God  
Alleluia Alleluia

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign, Alleluia

This is the feast of victory for our God  
This is the feast of victory for our God  
Alleluia Alleluia

Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia

**\*Prayer of the Day**

*(The Assembly is seated.)*

## **WORD**

*(The lifegiving Word of God is read and proclaimed in the presence of the Assembly.)*

### **First Reading**

*Psalm 22:25-31*

**L** A reading from the Psalms.

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

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

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

For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.

To 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.

Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,

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

**L** The Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

### **Second Reading**

*1 John 4:7-21*

**L** A reading from 1<sup>st</sup> John.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to

do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

**L** The Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation**

Soloist: Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

**C** Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

**\*Gospel**

*John 15:1-9*

**P** The holy gospel according to John.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**P** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(The Assembly is seated.)*

**Sermon**

**Vicar Emma Grinde**

**\*Hymn of the Day**

*Spirit of Gentleness*

*Refrain*

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness calling and free;  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

- 1 You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing:  
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings." *Refrain*
- 2 You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,  
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. *Refrain*
- 3 You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
and down in the city you called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. *Refrain*
- 4 You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;  
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions your people arise. *Refrain*

Text: James K. Manley, b. 1940

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## **\*The Apostle's Creed**

**☩ I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.**

**☩ Amen.**

## **\*Prayers**

### **MEAL**

*(The gifts of God are gathered together and the Body and Blood of Jesus are shared in bread and wine.)*

### **Peace**

**☩** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**☩ And also with you.**

### **Offering**

*(Don't have cash to give? No problem! You can Venmo The Lutheran Center (@Lutheran-Center) or give online at [www.lutherancenterunl.com/](http://www.lutherancenterunl.com/)!)*

**\* Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful**

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord.

Fill to the brim our cup of blessing.

Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, and be fed with the bread of life.

Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer now.

Grace our table with your presence.

Give us a foretaste of the feast,

give us a foretaste of the feast,

give us a foretaste of the feast to come

**Offering Prayer and Gifting**

*(After the offering is received, the graduates assemble near the chancel. The assembly remains seated.)*

**P** Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with abundant blessings. You make the wheat shoot forth from the earth and the grape mature on the vine. You give us one another as gifts. You gather all things together and then send them out again as nourishment for the world. Give us glad and generous hearts always, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C** Amen.

**P** Recognizing that each of you are and will continue to be a gift to this community, we offer a sign of our love in Christ to each of you, a gift that you might continue to grow in grace and remember the Lutheran Center in your prayers.

**Blessing for Graduates**

*(Gifts are given. The assembly is invited to raise their hands in blessing toward the graduates.)*

**P** Eternal God,  
In your will our lives are lived,

**C** **And by your wisdom truth is found.**  
**We pray for graduates who finish a course of study,**  
**And move onto something new.**  
**Take away anxiety or confusion of purpose,**  
**and give them confidence in your future,**  
**where energies may be gathered up**  
**and given to neighbors in love;**  
**for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.**  
**Amen.**

**P** Gathered together, with this great abundance of gifts from God, we turn our hearts to the gift of God's presence among us through the holy feast. Please return to your seats.

## **\*Great Thanksgiving and Holy, Holy, Holy**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

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

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy ... we praise your name and join in their unending hymn.

**C** **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
Heav'n and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.  
Bless'd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

*(Sing each line twice, and then choose a line to sing two additional times.)*

## **\*Eucharistic Prayer**

### **\*The Lord's Prayer**

**P** Lord, teach us to pray.

**C** **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**

**P** The risen Christ invites us to this table.  
Come, eat and be satisfied.

*(As a sign of our trust for God's grace among us and our trust for one another, The Lutheran Center extends Christ's welcome to all; all are welcome to the Lord's Table for the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please wait for an usher to direct you to the communion rail.)*

### **Lamb of God**

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, grant us peace, grant us peace.

## Communion Hymn *We Come to the Hungry Feast*

- 1 We come to the hungry feast  
hungry for a word of peace.  
To hungry hearts unsatisfied  
the love of God is not denied.  
We come, we come to the hungry feast.
- 2 We come to the hungry feast  
hungry for a world released  
from hungry folk of ev'ry kind,  
the poor in body, poor in mind.  
We come, we come to the hungry feast.
- 3 We come to the hungry feast  
hungry that the hunger cease,  
and knowing, though we eat our fill,  
the hunger will stay with us; still  
we come, we come to the hungry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943

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## *Here Is Bread*

- 1 Here is bread, here is wine,  
Christ is with us, he is with us.  
Break the bread, taste the wine,  
Christ is with us here.

### *Refrain*

In this bread there is healing,  
In this cup is life forever.  
In this moment, by the Spirit,  
Christ is with us here.

- 2 Here is grace, here is peace,  
Christ is with us, he is with us.  
Know his grace, find his peace,  
Feast on Jesus here. *Refrain*
- 3 Here we are, joined in one,  
Christ is with us, he is with us.  
We'll proclaim till he comes  
Jesus crucified. *Refrain*

## Table Blessing

### Post-Communion Prayer

#### SENDING

*(We are sent out into the world renewed as the Body of Christ in service to the world and to one another.)*

#### Rite of the Ending of an Academic Year

**P** Let us pray:

Almighty God, look with favor upon those  
who have completed another year of learning and growth.  
Give them courage, patience, and vision as they go their way;  
and strengthen us all in our vocation  
of witness to the world and of service to others,  
for the sake of your whole creation  
and to the glory of your holy name both now and forever.

**C** Amen.

**P** Let us pray for our graduates:

We give you thanks O God,  
That we have been eternally called as your children through the mark of baptism,  
and have been forever bound as siblings by the body and blood of your son, Jesus Christ our  
Savior and Lord.

**C** Today, we especially give thanks for the members of this community who are graduating,  
that as they leave this place, they may use the knowledge gained here as nourishment for a  
new and greater journey.  
Amen.

**P** Let us pray for our seminary intern, Emma who is not leaving yet, but whose time of internship  
we commemorate:  
We give you thanks O God,  
That we have been eternally called as your children through the mark of baptism,  
and have been forever bound as siblings by the body and blood of your son, Jesus Christ our  
Savior and Lord. Today, we especially give thanks for our seminary intern, Emma, who has  
served among us as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ this past year, and who has shared life  
with this community.

**C** Guide Emma as she continues in preparation for the ministry of Word and Sacrament. May  
your Holy Spirit rest upon her continually, that new life and hope will be proclaimed  
through her words and actions.  
Amen.

**P** Even as we are each sent forth from this place, renew in us the commitment to use our gifts in the service of others, and especially of those in need. Let us be your hands to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, comfort the weary and outcast, welcome the stranger, care for creation, and be loving neighbors to all people.

**+Blessing**

**P** May all the hard work you've done,  
books you've read,  
lectures you've attended,  
papers you've written  
be a blessing for your future.

May your new found knowledge  
contribute to the wellbeing of our  
communities and the world.

Christ sends you forth  
to live boldly in the promise  
of the resurrection,  
empowers you in your witness,  
and strengthens you in serving.  
The God of all grace bless you  
now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

**\*Sending Hymn**

- 1 Sent forth by God's blessing,  
our true faith confessing,  
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.  
The supper is ended.  
Oh, now be extended  
the fruits of this service in all who believe.  
The seed of Christ's teaching,  
receptive souls reaching,  
shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
Your grace shall incite us,  
your love shall unite us  
to work for your kingdom and answer your call.
  
- 2 With praise and thanksgiving  
to God ever-living,  
the tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face—  
our faith ever sharing,  
in love ever caring,  
embracing God's children, the whole human race.  
With your feast you feed us,  
with your light now lead us;  
unite us as one in this life that we share.  
Then may all the living  
with praise and thanksgiving  
give honor to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt.

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**\*Dismissal**

- A** Alleluia! Christ is risen.
- C** **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**
- A** Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!
- C** **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**