

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH
April 21, 2024—9:45 AM
Fourth Sunday of Easter—The Church at Thessalonica
We Proclaim and Practice Christ's Love



OPENING LITANY AND SONG “Our God is an Awesome God”

Our God is an awesome God!

We are gathered to praise God’s holy name.

Our God is an awesome God!

We are gathered to learn God’s wonderful works.

Our God is an awesome God!

We are gathered to share God’s amazing love with one another and the world.

Sing: Our God is an awesome God. He reigns from heaven above.

With wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God.

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

We celebrate the promise of Easter

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

We are witnesses of the Resurrection miracle!

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

We are sent out to testify to this Good News!

Sing: Our God is an awesome God. He reigns from heaven above.

With wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God.

The Holy Spirit calls you to this place.

We are inspired to hear and know God’s word.

The Holy Spirit calls you to this place.

We are inspired to sing God’s praises!

The Holy Spirit calls you to this place.

We are inspired to worship and sent forth to serve!

Sing: Our God is an awesome God. He reigns from heaven above.

With wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God.

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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.**

SPECIAL MUSIC **“All In The April Evening” Chancel Choir**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

Let us pray: **Holy God, it is not always easy to live out the gospel in our daily lives. We are sometimes met with opposition or rejection when we stand in solidarity with those who are marginalized. Strengthen us by the example of the early Christians that we might persist in our call to bear witness to you. In and through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

FIRST READING:

Acts 17:1-9

After Paul and Silas had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ²And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, ³explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, ‘This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you.’ ⁴Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. ⁵But the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the market-places they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar. While they were searching for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly, they attacked Jason’s house. ⁶When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, ‘These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also, ⁷and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus.’ ⁸The people and the city officials were disturbed when they heard this, ⁹and after they had taken bail from Jason and the others, they let them go.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

2 We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of people we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place where your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SONG *Great Are You Lord*

You give life You are love. You bring light to the darkness
You give hope You restore ev'ry heart that is broken
And great are You Lord

Refrain: It's Your breath in our lungs,
So we pour out our praise; We pour out our praise
It's Your breath in our lungs, So we pour out our praise to You only

Bridge And all the earth will shout Your praise
Our hearts will cry these bones will sing: Great are You Lord *Refrain*

SERMON

SONG: *Will You Come and Follow Me*

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1 "Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

2 "Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?

Will you risk the hostile stare, should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray'r in you and you in me?

3 "Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the pris'ners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?"

4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?"

5 Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER: Holy Spirit, who guided Paul to carry to the good news of Christ to all the world, and who inspires us in our giving to support the life and ministries of this congregation, accept these, our gifts, for your good purposes. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER: 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION: Jesus, who meets us wherever we are, and strengthens us in our call to work for his justice, now invites us to the feast of his body and blood. Come and experience the presence of Jesus in this holy meal.

DISTRIBUTION: *Communion will be served continuously. Proceed up the center aisle and return to your pews using the side aisles. We have purple wine or white grape juice available. There is also gluten-free bread available for those who need it.*

SONG *In Christ Alone*

In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light my strength my song
This Cornerstone this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love what depths of peace
When fears are stilled when strivings cease
My Comforter my All in All. Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone who took on flesh. Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness

Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid. Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay. Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine. Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life no fear in death. This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell no scheme of man Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home. Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

Almighty God, who raised our Lord Jesus from death, lift you up and restore you to wholeness. **Amen.**

Jesus Christ, the Word of life, bless you and send you to be his witnesses. **Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit, who renews the whole earth, refresh you in the gift of baptism this day and always. **Amen.**

CLOSING *My Lighthouse*

In my wrestling and in my doubts In my failures You won't walk out
Your great love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea whoa oh. You are the peace in my troubled
sea

In the silence You won't let go. In the questions Your truth will hold
Your great love will lead me through

You are the peace in my troubled sea whoa oh. You are the peace in my troubled sea

My Lighthouse my Lighthouse,
Shining in the darkness I will follow You oh
My Lighthouse my Lighthouse
I will trust the promise. You will carry me safe to shore
Safe to shore safe to shore safe to shore

I won't fear what tomorrow brings, With each morning I'll rise and sing
My God's love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea whoa oh. You are the peace in my troubled sea

My Lighthouse my Lighthouse
Shining in the darkness I will follow You oh
My Lighthouse my Lighthouse
I will trust the promise. You will carry me safe to shore
Safe to shore safe to shore safe to shore

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF KITS

Lutheran World Relief Kits will be assembled in May. We will be sending 45 personal care kits. We need 13 nail clippers and 12 wide-toothed combs. If you would like to donate any of these items, they can be placed in the brown baskets in the narthex or the bin inside the gym door. Thank you for your contributions.

-WELCA Mission Actions

A NEW MEMBER meeting will be held today, April 21 for all those interested in

joining St. James or learning more about St. James. We will meet at 6 PM. New members will be welcomed during worship on Sunday, April 28th. Please talk to one of the pastors to sign up or if you would like more information.

FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION will be held on Saturday, April 27 from 9-12. First Communion instruction is for all those in 3rd grade or older who have not yet had the class. First Communion Sunday will be held on May 5th. Please contact Pastor Jeni to sign up for the class. If you would like to have First Communion, but can't join the class that day, please talk to Pastor Jeni as well.

Next Week

Wednesday Meal: Variety

Tuesday, April 23rd: Do-Days 9 am

Wednesday, April 24th: Men's Breakfast 7 am, 5:30 Dinner, Confirmation at 6:30, Choir 7 pm

Saturday, April 27th: First Communion Instruction 9 am- Noon