



## OPENING SENTENCES

*Psalm 66:1–4, 8–9; 40:5*

Pastor: Shout for joy to God, all the earth;

People: **sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise!**

Pastor: Say to God, “How awesome are Your deeds!

People: **All the earth worships You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to Your name.”**

Pastor: Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of His praise be heard,

People: **who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip.**

Pastor: You have multiplied, O LORD my God, Your wondrous deeds and Your thoughts toward us; none can compare with You!

People: **I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.**

Pastor: We prepare for our time of confession as we sing the confession hymn, “O Jesus, Lamb of God, Thou Art.” As penitent people, we ask God for His grace and mercy.

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.

People: **O almighty God, most merciful Father, I, a repentant sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended You. By nature, I am a sinful creature. In thought, word, and deed I have continually transgressed Your law. For this I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a penitent and contrite being. Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of Your Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful life and bear fruit in keeping with true repentance.**

Pastor: God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: As you believe, so let it be. As a called and ordained servant Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

+ **WORD** +

**INTROIT** *Psalm 145:1–2, 8, 10, 21; antiphon: John 16:16*

Pastor: A little while, and you will see Me no longer;  
and again a little while, and you will see Me.

**People: I will extol You, my God and King,  
and bless Your name forever and ever.**

Pastor: Every day I will bless You  
and praise Your name forever and ever.

**People: The LORD is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

Pastor: All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD,  
and all Your saints shall bless You!

**People: My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,  
and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever.  
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.**

Pastor: A little while, and you will see Me no longer;  
and again a little while, and you will see Me.

**SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**Pastor:** Let us pray.  
Risen and ascended Lord, You are the vine and we are the branches. Apart from You there is no life. By Baptism You have grafted us into Your gracious life. Cause Your Word to abide in us and make us fruitful to the glory of Your Father, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## **FIRST READING**

*Acts 8:26–40*

**(Philip witnesses about Jesus to the Ethiopian official.)**

<sup>26</sup> Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.”

<sup>27</sup> So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship,

<sup>28</sup> and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet.

<sup>29</sup> The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

<sup>30</sup> Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

<sup>31</sup> “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

<sup>32</sup> This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,  
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup> In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?”

<sup>35</sup> Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

<sup>36</sup> As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?”

<sup>[37]</sup> <sup>38</sup> And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

<sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

<sup>40</sup> Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

### *Psalm 150*

People: **Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens!**

Women: *Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!*

Men: *Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with lute and harp!*

Women: *Praise Him with tambourine and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe!*

Men: *Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals!*

People: **Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! 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.**

## EPISTLE

### *1 John 4:1–11*

#### **(An exhortation to lives of Christian love)**

<sup>1</sup>Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

<sup>2</sup>This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

<sup>3</sup>but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

<sup>4</sup>You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

<sup>5</sup>They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them.

<sup>6</sup>We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit<sup>[a]</sup> of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

<sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

<sup>9</sup>This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

<sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

<sup>11</sup>Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE**

*Romans 6:9; John 14:23*

Pastor: Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

**People: Alleluia. If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. Alleluia.**

**HOLY GOSPEL**

*John 15:1–8*

**(Jesus says that He is the vine and His people are the branches.)**

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

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

<sup>2</sup>He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes<sup>[a]</sup> so that it will be even more fruitful.

<sup>3</sup>You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

<sup>4</sup>Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup>“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

<sup>6</sup>If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

<sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

<sup>8</sup>This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY “Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain” LSB 487**

1. Come, you faithful, raise the strain Of triumphant gladness!  
God has brought His Israel Into joy from sadness.  
Loosed from Pharoah's bitter yoke Jacob's sons and daughters,  
Led them with unmoistened foot Through the Red Sea waters.
2. 'Tis the spring of souls today: Christ hath burst His prison,  
And from three days' sleep in death As a sun has risen;  
All the winter of our sins, Long and dark, is flying  
From His light, to whom is giv'n Laud and praise undying.
3. Now the queen of seasons, bright With the day of splendor,  
With the royal feast of feasts, Comes its joy to render;  
Comes to gladden faithful hearts Which with true affection  
Welcomes in unwearied strains Jesus' resurrection!
4. For today among His own Christ appeared, bestowing  
His deep peace, which evermore Passes human knowing.  
Neither could the gates of death Nor the tomb's dark portal  
Nor the watchers nor the seal Hold Him as a mortal.
5. Alleluia! Now we cry To our King immortal,  
Who, triumphant, burst the bars Of the tomb's dark portal.  
Come, you faithful, raise the strain Of triumphant gladness!  
God has brought His Israel Into joy from sadness!

**SERMON**

**Pastor Matthew Kusch**

## **CREED**

### *The Second Article*

Pastor: As we celebrate the risen Christ in this season of Easter, let us speak together the words of the Apostles' Creed regarding our Savior, who is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

**People: I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Pastor: What does this mean?

**People: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.**

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*LSB, p. 215*

Pastor: Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us. God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**



Pastor: May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend [*name(s)*] and all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: And lastly, O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER***Matthew 6:9–13*

**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.**

**OFFERING****HYMN****“Take My Life and Let It Be” Sts. 1, 4–5: *LSB 783***

1. Take my life and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;  
Take my moments and my days,  
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
  
4. Take my silver and my gold,  
Not a mite would I withhold;  
Take my intellect and use  
Ev'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.
  
5. Take my will and make it Thine,  
It shall be no longer mine;  
Take my heart, it is Thine own,  
It shall be Thy royal throne.

**BENEDICTION***Numbers 6:24–26*

**Pastor:**     The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**People:**     **Amen.**

**HYMN**

**“Lift High the Cross” *LSB 837***

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

1. Come, Christians, follow where our Captain trod,  
Our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. [Refrain]
2. Led on their way by this triumphant sign,  
The hosts of God in conqu'ring ranks combine. [Refrain]
3. All newborn soldiers of the Crucified  
Bear on their brows the seal of Him who died. [Refrain]
4. O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
As Thou hast promised, draw us all to Thee. [Refrain]
5. Let ev'ry race and ev'ry language tell  
Of Him who saves our lives from death and hell. [Refrain]
6. So shall our song of triumph ever be;  
Praise to the Crucified for victory! [Refrain]

**Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 2.  
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