



St. John Lutheran Church ELCA Waseca, MN

Sunday, April 25, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Easter

GATHERING

Introduction

Our reading from Acts 8 includes three details that illustrate the Christian mission as separate from Judaism and spreading beyond boundaries of race, ethnicity, skin color, and sexuality. (1) Philip preaches the good news to the Samaritans (8:12) and Philistines (8:40 – Azotus is the Philistine capital), both multi-racial/multi-ethnic areas outside of Israel. (2) Philip instructs and baptizes a eunuch (castrated men, employed in some cultures as servants of a queen). (3) In an example of early Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, Philip uses Isaiah 53:7-8 as an image for the death of Christ, in whose name the outsider is baptized and proclaimed a ‘child of God,’ brother in Christ, inheritor of eternal life, and member of the kingdom of God.

Welcome and Announcement

(please stand)

Thanksgiving for Baptism

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

P We thank you, risen Christ,

**C for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.**

P We bless you, risen Christ,

**C that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth.**

P Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.

C Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.

Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

P Make us one, risen Christ.

C Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life.

P To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

Opening Hymn: (purple) **#88 Lift up your heads**

1. *Lift up your heads, O you gates; swing wide, you everlasting doors.
Lift up your heads, O you gates; swing wide, you everlasting doors.*

~Refrain~

***That the King of glory may come in, that the King of glory may come in;
that the King of glory may come in, that the King of glory may come in.***

2. *Up from the dead he ascends, through ev'ry rank of heav'nly pow'r.
Let heav'n prepare the highest place, throw wide the everlasting doors.*

~Refrain~

3. *With trumpet blast and shouts of joy, all heaven greets the risen king.
With angel choirs come line the way, throw wide the gates and welcome him.*

~Refrain~

Prayer of the Day

P: Please join your hearts with me in prayer:

Fulfiller of the prophecies, by water and your Word of grace you claim people from every nation, race, and color as your own. Remind us how your grace has claimed us with water and the Word, so that we may rejoice in the life given to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. And then send us to embody this good news of your grace to all people. We ask this for the sake of the one whose Spirit lives in us, Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise: (purple) **#98 Morning has broken**

1. *Morning has broken like the first morning; black-bird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning! Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!*
2. *Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven, like the first dew fall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, sprung in completeness where his feet pass.*
3. *Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning, born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise ev'ry morning, God's recreation of the new day!*

(please be seated)

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

First Reading: Acts 8:26-40

Led by the Spirit, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official who is returning to his African home after having been to Jerusalem to worship. Philip uses their encounter to proclaim the gospel to him. Upon coming to faith in Jesus, he is baptized by Philip.

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

R The Word of God, word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

(please stand)

Gospel Acclamation #7 Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

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

Alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.

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P *The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty fourth chapter.*

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

Gospel: Luke 24:44-48

Jesus commissions his disciples for a mission to proclaim the message of repentance and forgiveness to all nations.

⁴⁴Then [Jesus] said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.”

P *The Gospel of the Lord.*

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

(Please be seated)

Hymn: (purple)

#126 Sing out, earth and skies

1. *Come, O God of all the earth: come to us, O Righteous One; come, and bring our love to birth: in the glory of your Son.*

~Refrain~

***Sing out, earth and skies! Sing of the God who loves you!
Raise your joyful cries! Dance to the life around you!***

2. *Come, O God of wind and flame: fill the earth with righteousness; teach us all to sing your name: may our lives your love confess.*

~Refrain~

3. *Come, O God of flashing light: twinkling star and burning sun; God of day and God of night: in your light we all are one.*

~Refrain~

4. *Come, O God of snow and rain: shower down up on the earth; come, O God of joy and pain: God of sorrow, God of mirth.*

~Refrain~

5. *Come, O Justice, come, O Peace: come and shape our hearts anew; come and make oppression cease: bring us all to life in you.*

~Refrain~

Message

Who is your ‘everyone?’

Pastor John Omans

Message Song (purple)

#14 Baptized and Set Free

1. *We are people created, chosen by God. Then we’re washed, ever gently, in mercy and love. Sin has power no more. Jesus opened the door to a Fountain bringing healing, and wholeness and more.*
2. *We are fed and we’re nourished, filled and refreshed. Then our hunger returns and again we are blessed. For whatever the need, God is greater indeed: endless Ocean, always deeper than all of our need.*
3. *We are nourished by water, all living things, and by life that the Spirit abundantly brings. As we journey toward home, may your presence be known: precious River, ever-flowing, now carry us home.*
4. *Now with praise and thanksgiving, we join the song. All are welcome! We gather to sing loud and strong. Not enslaved, but set free! From now on, all will be one in Jesus, one in water, baptized and set free!*

(Please Stand)

Apostles' 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 into hell. 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.

The Prayers of the Church

Prayers

P: Hear our prayer

C: *The Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words to express oh, oh, oh.*
(2 times)

The Peace

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

P Share a greeting of Christ's peace with one another.
(We share Christ's Peace)

(please be seated)

Offering Invitation *(offering may be placed in offering plates located at corner of side aisle)*

Stewardship Minute

Please join me in giving thanks for our church council and commission leaders, who give of their time and talents for the sake of the mission we share together in, and through, this church.

We have the following commissions: Buildings and Grounds, Worship, Education, Congregational Life, Social Ministry and Outreach. If you are interested in serving on a commission and strengthening our shared mission in this church, please contact the church office or a member of the church council. Thanks be to God!

Offering Prayer

P: Merciful God,

C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and 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.

SENDING

Blessing

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

(please stand)

Sending Song (purple)

#123 Shine Jesus Shine

Refrain~

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;

blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;

send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

*1. Lord the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth you now bring us.*

Shine on me, shine on me:

Refrain~

*2. As we gaze on your kingly bright ness, so our faces display your likeness,
Every changing from glory to glory, mirrored here, may our live tell your story.*

Shine on me, shine on me:

Refrain~

Dismissal

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

C Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Postlude

PLEASE WAIT FOR USHERS TO EXIT YOU OUT OF PEWS.

Leaders in the Service

Pastor: John Omans

Pianist: Al Tonn

Acolyte: Alexis Brinkman

Reader: Gyles Randall

Ushers: Kim & Kaden Elias,

Council Person: Sue Michaels

Videographer: Merrill Schultz

Thank you to all these members of St. John for offering their time and talents.

