

**St. Paul Lutheran Church**

**Pontiac, IL**

**May 16, 2021**

**Ascension of Our Lord**

**We gather to worship, reach out, and serve the Lord.**

**Welcome**

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church. Whether you have worshipped with us many times, or this is your first time, there is a place for you here. Your presence among us is a gift.

God’s Peace be with you.

**Introduction to the day**

**Introduction**

In today’s readings the risen Christ ascends into heaven and his followers are assured that the Spirit will empower them to be witnesses throughout the earth. The disciples are told to not gaze up into heaven to look for Jesus (Acts 1:11); we find his presence among us as we proclaim the word and share the Easter feast. We too long for the Spirit to enliven our faith and invigorate our mission.

**Prelude**

**GATHERING**

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

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

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

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

L: 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.*

We thank you, risen Christ,

**We thank you, risen Christ,**

for these waters where you make us new,

Leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ,

**We bless you, risen Christ**

that your Spirit comes to us

In the grace-filled waters of rebirth,

Like rains to our thirsting earth,

Like streams that revive our souls,

Like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

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

Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.

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

Make us one, risen Christ.

**Make us one, risen Christ.**

Cleanse our hearts.

Shower us with life.

To you be given all praise,

With the Holy Spirit,

In the glory of God,

Now and forever. Let the church say Amen.

**A: Amen.**

**Greeting**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the

Holy Spirit be with you all**.**

**A: And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

L: Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**A: Amen**.

**Children’s Message (following the message children are invited to go to Children’s Chapel)**

**WORD**

**First Reading –** **Acts 1: 1-11**

L: A reading from Acts.

L: [Luke writes:] 1In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning 2until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; 5for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”  
  6So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

L:Word of God, word of life.

A**: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm Reading- Psalm 47**

L: A reading from Psalm.

1Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
  shout to God with a joyful sound.  
 2**For the Lord Most High is to be feared:**  
  **a great king over all the earth,**  
 3who subdues the peoples under us,  
  and the nations under our feet;  
 4**who chooses our inheritance for us,**  
  **the pride of Jacob, whom God loves.**  
 5God has gone up with a shout,  
  the Lord with the sound of the ram’s horn.  
 6**Sing praises to God, sing praises;**  
  **sing praises to our king, sing praises.**  
 7For God is king of all the earth;  
  sing praises with a song.  
 8**God reigns over the nations;**  
  **God is enthroned on high.**  
 9The nobles of the peoples have gathered as the people of the God of Abraham.  
  The rulers of the earth belong to God, who is highly exalted.

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy word.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading – Ephesians 1: 15-23**

L: A reading from Ephesians.

15I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason 16I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. 17I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, 18so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, 19and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. 20God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. 22And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, 23which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

L: Word of God, word of life.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

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*Please rise as you are able for the reading of the Holy Gospel.*

**Gospel Acclamation**

(spoken responsively)

L: *Alleluia*. Go and make disciples of all nations, says the Lord.

**A: I am with you always, to the end of the age. *Alleluia.***

**Gospel–Luke 24: 44-53**

L: The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

**A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

44[Jesus said to the eleven and those with 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. 49And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”  
  50Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. 51While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. 52And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; 53and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

L: The gospel of the Lord.

**A: Praise to you, O, Christ.**

**Sermon Pastor Mathew Berger**

**Hymn of the Day Hosanna to the Prince of Light Wendell Kimbrough**

**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**

Throughout our prayers, each petition ends “Hear us, O God.” The congregation is invited to respond, **“Your mercy is great.”**

**Sharing the Peace**

L: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**A: And also with you.**

*You are invited to share a sign of God’s peace with your neighbors by saying or typing, “Peace be with you.”*

**MEAL**

*All are welcome at Christ’s table.*

*Communion is distributed in front of the altar. The individual cups are filled with wine. The prepackaged cups are juice. If you prefer not to receive communion you may come forward with your hands crossed over your chest to receive a blessing or you may remain in your seat.*

**Offering**

*Offerings can be placed in the offering box at the back of the sanctuary, sent by mail or given online. You can send a check to St. Paul Lutheran Church 210 Deerfield Rd Pontiac, IL 61764 or give online at* [*stpaulpontiac.org*](http://www.stpaulpontiac.org/)

**Offertory Music**

**Offering Prayer**

L: God of Love,

You call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

For the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

**A: Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

L: The Lord be with you.

**A: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**A: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Preface**

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,

the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;

who in dying has destroyed death,

and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,

with earth and sea and all their creatures,

and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn saying

**A: Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**Lord God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory**

**Hosanna in the highest,**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

L: Holy, living, and loving God,

we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood,

for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,

and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus

who, living among us,

healed the sick,

fed the hungry,

and with a love stronger than death,

gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,

his life-giving death and glorious resurrection,

we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup:

carry us in your arms from death to life,

that we may live as your people,

clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church,

both now and forever, and all God’s people said...

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us,

**A: 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**

L: The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied.

**Communion Music**

**O Praise Him David Crowder Band**

**Blessing, Honor, Glory ELW 433**

**Prayer After Communion**

*a blessing is given, a prayer follows*

L: Wellspring of joy,

Through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.

Satisfy the hunger still around us,

And send us as joyful witnesses,

That your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A: Amen.**

**Announcements**

**SENDING**

**BLESSING FOR GRADUATES**

*Blankets are presented to the graduates*

Friends in Christ: Today we give thanks to God and seek God’s blessing upon the graduates from our congregations and upon all their future endeavors.

*A reading from Ephesians 3:17-19*

“[I pray] that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. 18 I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

L: The Lord be with you.

**A: And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God- you have brought these graduates safely to this day of rejoicing. We thank you for parents and all caretakers who have accompanied them along the way. Look with favor upon those who are graduating this year; comfort them in their disappointments and grief; 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. **Amen.**

*We now invite everyone to reach out a hand toward the graduates as we ask for God’s blessing.*

Holy God, bless these graduates... Mason Walsberg and Bryce Claypool.

Grant them joy in the completion of their work. Grow in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit; surround them with your loving presence; take them by the hand and walk with them in the path you are laying out before them. Through your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Blessing**

L: 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 the Holy Spirit,

Bless you now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

**Sending Hymn Lord, you give the Great Commission ELW 579**

*See music and lyrics on final page of bulletin*

**Dismissal**

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

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

L: Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

**A: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

**Postlude**

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Thank you to all those who contributed to today’s service: Worship Slides: Julie Mehlberg, Lector: Sandy Erickson, Ushers: Marty Heller, Musician: Sara Solberg, Livestream: Louis Kehinde, Sound: John Mehlberg, Communion Asst.: Marty Heller and Brad Solberg.

