

Announcements

Return to Normal plan – by May 9 we will be at very near 100% vaccinated against Covid. There will be a few people a few days shy of the 14 days after the second shot, but with everyone else vaccinated and case rates in our area fairly low, the risk should be very low. May 9 then will be the day that we can begin to worship without masks. If there are any who choose to be unvaccinated, or those not yet eligible, masks won't be required. However please continue to be vigilant. If you've been exposed, or think you might have, plan to participate in worship online. If any doubt at all, wear a mask and keep your distance. The vaccine is immensely effective at preventing serious illness, but apparently not completely protective against mild forms and we still want to be protective toward one another. For everyone, if you're sick, stay home. And if you continue to feel more comfortable wearing a mask, of course please do so.

At this point, the one thing that could derail this is a surge of a Covid variant that doesn't seem as responsive to the vaccine. So far, that has not happened and as I understand how this works, as vaccination rates increase, it shouldn't.

Ministry Appreciation – we've typically done a ministry/volunteer recognition on May 9. Ministry and volunteering have looked pretty different the last year, but there are still many of you who have been a huge help. So we will plan to say our thank yous that day.

Vacation

Below are my remaining vacation dates for the year. I'm hoping to get people from the congregation to share some of your experience from this year for at least some of them. Sign up is on the table in the narthex

July 18

August 29

October 24

Bethlehem Worship

May 2, 2021

Welcome and Announcements Confession and Forgiveness

P: Gathered in the name of the triune God +, we confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Risen Lord,

C: We confess that we are slow to believe, and even slower to follow where you lead us. We doubt your promise, create divisions among ourselves, and fail to proclaim the power of your resurrection. We choose to live small lives when you have given us the biggest gift of all: your eternal life. Forgive us. Raise us up to be a people who will serve you faithfully.

P: Christ is arisen, bringing gifts of life, mercy and pardon for sin! Believe that you are forgiven, and go out and live in the joy of your Lord's resurrection in the power of God's Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn *Blest Be the Tie that Binds*

ELW 657

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

Prayer of the Day

Risen Lord,

We all too often focus on only ourselves and what's best for us. Help us to see that we all thrive when we keep the well-being of others in our hearts, minds, and actions. In Christ's name we pray, **Amen.**

Narrative Reading Acts 4:32-5:10

³² Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³ With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵ They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. ³⁶ There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). ³⁷ He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

5 But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; ² with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ "Ananias," Peter asked, "why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us^[a] but to God!" ⁵ Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. ⁶ The young men came and wrapped up his body,^[b] then carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price." And she said, "Yes, that was the price." ⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." ¹⁰ Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Silence

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 of Intercession - Unmute

Exchange of Peace – Unmute

P: The peace of Christ be with you all

R: And also with you.

Please share the peace with one another

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of abundance, bless our gifts to the benefit of your world, that all the earth may know of your goodness and grace, offered through the resurrection of your son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Communion

P: The Lord be with you

R: And also with you

P: Lift up your hearts

R: We lift them to the Lord

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

R: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Communion Proclamation/Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Communion

Post-communion blessing and prayer

Benediction

P: May the Lord Bless you and keep you, the Lord's face shine on you with mercy, the Lord look upon you with favor + and give you peace. **Amen**

Sending Hymn *What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine* **ELW 774**

Dismissal

Go in peace to love God and your neighbor.

Thanks be to God.

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Blest Be the Tie That Binds

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris-tian love;
 2 Be-fore our Fa-ther's throne we pour our ar-dent prayers;
 3 We share our mu-tual woes, our mu-tual bur-dens bear,
 4 From sor-row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;

the u-ni-ty of heart and mind is like to that a-bove.
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com-forts and our cares.
 and of-ten for each oth-er flows the sym-pa-thiz-ing tear.
 and per-fect love and friend-ship reign through all e-ter-ni-ty.

Text: John Fawcett, 1740-1817, alt.
 Music: Johann G. Nägeli, 1773-1836, adapt.

DENNIS
 SM

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

774

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

1 What a fel-low-ship, what a joy di-vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms?

what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

Refrain

Lean-ing, lean-ing, safe and se-cure from all a-larms;
 Lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus,

lean-ing, lean-ing, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus,

Text: Elisha A. Hoffman, 1839-1929
 Music: Anthony J. Showalter, 1858-1924

SHOWALTER
 10 9 10 9 and refrain