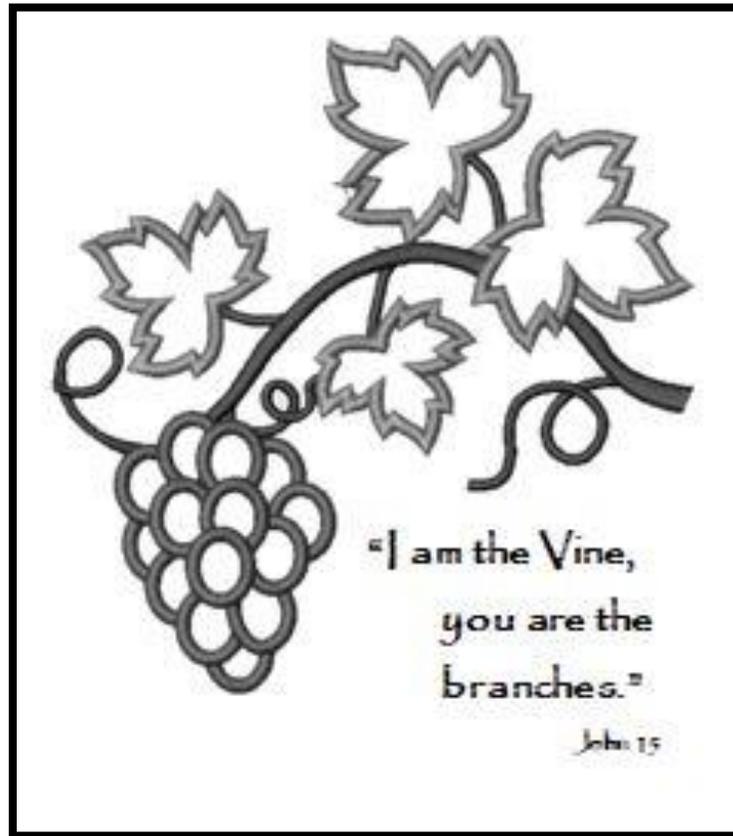




Bethel
Lutheran Church WELS

**Fifth Sunday
of Easter**



What a Blessing to Be Connected to Christ!

Bethel Lutheran exists to serve all people with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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May 2, 2021

Hymn 385 Chief of Sinners Though I Be

1 Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed his blood for me,
Died that I might live on high, Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine, I am his and he is mine!

2 Oh, the height of Jesus' love, Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea, Lasting as eternity,
Love that found me-wondrous thought!-Found me when I sought him not.

3 Only Jesus can impart Comfort to a wounded heart:
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n, Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God In the way that Enoch trod.

4 Chief of sinners though I be, Christ is all in all to me.
All my wants to him are known; All my sorrows are his own.
Safe with him in earthly strife, I await the heav'nly life.

5 Strengthen me, O gracious Lord, By your Spirit and your word.
When my wayward heart would stray, Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply While I live and when I die.

Invocation

P: We worship in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: (spoken) **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.**

Lord, Have Mercy

P: (spoken) **Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.**

P: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

C: (spoken) **Amen.**

Song of Praise

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord!

C: **Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**

We praise you, we bless you, we worship you,

we glorify you, we give thanks to you, for your great glory,

O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

You take away the sin of the world; receive our prayer.

You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.

For you only are holy; you only are the Lord.

You only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

are most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you form the minds of your faithful people into a single will. Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that among the many changes of this world, our hearts may always long for the lasting joys of heaven; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Lesson Acts 8: 26-40

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27 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, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

31 "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 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. 33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”

34 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” 35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

36 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?” [37] 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39 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. 40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 67

Refrain: Let the people praise you, O God. Let all the people praise you.

May God be gracious to us and bless us*
and make his face shine upon us;

may your ways be known on earth,*
your salvation among all nations.

May the nations be glad and sing for joy,*
for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth.

Refrain: Let the people praise you, O God. Let all the people praise you.

Then the land will yield its harvest,*
and God, our God, will bless us.

God will bless us,*
and all the ends of the earth will fear him.

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.

Refrain: Let the people praise you, O God. Let all the people praise you.

Second Lesson Titus 3: 3-8

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

Verse of the Day

Alleluia! Alleluia! The Lord Jesus said, "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; ..." Alleluia.

Gospel Lesson John 15: 1-5, 8

C: (spoken) **Glory be to you, O Lord.**

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 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.

5 "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. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord

C: (spoken) **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks

Refrain

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, give thanks to the ris - en Lord.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, give praise to his name.

1 Je - sus is Lord of all the earth;
 2 Spread the good news o'er all the earth;
 3 We have been cru - ci - fied with Christ;
 4 God has pro - claimed his gra - cious gift;
 5 Come, let us praise the liv - ing God;

Refrain

He is the King of cre - a - tion.
 Je - sus has died and has ris - en.
 Now we shall live for - ev - er.
 Life e - ter - nal for all who be - lieve.
 Joy - ful - ly sing to our Sav - ior.

Cutting.

Pruning and Growing and Glory!

The Prayer of the Church

The 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.

The Blessing

P: 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.

C: (spoken) **Amen!**

Closing Prayer

CW: 326

May the grace of Christ our Savior And the Father's boundless love
With the Holy Spirit's favor Rest upon us from above.
So may we abide in union With each other and the Lord,
Gathered here in blest communion By the power of his Word.
Now with all the saints in heaven Thanks and praise to you we sing,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One, our triune King.