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**6th Sunday after Pentecost**

“Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” *Matthew 11:28*

**AS WE GATHER**

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.” When we hear these words of the prophet Zechariah in the season of Advent, we are evermore ready to rejoice, especially as Christmas approaches. But to hear these words now in the middle of summer may strike us as a little more challenging. The pressures and doldrums of daily life can wear away momentary joys. In fact, the call to rejoice can seem pointless echoing against the hard walls of a prison of our own making. No matter how many Christmases we have celebrated, like the apostle Paul, we may continue to feel trapped by our unrelenting sinfulness. True joy comes only as we receive the comforting words of our Lord, “Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Herein is the goal of Christmas. Here today by means of the Word of God and the receiving of His body and blood, God gives you faith to believe and to receive eternal salvation. By God’s Word, even today “it’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas.” For here is where true joy is found.

**PSALM** 145:1-19

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Romans 7:15; Matthew 11:28*

Pastor: With the apostle Paul today we admit, “I do not understand my own actions.

**People: For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.”**

Pastor: At the invitation of God our Savior, let us bring our weariness and burdens to Him, that His forgiveness may rescue us and restore to us the joy of His salvation.

**People: For if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

 *Silence for reflection.*

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean and cannot free ourselves. Even though we rejoice at the joy of Christmas, daily our sins of thought, word, and deed cause us grief. We have forgotten You even when we needed You the most. Our love for our neighbors has faded. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we come at His invitation seeking the true rest of the forgiveness of our sins. Amen.**

Pastor: “Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Upon this, your confession, I by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word announce the grace of God to you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**HYMN** *“Hark the Glad Sound”* (*LSB* 349)

**COLLECT OF THE DAY** *(bulletin insert)*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Zechariah 9:9-12 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *(bulletin insert, below Collect of the Day)*

**EPISTLE** Romans 7:14-25a *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** Matthew 11:25-30 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

# THE NICENE CREED *(LSB*,back inside cover)

**HYMN** *“I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say”* (*LSB* 699)

**SERMON “*Rest”***

# RETURNING OF OUR FIRST FRUITS

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and LORD’S PRAYER

*(after each petition):* Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

 **People: hear our prayer.**

**LORD’S PRAYER, SUNG** (*LSB*,front inside cover)

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**PEACE OF THE LORD**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However, if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**DISTRIBUTION**

 *“I Lay My Sins on Jesus”* (*LSB* 606)

 *“Shepherd of Tender Youth”* (*LSB* 864)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty, everlasting God, we rejoice greatly that You have come to us as our King, in Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, giving us the comfort and rest of the forgiveness of our sins by His very body and blood. With thankful hearts we hold to the great hope of the eternal joys in the day of the resurrection of all flesh and our eternal home. To You be all the praise and glory with Your Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“Before You, Lord, We Bow”* (*LSB* 966)

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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 **All are welcome …**

 **… Christ is honored.**