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**Ascension /**

**7th Sunday of Easter**

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed.” *1 Peter 4:12-13*

**AS WE GATHER**

Sometimes life is hard and sometimes it is hard because we are Christians, and our adversary, “the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Jesus once said, “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11–12). This same Jesus prayed for us, that our holy Father would keep us in His name. He knew suffering and is now experiencing glory. When we suffer because of our Christian faith, we share Christ’s suffering and because He suffered, died, and rose again, we, too, will share that experience and join Him in His glory.

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION**

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

**People: Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Acts 1:1-11

Pastor: A reading from Acts, chapter 1, verses 1-11:

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 133***

Pastor: Behold, how good and pleasant it is

**People: when brothers dwell in unity!**

Pastor: It is like precious oil on the head,

**People: like the dew on the mountains.**

Pastor: For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,

**People: life forevermore.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father, confident that He will hear and forgive us for Jesus’ sake.

**People: Most merciful God, we confess that we have not always been proud to bear Your name. At times, we crumble in the face of the trials that come our way. We allow worries and anxieties to crowd out Your caring presence. Keep us in Your name, which You have given us in Baptism, and forgive us our sins for Jesus’ sake.**

Pastor: Our God hears our prayers and forgives our sins because of Jesus’ perfect life, death, and resurrection. At the command of Christ and through the power of the cross and the empty tomb, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit. Go in peace!

**People: Alleluia! Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**HYMN** *“A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing”* (*LSB* 493)

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

**CONTINUED FIRST READING** Acts 1:12-26 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**INTROIT** *(bulletin insert)*

**EPISTLE** 1 Peter 4:12-19; 5:6-11 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** John 17:1-11 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

**HYMN** *“Draw Us to Thee”* (*LSB* 701)

**SERMON “*Scarcely Saved”***

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

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and LORD’S PRAYER

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

 **People: hear our prayer.**

**RETURNING OF OUR FIRST FRUITS**

**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.*

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**PEACE OF THE LORD**

**DISTRIBUTION**

 *“Crown Him with Many Crowns”* (*LSB* 525)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. We thank You, Father, for blessing us with the gift of Your grace as it comes to us through the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation. Strengthen us in living our baptismal faith; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“Beautiful Savior”* (*LSB* 537)

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Rev. Curt Hoover, Rev. Alebachew Teshome,

Rev. Craig Fiebiger, Rev. Doug DeWitt

2640 Buckner Road, Thompson’s Station, TN 37179, (615) 791-1880

[www.faithlutheran-tn.org](http://www.faithlutheran-tn.org)

 **All are welcome …**

 **… Christ is honored.**