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**Last Sunday of the Church Year**

“Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!” *Psalm 95:1-2*

**AS WE GATHER**

Preparing for Christ’s return means loving the people around us. Today’s Readings reveal that also means living the orthodox life today. *Orthodox* means “right glory,” and today we glorify God for sending His Son, David’s descendant, to fulfill the promise in Ezekiel and to care so deeply for us that He died for us. In essence His cross was His throne, loving us to death. We dare not wait to share that news, for Christ has already risen, Paul reminds in the Epistle. Right now the end time in which we live has multiple opportunities to share God’s love. In the Gospel, Jesus explains that means caring for the “least of these My brothers” (Matthew 25:40) in their hunger, poverty, and even separation from society. Why? Because the Kingdom has already been graciously prepared for us. Today’s Readings encourage us to give God “right glory” by sharing His love.

**PSALM** 95:1-7a

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION and CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Ezekiel 34:11; 1 Corinthians 15:27*

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

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Let us confess our unworthiness and ask His grace and mercy.

Through Ezekiel, God said that He would “search for My sheep and will seek them out.”

**People: We confess that we have wandered away as erring sheep, preferring the pleasures of this world rather than the rich pastures You have provided. Forgive us, O Lord.**

Pastor: Paul wrote that “God has put all things in subjection under Christ’s feet.”

**People: We confess that we have not always been loyal subjects of our Lord, but have made decisions based on our own thoughts and desires. Forgive us, O Lord.**

Pastor: Jesus foretold that He will judge people about how they treated others—the hungry, strangers, and prisoners.

**People: We confess that we have not always sought to share Your love and meet the needs of the people around us. We cannot change without Your grace, mercy, and strength. Forgive us, O Lord.**

Pastor: Rejoice! The One who comes to judge is the same Jesus who is the one who gave His body and shed His blood for you on the cross. He is the first to rise from death, and by His grace we shall follow Him to His eternal kingdom. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen. Thanks be to God.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**HYMN** *“Come, Thou Almighty King”* (*LSB* 905)

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

**FIRST READING** Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 *(bulletin insert)*

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**INTROIT** *(bulletin insert)*

**EPISTLE** 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 *(bulletin insert)*

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** Matthew 25:31-46 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

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

**HYMN** *“Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring”* (*LSB* 353)

**SERMON “*Separated”***

# RETURNING OF OUR FIRST FRUITS

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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

 **People: hear our prayer.**

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

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**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.*

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**PEACE OF THE LORD**

**DISTRIBUTION**

 *“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”* (*LSB* 709)

 *“We Know That Christ Is Raised”* (*LSB* 603)

**POST-COMMUNION HYMN**

 *“Beautiful Savior”* (*LSB* 537)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son’s body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith so that we daily show forth His love and mercy until that day when we see Him face to face to celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise”* (*LSB* 680)

**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.**