

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda NY
May 14th, 2023**



AS WE GATHER

We live in a world where we increasingly hear strange ideas. The people we work, play, and live near increasingly consider the truths that our God created this world and redeemed us to be strange. Jesus, Peter, and Paul lived in a world that had some striking similarities to our own. As we live out our Baptism, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to love Jesus and keep His commands. We are urged to always be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). As we do so, it is easy to fall into the angry, divisive, argumentative patterns that we hear in the political realm. Yet, we are called to share our hope with gentleness and respect, so that we keep a clear conscience and suffer for doing good rather than evil.

Blessings to all our moms on this Mother’s Day!

✠ PREPARATION ✠

TLH 36 Now Thank We All Our God

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Jesus said, "Because I live, you also will live."

In Him we live and move and have our being.

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins to God, our Father, seeking His forgiveness through our risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, creator of all that was, is, and will ever be, we confess to You that we fall short of the calling that we have received from You, as Your dearly loved children. We have struggled to share the reason for the hope we have in You. We have not always responded to others with gentleness and respect. We have failed to live and share the love we have first received from You. Forgive our sins, for Jesus' sake, and lead us to live lives that reflect Your indwelling presence.

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!

Alleluia! Amen.

Introit

Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.

Forever, O LORD, your word
is firmly fixed in the heavens.

Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

By your appointment they stand this day,
for all things are your servants.

If your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.

I will never forget your precepts,
for by them you have given me life.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory be to God on High,
and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee. We glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy 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, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God, You are the Creator of all things in heaven and on earth, and You have claimed and cleansed us to be Your people through the waters of Baptism.

By Your Spirit, give us hearts and minds to hear Your Word.

Give us eyes and ears to see and listen to our world as You view and hear it.

Give us words and actions to share the hope we have in You;

through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord, who lives eternally with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading *Acts 17:16–31*

¹⁶Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, “What does this babbling wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹And they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean.” ²¹Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. ²²So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he

himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸for “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we are indeed his offspring.” ²⁹Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Choir “Honor Thy Father & Thy Mother”

Epistle 1 Peter 3:13–22

¹³Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil. ¹⁸For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited

in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse

Alleluia. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. Alleluia.

Holy Gospel *John 14:15–21*

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourteenth chapter.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹⁵[Jesus said:] “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed (Rear cover of maroon hymnal)

TLH 476 Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand

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Sermon

Offertory

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

Offering

Prayer of the Church

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. We pray with boldness and confidence because we know He hears our prayers because Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank You for sending Your Son to die and rise again for the sins of the world. We praise and thank You for sending the Holy Spirit, who calls us by the Gospel, gathers us around Your Word and Sacraments, enlightens us with Your truth, and sanctifies and keeps us in the true faith. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Creator God, You have created this world and everything in it, as well as each person who lives in it. In You we live and move and have our being, and You continue to provide for our daily needs of body and life. Lead us as we steward the resources and relationships You generously give us. Guide us to see all people as Your masterpieces. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

O Jesus, You know intimately the challenges we face and the griefs we bear in this life. Hear us as we pray for those who are hurting and grieving, [especially . . .]. Give them strength and healing according to Your good and gracious will. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Lord God, You have placed us in a community where there are people who

have never known You or who no longer are connected to Your Church. Guide us, as You guided Paul and others, to seize the opportunities to share the reason for the hope we have, doing this with gentleness and respect. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Gracious God, we thank You for making us male and female and for creating families with a loving father and a mother. We grieve for those who do not experience life according to Your design and for those who experience abandonment, abuse, and neglect. We celebrate with those who experience Your love in their families. Today, we especially remember our mothers. We remember those in whose wombs you knit us together. We remember those You have worked through to provide us comfort, wise counsel, care, and discipline throughout the different stages of our lives. We ask Your blessing on all mothers, that they experience Your love and are shaped by it in their parenting. Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to Him.

Amen.

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.**

Pax Domini

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Salutation and Benedicamus

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Bless we the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction

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.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

TLH 649 Jesus, Savior Pilot Me