



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Matthew 21:29 – 22:14

May 3, 2026

10:30 Service of the Word

Today we pick up in Matthew's gospel immediately where we left off last Sunday. It is Monday of Holy Week. Jesus is teaching in Jerusalem. He has caught the attention of the religious leaders, and they are not happy with him! He goes on to challenge the legitimacy of their leadership and the motives that drive them. Before we look down upon them too harshly, we remember that those same qualities can easily exist within ourselves.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

The Zoom feed for this service is available in the nursery.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Thanksgiving for Baptism

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

C: Amen.

P: Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Water is poured into the baptismal font as we continue.

P: Merciful God,
you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.
You lead us beside still waters.

We thank you for the waters of creation:
morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves.

We thank you for Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes, and the Erie Canal; all
of whose waters made our region flourish.

Blessed are you.

C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness
who accompanies us on our journeys.

We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.

We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you.

C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows.

Break down barriers that divide us.

Fill us with the breath of new life to share the gospel.

Blessed are you.

C: You guide us to the springs of the water of life.

P: Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism,
and for making us a new creation.

We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise
now and forever.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn On Eagle's Wings
(For music turn to Hymn 787 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
who abide in this shadow for life,
say to the Lord: "My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!"**

Refrain

**"And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of his hand."**

2. **Snares of the fowler will never capture you,
and famine will bring you no fear;
under God's wings your refuge
with faithfulness your shield. *Refrain***

3. **You need not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by the day;
though thousands fall about you,
near you it shall not come. *Refrain***

4. **For to the angels God's given a command
to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone. *Refrain***

Text and Music by Michael Jonas, b. 1951; copyright 1979 OCP Publication

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Gathering Dialog (Romans 10)

A: The word is near you,

C: on your lips and in your heart.

A: If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord,

C: and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

A: Faith comes from what is heard,

C: and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray.

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

Scripture Poetry Psalm 80:9-20 (*read responsively*)

B: Restore to us, God of might,
the light of your presence,
and we shall be saved.

**C: You brought a vine from Egypt,
cleared out nations to plant it;
you prepared the ground
and made it take root
to fill the land.**

B: It overshadowed the mountains,
towered over the might cedars,

**C: stretched its branches to the sea,
its roots to the distant river.**

B: Why have you now torn down its walls?
All who pass by steal the grapes,
wild boars tear up its roots,
beasts devour its fruit.

**C: Turn our way, God of might,
look down from heaven;
tend this vine you planted,
cherish it once more.**

B: May those who slashed and burned it
wither at your rebuke.

**C: Rest your hand upon your chosen one
who draws strength from you.**

B: We have not turned from you.
Give us life again
and we will invoke your name.

**C: Restore to us, Lord God of might,
the light of your presence,
and we shall be saved.**

Hymn Sing Introduction

First Reading Zechariah 8:18-23

The word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying: ¹⁹Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be seasons of joy and gladness, and cheerful festivals for the house of Judah: therefore love truth and peace.

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, the inhabitants of many cities; ²¹the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, 'Come, let us go to entreat the favor of the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I myself am going.' ²²Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the Lord. ²³Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of every language shall take hold of a Jew, grasping his garment and saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'

Reflections on the Reading

Hymn O Christ the Same

(For music see Hymn 778 in the Blue Hymnal)

1. **O Christ the same, through all our story's pages
our loves and hopes, our failures and our fears;
eternal Lord, the king of all the ages,
unchanging still amid the passing years:
O living Word, the source of all creation,
who spread the skies and set the start ablaze;
O Christ the same, who wrought our whole salvation
we bring our thanks for all our yesterdays.**

2. **O Christ the same, the friend of sinners, sharing
our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide;
still as of old upon your body bearing
the marks of love in triumph glorified:
O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heaven
O Prince of life, in all your saving power;
O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are given:**

we bring our thanks for this the present hour.

- 3. O Christ the same, secure within whose keeping
our lives and loves, our days and years remain;
our work and rest, our waking and our sleeping,
our calm and storm, our pleasure and our pain:
O Lord of love, for all our joys and sorrows,
for all our hopes when earth shall fade and flee;
O Christ the same, beyond our brief tomorrows,
we bring our thanks for all that is to be.**

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926. Music: Irish tune, arr. John Barhard, b. 1948. Text and arr. copyright 1982 Hope Publishing Co.

Introduction to the Matthew 21:28-32

Second Reading Matthew 21:28-32

[Jesus said to the religious leaders] ‘What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, “Son, go and work in the vineyard today.”²⁹He answered, “I will not”; but later he changed his mind and went.³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, “I go, sir”; but he did not go.³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?’ They said, ‘The first.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

Reflections on the Reading

Hymn Will You Let Me Be Your Servant
(For music see Hymn 659 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. Will you let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.**
- 2. We are pilgrims on a journey,
we are trav'lers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.**

- 3. I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.**
- 4. I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen the journey through.**
- 5. Will you let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.**

Text: Richard Gillard, b. 1953. Music: Richard Gillard; arr. Betty Pulkingham, b. 1928. Text and music copyright 1977 Scripture in Son, admin. Integrity Music

Introduction to Matthew 21:33-46

Third Reading Matthew 21:33-46

‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ ⁴¹They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures:

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes”?

⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Reflections on the Reading

Hymn Spirit of God Descend upon My Heart
(For music see Hymn 800 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
stoop to my weakness, strength to me impart,
and make me love you as I ought to love.**
2. **I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,
no sudden rending of the veil of clay,
no angel visitant, no op'ning skies;
but take the dimness of my soul away.**
3. **Have you not bid me love you, God and King;
all, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling.
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!**
4. **Teach me to love you as your angels love,
one holy passion filling all my frame:
the baptism of the heav'n descended dove,
my heart an altar, and your love the flame.**

Text: George Croly, 1780-1860. Music: Frederick C. Atkinson, 1841-1897

Introduction to Matthew 22:1-10

Fourth Reading Matthew 22:1-10

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to

his slaves, “The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.” ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Reflections on the Reading

Hymn In Christ There Is No East or West
(For music see Hymn 650 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one community of love
throughout the whole wide earth.**
2. **In Christ shall true hearts ev’rywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.**
3. **Join hands, disciples of the faith,
whate’r your race may be.
All children of the living God
and surely kin to me.**
4. **In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christly souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth.**

Text: John Oxenham, 1852-1941, alt. Music: African American spiritual; adapt. Henry T. Burleigh, 1866-1949

Introduction to Matthew 22:11-14

Fifth Reading Matthew 22:11-14

‘But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, “Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?” And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, “Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.’

Reflections on the Reading

Hymn of the Day Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus
(for music, please turn to Hymn 802 in the Red Hymnal)

1. Let us ever walk with Jesus,
follow his example pure,
through a world that would deceive us
and to sin our spirits lure.
Onward in his footsteps treading,
trav'lers here, our home above,
full of faith and hope and love,
let us do our Savior's bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide;
I shall follow where you guide.
2. Let us suffer here with Jesus,
and with patience bear our cross.
Joy will follow all our sadness;
where he is there is no loss.
Though today we sow no laughter,
we shall reap celestial joy;
All discomforts that annoy
shall give way to mirth here after.
Jesus, here I share your woe;
help me there your joy to know.
3. Let us gladly die with Jesus.
Since by death he conquered death,
he will free us from destruction,
give to us immortal breath.
Let us mortify all passion
that would lead us into sin;
and the grave that shuts us in
shall but prove the gate of heaven.
Jesus, here with you I die,
there to live with you on high.
4. Let us also live with Jesus.
He has risen from the dead
that to life we may awaken,
Jesus, you are now our head,
we are your own living members;

**where you live, there we shall be
in your presence constantly,
living there with you forever.
Jesus, let me faithful be;
life eternal grant to me.**

Text: Sigmund von Birken, 1626-1681; tr. Luthlean Book of Worship, alt. Music: Georg G. Boltze, 18th cent.

Response to the Word

P: In Christ you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

A: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C: pray in the Holy Spirit. *(Jude 20)*

A: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

C: look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. *(Jude 21)*

A: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

**C: Everything old has passed away;
behold, everything has become new!** *(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

‡ THANKSGIVING ‡

Offertory

Offertory Hymn Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise Him, all creatures here below;
praise Him, above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711. Music: Louis Bourgeois, 1510-1561

‡ PRAYER ‡

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: Blessed are you, O God,

C: ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

From: *A New Zealand Prayer Book*, "Midday Prayer"

A: Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

For the hungry and overfed

May we have enough.

For the mourners and the mockers

May we laugh together.

For the victims and the oppressors

May we share power wisely.

For the peacemakers and the warmongers

May clear truth and stern love lead us to harmony.

For the silenced and the propagandists

May we speak our words in truth.

For the unemployed and the overworked

May we live together as wounded healers.

For the homeless and the cosseted

May our homes be simple, warm, and welcoming.

For the vibrant and the dying

May we all die to live.

Blessed Savior, you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms; grant that all the peoples of the earth may be drawn to your uplifted love; for your kingdom's sake.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

† SENDING †

Blessing

P: The triune God,
who was, who is, and who is to come,
Sovereign, Savior, and Spirit,
light your way with resurrection dawn,

now and always.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
(For music turn to Hymn 858 in the Red Hymnal)

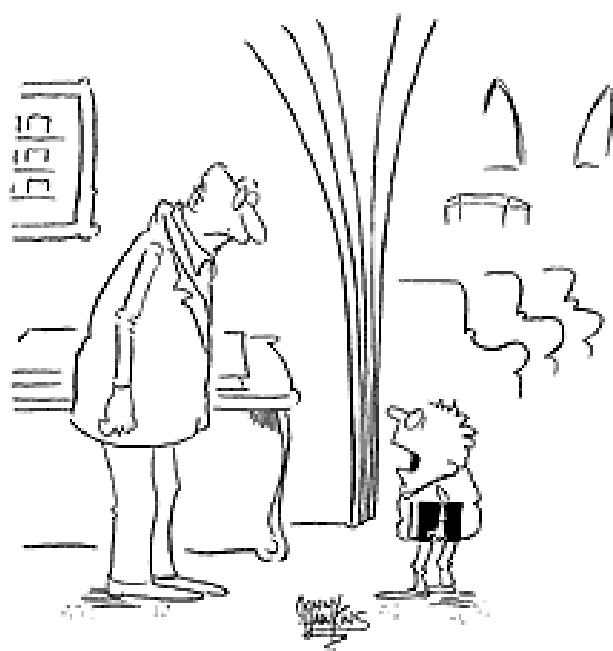
1. **Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!**
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Let all who hear
Now to his temple draw near,
Joining in glad adoration!
2. **Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is wondrously reigning.**
And, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining.
Have you not seen
All that is needful has been
Sent by his gracious ordaining?
3. **Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you.**
Surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew
What the Almighty can do
If with his love he befriend you.
4. **Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!**
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen
Sound from his people again.
Gladly forever adore him!

Text – Joachim Neander, 1650-1680; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878; Tune Erneueren Gesangbuch, Stralsund, 1665

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.



"I slept in church because I'm striving
to be more like God, and on the
seventh day He rested."

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers Greg and Mary Zuege
Acolyte Charlotte Stroup
Counters Burdie Gillern and Babette Huber
Coffee Hour

Worship assistants for next Sunday, May 10

Greeters and Ushers John and Linda Thompson
Acolyte Elijah Young
Counters Greg and Mary Zuege
Coffee Hour Mother's Day Treats

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