



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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Rev. James D. Smith-Pastor

Baptized People of God, Ministers Dante Eusebio-Sexton

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 8, 2022

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another. *(pause for silence and self reflection).*

Most Merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Prayer of the Day: O God of peace, you brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. By the blood of your eternal covenant, make us complete in everything good that we may do your will, and work among us all that is well-pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

First Reading: Acts 9:36-42 Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He

turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Second Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

*Gospel Acclamation: ***Alleluia!* Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. *Alleluia!* (John 10:14)**

Response after announcement: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 10:22-30 At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

Response after the conclusion: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON: Pastor James D. Smith

*Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray:

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation. (A brief silence).

Gentle Shepherd, enable your church to respond to the voice of Jesus. Give us unflinching trust, unafraid to join in Jesus' work of renewing all things. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Feed your people at the table of creation. Prepare a safe place for those whose environments are dangerous or unhealthy, especially those making difficult journeys. Prosper your creation for the sake of every living thing. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Warm the hearts of all who celebrate and all who mourn on Mother's Day. Accompany those yearning to be mothers. Help us to heal from broken family relationships and open us to receive your nurturing love from all who serve mothering roles in our lives. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Seek out those who weep while they await healing or consolation. Set people in their path who can provide the care they need, and wipe away every tear from their eyes. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Inspire the words of prophets and saints who employ innovative imagery to stretch our understating. Send Christ to instruct us with motherly care. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Enfold us in the great multitude of saints from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages. Wash us in your saving grace every day, guiding us to your waters of life. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We especially pray today for: Our military and their families, Our First Responders (Fire, Police, EMS), Healthcare Workers, Transit Workers, teachers, David, Sophia, Symons Family, Spatz Family, D'Ambrosio Family, McPherson Family, Peragine Family, Michelle, Frank, Gloria Holke, Wirth Family, Tom and Vicky Jackson, the Offley family, the Twohig family, Elaine, Shirley, James and Prentella McSwain, Justin, Danny, Buck Family, Kathleen, Sandy, Terry Zamparelli, Mike Brawley, Kim Spitzer, Roberta Neidballa, Kim McManus, the Garbe family, the Lebby family, the Robinson family, the Kogan family, Daniel White, Rosalie Connor, the Petito family, Mack Smith, Ellen Hoover Ayling, the Arfsten family, the families in the Ukraine who have fled the war zone to safety, those who suffer because of natural disasters and those who are victims of violence. We pray for peace.

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

*Lord's Prayer

Amen.

*Eucharistic Prayer

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way. In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into a path of love and light. In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity. The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire. In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted, to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

* Thanksgiving

* Holy Communion For remote listeners-please bring your own elements.

(In this time we gather around the eternal table wherever that may be in this time we are apart. We bring our own gifts so they can be lifted up and bring honor and glory to God. We lift up our prayers so that the Spirit is sent to us and the meal that we share, so that it and all of God's acts and promises may come to fulfillment for us and the world. The prayer is that the life giving Spirit will make the meal effective in us. We join our prayers with those servants of every time and every place and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great High Priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.)

Sending

*Blessing

The God of all consolation bless you in every way, grant you hope all the days of your life, restore you to health and grant you salvation, fill your heart with

peace, and lead you to eternal life. Almighty God bless you, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Dismissal: Go in with Christ into a weary world. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

Please remain at your seat as Pastor distributes communion.

Offering plates are at the back of the sanctuary as you leave.

*Offering- Please remember your church home during this time. Your donations are important in helping the church to fulfill its missions as well as pay bills. Please return your donation at the back of the sanctuary as you leave or go on our website and use the blue Donate button at the top of the page.

The Eternal Light is lit in honor of all the Bethlehem mothers.

The Flowers on the altar today are in loving memory of Hedwig Adel from Ellen Connors and family.

There is opportunity to sponsor the flowers and the eternal light in honor or memory of a loved one. See sign up sheets in back of the church for more details.

If you know of anyone who is ill, in the hospital, or in need of a home visit, please contact Pastor Smith or a Council member. Pastor can be reached by text or phone: 718-619-1333.

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms, grandmothers, and those who are like mothers to families!



Calendar

- Pampered Chef virtual fundraiser now going on until May 31—check your email to place your order!
- Paint Night fundraiser-June 11.
- Virtual Bible Study-Wednesdays, 12:00 & 7:30 pm; Zoom links are on the website.
- Confirmation Class-Sundays, 5 pm

2022 BLC COUNCIL

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President-Kathy Spatz
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Members

Patty Derkatch
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*As a community of faith and a whole life ministry focused on Living God's Word, we embrace and learn from the diversity in our midst. We seek to meet all people with God's grace and eternal love shown to all God's people through the life, death and resurrection of God's only Son regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, culture, marital status, addictions, sexual orientation, economic status, ability or label.
 You are welcome here!*