**Third Sunday of Easter - 18 April 2021**

**GATHER**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Confession and Forgiveness *Please rise in body or spirit.***

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, who raised Jesus from the dead, and imprints His image on our hearts.

**C AMEN.**

P Let us prepare our hearts for worship, confessing our sins. ***Silence is kept for reflection.***

P Merciful God,

**C YOU MADE US WITH MINDS TO KNOW YOU, HEARTS TO LOVE YOU, AND WILLS TO SERVE YOU. BUT OUR KNOWLEDGE IS IMPERFECT, OUR LOVE INCONSTANT, AND OUR OBEDIENCE IS INCOMPLETE. WE REFUSE TO GO WHERE YOU LEAD US. WE FAIL TO GROW INTO YOUR LIKENESS. HAVE MERCY UPON US. FORGIVE US AND FREE US FROM OUR SIN. IMPRINT ON OUR HEARTS AGAIN THE IMAGE OF YOUR SON, JESUS. AMEN.**

P You were born in the image of the invisible God. Lost in the Fall, it was restored by Christ at the cross. At your Baptism, you were given Christ’s name. He marked you as His own, so you know that you are His and that He is your life, the foundation of all your hope, and in His name, **✠** you are forgiven all your sins and His image is imprinted again on your heart.

**C AMEN**

**Gathering Song (Ensemble)** ELW # 420 1,2,4, & last “By All Your Saints”

**Greeting and Prayer of the Day**

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**C CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!**

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

**C AND ALSO WITH YOU.** ***A brief silence is kept before the prayer.***

P Holy Giver and Receiver of life, Your martyr, Stephen, shined with the light of Your Holy Spirit. When his opponents took his life, he offered up his spirit to You, and prayed mercy for theirs. Make Stephen an example of faith and courage for all Your followers, for the sake of the one who brought light and life to this world, Jesus Christ.

**C AMEN.** ***Please be seated.***

**WORD**

**Children’s Time**

**Psalm & Gloria** Psalm 146:1,2

**Preaching Text**  Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60

The Word of the Lord/**THANKS BE TO GOD.**  ***Please be seated***

**Sermon** “Stephen’s Witness”

**Special Music**  “You Are Mine”

**Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving *Please rise in body or spirit***

A With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray...

Lord in your mercy/**HEAR OUR PRAYER**.

P Merciful God, You hear the prayers of Your people ...through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C AMEN. *Please be seated.***

**MEAL**

**Offering the Gifts and Tithes *Please rise in body or spirit.***

A Let us pray. God our provider, You have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these Your gifts, which we receive from Your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**C AMEN.**

1. ***The assisting minister will distribute the***

 ***elements to you in your seats.***

* 1. ***Open bread seal. Take and eat.***
	2. ***Open wine seal. Take and drink.***
1. ***The usher will collect the used chalice.***
2. ***Note: the bread is gluten free.***

**Thanksgiving & Words of Institution**

P The Lord be with You

**C and also with You.**

P Lift up Your hearts.

**C We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**C It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy...

 *In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ, took bread, and gave thanks...*

**Lord’s Prayer (Ensemble)**

P All who thirst, all who hunger, come, and be filled with the goodness of God. ***Please be seated.***

***After the distribution, please rise in body or spirit.***

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen You and keep You in His grace.

**C AMEN.**

**Prayer after Communion**

A Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation You have united us with Christ, making us one with all Your people. Now send us forth in the power of Your Spirit that we may proclaim Your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C AMEN.**

**Sending of Communion**

P Eternal God, whose glory is revealed in the crucified and risen Lord, bless those who go forth to share Your word and sacrament with our sisters and brothers who are sick/homebound/imprisoned. In Your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this communion in the body and blood of Your Son, that we may all feast upon Your abundant love made known in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C AMEN.**

**SEND**

**Benediction**

P The Maker of all, the Word made flesh, the Giver of life, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C AMEN.**

**Announcements, Choral Benediction, and Dismissal**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! /**CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA1**

 Go in peace. Share the Good News/**THANKS BE TO GOD.**

**St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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