Welcome to long-time Lutherans, Christians from every tradition, and people new to this faith. Welcome to friends new and old. Welcome to people of every age and size, color and culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; every socioeconomic and marital status, political conviction, ability and challenge. Welcome to believers and questioners, and questioning believers. Welcome.

Ebenezer Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. You are welcome here.

This worship booklet is digital! Zoom in for larger print.

Please use phones and other devices frequently, to offer and receive encouragement.

Remember to wash your hands and clean surfaces frequently.

Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; but can still be practiced at home!

Children are always welcome in worship at Ebenezer. If there are children in your house, invite them to worship with you.

Jesus does not abandon his followers. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to abide with his disciples of every generation. As Pentecost draws near, we are reminded that the risen Christ dwells in us as the Spirit of truth. We receive this Spirit in baptism and pray that when we can gather around the Lord’s table the Spirit will continue to transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.
Gathering

Consider lighting a candle, or putting a cross in your field of vision.
Throughout the liturgy, you may sit, stand, or kneel as you wish.

Flowers are given for this liturgy to honor healthcare workers, educators, first responders, and essential workers.

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Bob Garrett, percussionist

Blessing of Fields and Gardens

If you are able, and can do so safely, consider going outside, near a garden or trees, or to a window, to give thanks for and bless the growing life of the earth.

Let us bless God, the creator of all things.

God has given us the earth to cultivate, so that we might receive the bounty of its fruits. Just as the rain falls from heaven and waters the earth, bringing forth vegetation, so God’s word will flourish and will not return empty.

Make the sign of the cross to bless the creation around you.

Abundant God, we give you thanks for the fruitful earth, which produces what is needed for life. Bless those who work in the fields with safety and just wages; grant favorable weather to all engaged in agriculture; and help us to ensure that all people share the fruits of the earth, rejoicing in your goodness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.
Gathering Hymn

Blessed Assurance

1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di- vine!
2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,

Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look- ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain

This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:

this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915
Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908
Greeting

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed, Alleluia!

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

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Word

The First Reading Acts 17:22-31

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said,

‘For we too are his offspring.’
Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 66

Make a Joyful Noise

1. Make a joyful noise to God! All creation sings your praise!
2. Come and see what God has done, great the blessing to the just.
3. Bless the Lord, our refuge sure; let our songs of praise be heard!

Great your wonders here displayed, by whose justice we are tried;
unexcelled throughout our days, glorious is your sacred name, ages old, yet still the same.
brought their enemies to dust, by whose grace, our guilt deferred.
Glorious is your thank-ful voice for God’s mer-cies and re-joice!

Let us lift a end shall come, bring us to your heav’n-ly home.

text: Michael Morgan
music: John Elmquist
The Second Reading  First Peter 3:13-22

Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, 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, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel  The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John 14:15-21

Jesus said: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon  Silence for reflection follows.
Come Down, O Love Divine

1. Come down, O Love divine; seek thou this soul of mine
and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;
O Comforter, draw near; within my heart appear
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

2. Oh, let it freely burn, till worldly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
and let thy glorious light shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illumining.

3. Let holy charity mine outward vesture be,
shall far outpass the pow'r of human telling;
true lowli ness of heart, which takes the humbler part,
and o'er its own short comings weeps with loathing.

4. And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,
O Comforter, draw near; within my heart appear
and let thy glorious light shine ever on my sight,
where in the Holy Spirit it makes a dwelling.
Creed

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.

Children’s Message

Prayer

Prayers of Intercession

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Abiding God, you have revealed yourself to us in the form of your Son, Jesus Christ. Embolden your church, as your followers, to reveal your love to everyone in our speaking and in our living. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You are the creator of heaven and earth. Revitalize the health of oceans, rivers, lakes, springs, glaciers, and other bodies of water that give life to your creatures (local bodies of water may be named). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.
You call all people of the world your children. Judge the nations justly, show mercy to the oppressed, and speak truth to power through your prophets. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You come near to us when we are lost, and you hear our distress. We pray for those who suffer in any way (especially). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Your commands are good and merciful. Give us courage to take hold of our baptismal promises to work for justice, advocate for the voiceless, and free the oppressed and imprisoned in body, mind, or spirit. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You remain with us always, O God, and your kingdom has no end. We remember the saints who have gone before us (especially). Unite us forever in your final victory over death. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

You may pray this prayer in these words; or, in language close to your heart.

Our Father in heaven,
    hallowed be your name,
    your kingdom come,
    your will be done,
    on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
    as we forgive those
    who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
    and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
    and the glory are yours,
    now and forever. Amen.
Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The Ebenezer Choir  From Where the Sun Rises  by Graham Kendrick

Sending

Benediction

May God bless us and keep us. May God’s face shine on us with grace and mercy. May God look upon us with favor, + and give us peace. Amen.

Sending Hymn  Come We That Love the Lord

1 Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known;
2 Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;
3 The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets
4 Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry;

join in a song with sweet accord, join in a song with
but children of the heav’nly King, but children of the
before we reach the heav’nly fields, before we reach the
we’re marching through Immanuel’s ground, we’re marching through Im-
sweet accord and thus surround the throne, and thus surround the throne.
heav’n-ly King may tell their joys a-broad, may tell their joys a-broad.
heav’n-ly fields, or walk the gold-en streets, or walk the gold-en streets.
man-u-el’s ground, to fair-er worlds on high, to fair-er worlds on high.

We’re marching to Zi-on, beau-ti-ful, beau-ti-ful Zi-on:

we’re marching up-ward to Zi-on, the beau-ti-ful cit-y of God.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, stanzas; Robert Lowry, 1826–1899, refrain
Music: MARCHING TO ZION, Robert Lowry