

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church

4 Easter + Saturday, May 10, 2025



INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those "who have come out of the great ordeal" in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

WELCOME

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

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

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.

Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.

Shower us with your Spirit,
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

GREETING

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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you,
we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God,
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.

FIRST READING: Acts 9:36-43

*Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness
and her work with clothing were well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill
and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.*

A reading from Acts.

³⁶Now 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. ³⁷At that time she became
ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸Since 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." ³⁹So 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. ⁴⁰ 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. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴² This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Meanwhile, he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 23

¹ The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

³ You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: Revelation 7:9-17

Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful to springs of the water of life. Christ is also the lamb who vanquishes sin and suffering.

A reading from Revelation.

⁹ 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. ¹⁰ They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

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

¹¹ 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, ¹² singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and

where have they come from?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you are the one who 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.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ They will hunger no more and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat,

¹⁷ 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."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 10:22-30

Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²² At that time the Festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. ²⁴ 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." ²⁵ Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, in regard to what he has given me, is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

You guide your people to the waters of life. Make your church a nourishing place for all who are thirsty for hope and healing. Renew us in the waters of baptism, and send us forth as signs of your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You tend to the earth, sustaining life in all places. Revive fragile ecosystems and restore species in danger of extinction. Teach us new ways of living in balance and harmony with our non-human neighbors. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You lead all peoples along right pathways. Grant wisdom and compassion to judges, lawyers, mediators, and legal advocates. Dismantle systems of mass incarceration, empower processes of restorative justice, and encourage all who strive for healing in our communities. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You wipe the tears from every eye. Tend to all who struggle with anxiety or depression, loneliness, or despair. Enfold all who are in any need in your shepherding care, especially those whose names we remember by speaking them out loud, in our hearts or by listing them online. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

This Mother's Day, bless mothers, grandmothers, and all who offer mothering care. Come close to those whose relationships with their families are difficult, and console all who grieve the loss of mother figures or the loss of children. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are the source of everlasting life. In deep gratitude for all your saints (*especially*), we rejoice in the joy and hope of the resurrection made known to us in Jesus, your beloved child. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

We give our offerings in praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done for us in Jesus Christ and for the sake of Jesus' ongoing mission and ministry in this world. We have been entrusted to carry out this mission Jesus' name, bringing the good news of Jesus to the people of this community and around the world. Please, take a minute of your time to make an electronic gift through the St. Paul's Website www.stpauls-edison.org/online-giving.html. Please consider making this gift a recurring gift, and look for ways to grow in your giving for the sake of Christ's mission through this congregation. You may also mail your offering to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 445 Old Post Rd., Edison NJ 08817.

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you,

O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,

we give you thanks and praise.

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WALKING AT ROOSEVELT PARK. Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Call your friends and put on your walking shoes and meet at Skating Rink at Roosevelt Park. Enjoy fellowship, prayer and a walk around the lake.

BIBLE STUDY. Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m., starting April 30. Join us in the conference room on Wednesday afternoons for a time of Bible study and fellowship.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL VOLUNTEER MEETING. Sunday, May 18, after worship. If you would like to help with Vacation Bible School in June, please plan to attend our Vacation Bible School meeting after worship.

CALLING ALL WRITERS, ACTORS, ARTISTS AND CRAFTERS. Pastor is looking to gather a group of creative people to plan and lead us in our worship and experience of God's Word this summer. See Pastor or put your name on the sign up sheet in the lounge.

START AND END YOUR DAY IN PRAYER

DAILY PRAYER. Daily prayer is one of the means the Holy Spirit uses to keep us in faith. Here are two ways to make daily prayer part of your life: a daily service of morning prayer and a daily service of night prayer.

Morning Prayer: Start each day (Monday through Saturday) with a brief service of Morning Prayer. This service is available as an audio file on the [St. Paul's Website](#) and the St. Paul's Facebook each morning. You can listen and pray along from your home or take it with you as you exercise or commute.

Night Prayer. End your day in prayer and fellowship. This ongoing prayer group meets **on Zoom each night at 9:00 p.m.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

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