

Fifth Sunday of Easter
April 28, 2024



Immanuel Lutheran Church

a Reconciling in Christ congregation

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*our purpose is to gather people, nurture faith,
grow in God's love, and serve God's world*

Welcome to Immanuel!

We're thankful you're with us this morning! Throughout worship we'll use the red hymnal located on the back of the pew in front of you. Page numbers can be found towards the front of the hymnal at the bottom of the page, with hymns towards the back, beginning with the Psalms. Hearing assist devices are also available – just ask an usher for help.

We believe that the Gospel – the Good News that we are loved, forgiven, and free in Christ – is a gift offered to every person, and that God's grace has no limits or conditions. Through Christ, we are made a community that shares God's mission to proclaim grace and peace to all the world.

Prelude

Gathering

*The Holy Spirit gathers us in unity on the first day of the week,
the day of Christ's resurrection.*

stand

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy.

Amen.

Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and the waters of life. The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day. Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom's land. At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people.

We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

sit

Celebration Song *His Banner Over Me Is Love* Traditional
The Lord is mine and I am His; His banner over me is love. (3 x)
His banner over me is love!
He is the vine and we are the branches; His banner over me is love. (3 x)
His banner over me is love!

Children’s Chat

stand

Hymn of Praise *Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death* Hymn 452

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

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.

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

sit

Word

God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung and preached.

First Reading Acts 8:26-40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. ³³In his humiliation

justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus.³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?”³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

1 John 4:7-21

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God

whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

stand

Gospel Acclamation

p. 102

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Reading

John 15:1-8

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

sit

Sermon

Pastor Josh Ferris

stand

Hymn of the Day

Chief of Sinners Though I Be

Hymn 609

Apostles' 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.

Prayers of Intercession

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Passing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

sit

Offertory Anthem

Gift of Love

H. Hopson

Sonya Imperio, soloist

stand

Offertory Canticle

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

praise God, all creatures here below;

praise God above, ye heav'nly host;

praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Offering Prayer

Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

p. 107

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

p. 108

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world. Blessing, praise, and thanks

to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Invitation to Communion

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread.

Come and eat at God's table.

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

sit

All people are invited to receive communion today by coming forward to the front of the sanctuary. First, you'll receive bread, which is the body of Christ given for you. Then move to the next station, where you will find glass cups full of grape juice (lighter-colored) and wine (purple-colored), which is the blood of Christ shed for you. At the last station, return your empty cup to the tray. Gluten-free wafers are also available; to indicate you'd like to receive one, please simply raise your pointer finger when it's your turn to receive.

Lamb of God

p. 112

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace,
grant us peace.**

Communion Hymn

Where Charity and Love Prevail

Hymn 359

There in God's Garden

Hymn 342

Prayer after Communion

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Announcements

stand

Blessing

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

Let All Things Now Living

Hymn 881

Dismissal

Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Nursery School Directors – Amy Drzik, Kristine Whitemore

Sexton – Don Roberts

Online Ministry Coordinator – Jennifer Greene

We're thankful for these servants in worship today:

Livestream – Sonya Imperio, Jon Sprague

Assisting Minister – Diana Powers

Ushers – Craig Landquist, *volunteer*

Acolyte – Eve Cranson

Greeter – Sue Hudson

Children's Word – Greta Gridley, Heidi Lahey

Coffee Hour – Fran & Ray Philblade

Altar Guild – Mary Jane Rasku, Heidi Lahey, Bruce & Linda Kiefer

Counting Team – Greta & Scott Gridley

Worship, Service, and Fellowship in the week ahead:

Today	8:00 am	Simple Church (indoor Chapel/Choir Room)
	9:00 am	Indoor & Livestream worship (in sanctuary)
	10:15 am	Coffee Hour (in gym)
	10:30 am	Learning Hour
Monday	8:00 am	Lectio Divina (on Zoom)
Tuesday	6:45 pm	Steering Committee (On Zoom)
Wednesday	7:00 pm	Adult Choir Rehearsal (in sanctuary)
	7:00 pm	Confirmation Class (Room 6)
Thursday	10:30 am	Bible Study (on Zoom)
Sunday	8:00 am	Simple Church (indoor Chapel/Choir Room)
	9:00 am	Indoor & Livestream Worship (in sanctuary)
	10:15 am	Coffee Hour (in gym)
	10:30 am	Learning Hour

Daily Bible Readings for the Coming Week:

Monday:	Psalm 80, Isaiah 5:1-7, Galatians 5:16-26
Tuesday:	Psalm 80, Isaiah 32:9-20, James 3:17-18
Wednesday:	Psalm 80, Isaiah 65:17-25, John 14:18-31
Thursday:	Psalm 98, Isaiah 49:5-6, Acts 10:1-34
Friday:	Psalm 98, Isaiah 42:5-9, Acts 10:34-43
Saturday:	Psalm 98, Deuteronomy 32:44-47, Mark 10:42-45
Sunday:	Acts 10:44-48, Psalm 98, 1 John 5:1-6, John 15:9-17

Welcome to Immanuel

Thanks for joining us in worship today! Wherever you are, we're glad to have you with us. Remember you can reach out to the church office anytime if you need help, prayer, or someone to talk to.

Children's Word – After the Children's Chat, our young friends are invited to go with our volunteers to the gym to worship in their own way. Kids will return in time for communion.

Thank you – We thank Sonya Imperio for her gift of music this morning.

Coffee Hour – All are welcome to join us for coffee hour in the gym following today’s 9:00am worship. We thank Fran and Ray Philblade for hosting today. We’ll assemble personal care kits during this time--we are still in need of more soap (3 - 5 oz., any brand, in original wrapping).

Godly Play – Pastor Sarah will lead an Earth Day themed lesson for our youngest learners. You’re invited to join in classroom 2 at 10:30 or when you here the bell ring!

Adult Forum – Unfortunately, Lauren Aquino from IHN had to reschedule, but we look forward to learning more about In the Hour of Need family shelter when we can find a new date!

Beverly School of Kenya Presentation – On Sunday, May 5, Kathy Mills and Bonnie Colon will share their experiences from their recent trip to the Beverly School of Kenya. Join us in the gym during coffee hour to hear about their trip, see some amazing pictures, and learn more about the Beverly School.

Centennial Capital Campaign – So far we have received 75 commitments to the Capital Campaign. Thank you for your generosity! We are still receiving commitment forms. You can bring them to the church office or place them in the offering plate.

New Endowment Working Team Forming – As we shared last month, recently our congregation received a roughly half-million dollar bequest. We are very grateful for this generosity and the way it will bless our church for years to come. Over the next few weeks, we’ll be forming a team to do research and put together a plan for the use of these funds that will be presented at our annual meeting in January. This team will meet monthly. If you’d like to be part of it, please reach out to Pastor Josh and let him know.

Lectio Divina – Join us on Monday mornings from 8:00–8:30am on Zoom. Lectio Divina is the practice of reading scripture as a form of prayer. (Meeting ID: 854 5947 2625 Passcode: 684195).

Confirmation – Students and mentors are invited to join this Wednesday, May 1 at 7:00pm in Room 6 for a conversation about Psalms and Proverbs.

Thursday Morning Bible Study – We invite you to join us this Thursday at 10:30am on Zoom as we continue talking about the Gospel of John. Here's the link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84825798597>.

Meal Packaging – Volunteers are needed for our Meal Packaging Event on Saturday, May 18. Please contact Elaine Vetter with questions at etvetter@yahoo.com. The packing starts at 2:00pm this day and volunteer sign-ups start May 5 (link to follow).

IHN Fundraiser – In the Hour of Need Family Shelter's fundraiser, the Evening of Hope is Friday, May 10, 2024, at Brick Box Theater, 20 Franklin Street, Worcester. The evening's MC is Hank Stolz and includes performances by Cara Brindisi, Rob Joyce, Hip Swayers and Sheri Linn, and an online auction. Theater tickets are \$75, Livestream \$45. For tickets visit go to ihnworchester.org. We'll host IHN again May 26–June 1.

Senior Luncheon – Save the date! Join us on Thursday, May 23 for a Senior Luncheon! Sign-up is in Lawson Hall (or call the church office).

Communion Kits – Personal communion kits are located in the wooden trunk outside of Lawson Hall for those communing at home.

Stephen Ministry – Our Stephen Ministers are trained to provide confidential, one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life. Please let one of the pastors know if you or someone you know could benefit from talking to a Stephen Minister.

In Your Prayers this Week

This week, please lift up to God those who have requested our prayers:

David Alward, Bruce Axelson, Isaac Barron, Mary Beams, Jane Bedard, Heide & Bob, Grace Bialecki, Lucy & Tom Brennan, Ken Cameron, Ed & the Clarke family, Ann Marie Cole, Ben Cranson, Colleen Davison, Barbara Demont, Jaeger Dziama, Jim Eisenlord, Alan Farmer, Bev Gingras, Joan Greene, Bill, Dolores Hadady, Marilyn Hildick, Erika, Robin Johns, Ken Johnson, Mackenzie Keogh, Sara Kern, Carole Laino, Samantha Lampron, Bev Landquist, Jean Lane, Jeannie Larson, Jeff Larson, Meghan MacDonald, Joe Martire, Bob Mellor, James Mellor, Joanne Neal, Francis Parretti, Shirley, the Poissot family, Kay Porter, Jeff, Wylla Rabeler, Kathy Richardson, Nancy Robinson, Ray Rossetti, Shirley Rotti, Donald Shefer, Wendy, Diane Smith, Shirley Smith, Brad Sweet, Will, Elaine Vetter, Donna Vilian, Liz Wilson, Jim Zelesky, Don and Jill Zitzewitz.