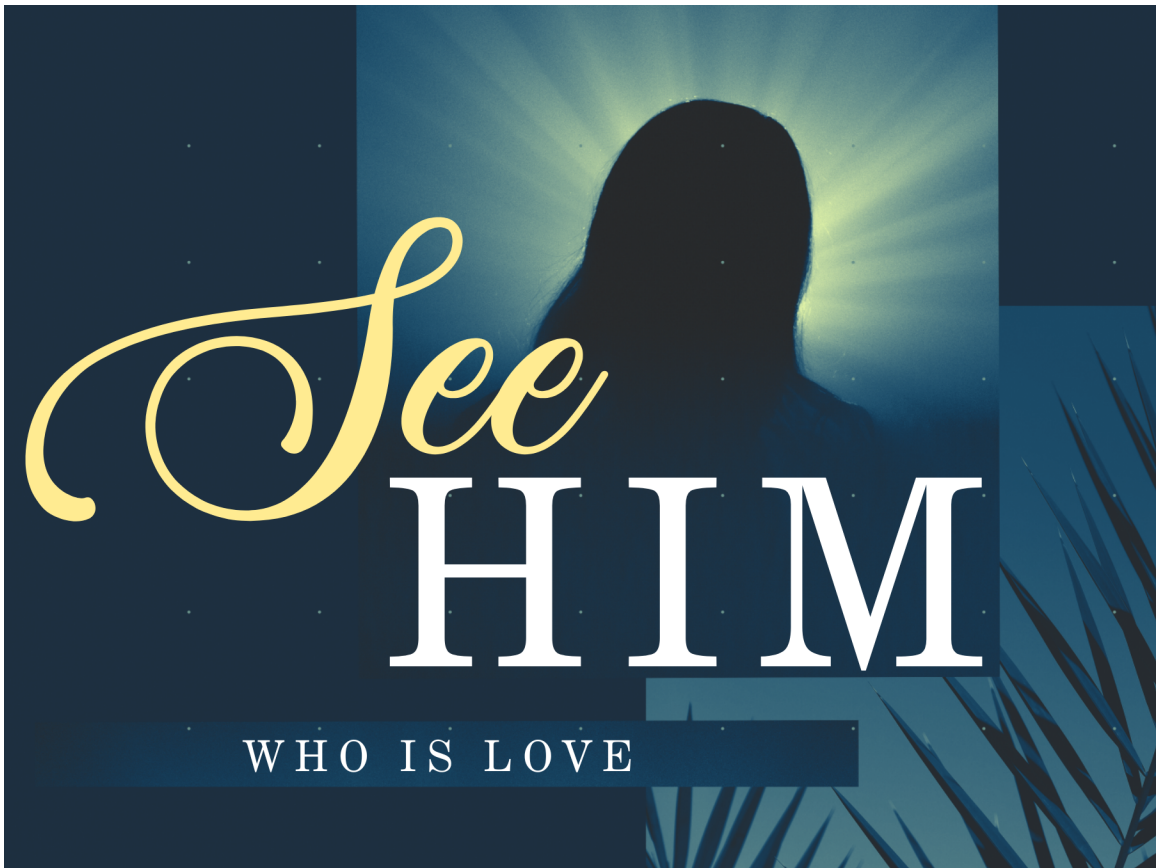


RIVER OF LIFE



5 MAY 2024



RIVER OF LIFE LUTHERAN | refreshing truth for all people

725 S. Estrella Pkwy (Suite 120) Goodyear, Arizona 85338

Sixth Sunday of Easter

OUR PASTOR

Pastor Lincoln Albrecht (623) 312.8650 pastor.lincoln.albrecht@gmail.com

WELCOME TO RIVER OF LIFE

Thank you for joining us this morning. In our worship service, God's children—you & I—gather together before God to be strengthened through God's Word. In response to God's message of love to us, we offer God our worship and praise.

The worship folder you're holding has the entire Order of Service. If you have questions, feel free to ask one of our ushers or anyone near you. The unfamiliar can be intimidating—let us help you. We want you to be comfortable & comforted here.

Restrooms are located in the front corner for your convenience.

God wants everyone to worship together. Worship is a learning process for children. Parents, if you feel like you need a moment, there is a room in the back of the worship area where you can see, hear, and participate in worship without being heard.

OUR FOCUS FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

The Festival of Jesus' Ascension into heaven is right around the corner. With Christ's visible presence about to be removed, how will the world see him?

It should see him when it looks at us. We must strive to reflect the love of Christ and his obedience to his Father in our lives. This isn't optional or merely for overachievers. The branches, to connect with last week's Gospel lesson, bear corresponding fruit of necessity. To spur us on, Jesus gives us a new title; he calls us his friends, those with whom he has shared the heart and mind of God! Jesus says to his disciples: **Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching and** the Triune God **will make his home with you.** What a reward! And yet, we are incapable without God first loving us. Praise be to God that he loves us—lives for us and with us—to motivate our love. Christ for us aims at visible results in our relationships that show Christ in us. God is love so we love one another.

The Gathering

INVOCATION

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the Son ✚ and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word | **221 (1)**



Bless - ed Je - sus, at your Word We are gath - ered all to
Let our hearts and souls be stirred Now to seek and love and



hear you.
fear you, By your teach - ings, sweet and ho - ly,



Drawn from earth to love you sole - ly.

M: Oh, how I love your law.

P: I meditate on it all day long.

M: Your commands make me wiser than my enemies,

P: for they are ever with me.

M: I have more insight than all my teachers,

P: for I meditate on your statutes.

M: How sweet are your words to my taste,

P: sweeter than honey to my mouth.

HYMN

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word | **221 (2)**



All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight Lie in deep - est dark-ness
Till your Spir - it breaks our night With the beams of truth un-



shroud - ed
cloud - ed. You a - lone to God can win us;



You must work all good with - in us.

M: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness,

P: **so that the person of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

M: Yet so often we have despised God's Word and failed to gladly hear and learn it. For this and all our sins, we bow before God and humbly ask his forgiveness.

P: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

HYMN*Blessed Jesus, at Your Word* | **221 (3)**

Gra-cious Sav - ior, good and kind, Light from Light, from God pro-
 O - pen now our heart and mind; Help us by your Spir - it's



ceed - ing,
 plead - ing. Hear the cry your peo - ple rais - es;



Hear and bless our prayers and prais - es.

M: God gave his Word so "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." The Scriptures testify about Jesus, who lived a perfect life for you, died on the cross to pay for all your sins, and rose again to assure you of your salvation. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

P: Amen.

HYMN*Blessed Jesus, at Your Word* | **221 (4)**

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, Praise to you and ad - o -
 Grant that we your Word may trust, Con - fi - dent of our sal -



ra - tion!
 va - tion, While we here be - low must wan - der,



Till we sing your prais - es yon - der.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray.

Father of lights, every good and perfect gift comes from you. Inspire us to think those things that are true and long for those things that are good, that we may always make our petitions according to your gracious will; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

P: **Amen.**

The Word of God

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 John 4

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us...¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.



Jesus encouraged the little ones to come to him. During this portion of the worship service, the children are invited forward to learn a truth tailored for them.

VERSE OF THE DAY

John 14:23

M: Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is risen!

P: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia.**

M: If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.

P: **My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.**

RESPONSE OF PRAISE

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus | 169 (1)

1 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus; His the scep - ter,
 his the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! His the tri - umph,
 His the vic - to - ry a - lone. Hark! The songs of peace -
 ful Zi - on Thun - der like a might - y flood: "Je - sus
 out of ev - 'ry na - tion Has re - deemed us by his blood."

³⁶ In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. ³⁷ About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. ³⁸ Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

³⁹ Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

⁴⁰ Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. ⁴² This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

In Joppa, there was a follower of Jesus, Tabitha, who was habitually doing good deeds and making a point of helping those who were impoverished—especially by making and providing clothes for those in material need.

When she became sick and died, her friends did a strange thing. Instead of burying her quickly after her death, they sent for Peter who was nearby.

What did he do? He did not remind those who journeyed from Joppa that Dorcas was already dead. He went with them, trusting that God had the power to bless her with life again, and if not she had already gained heaven. Peter followed the pattern of great Old Testament prophets like Elijah (see 1 Kings 17) and Elisha (2 Kings 4) and began with prayer. Peter knew only God could do what needed to be done—and his will would be done.

Then Peter spoke to Tabitha as if she were alive, using the same kind of words that Jesus did when he raised Jairus' daughter back to life (Mark 5:41).

Why did God do this miracle for Tabitha? It was not because she was more righteous. It was not because her death was more tragic than most. It was because through this miracle, many more were brought to faith in the Lord of eternal life.

GOSPEL READING

John 15

M: The Gospel according to John chapter fifteen:

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

P: Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice | **377 (1-5)**



1 Dear Chris - tians, one and all, re - joice, With
 2 Fast bound in Sa - tan's chains I lay; Death
 3 My own good works a - vailed me naught, No
 4 But God be - held my wretch - ed state Be -
 5 He spoke to his be - lov - ed Son: "'Tis



ex - ul - ta - tion spring - ing, And, with u -
 brood - ed dark - ly o'er me. Sin was my
 mer - it they at - tain - ing; My will a -
 fore the world's foun - da - tion, And, mind - ful
 time to have com - pas - sion. Then go, bright



nit - ed heart and voice And ho - ly rap - ture
 tor - ment night and day; In sin my moth - er
 gainst God's judg - ment fought, No hope for me re -
 of his mer - cies great, He planned my soul's sal -
 Jew - el of my crown, And bring man - kind sal -



sing - ing, Pro - claim the won - ders God
 bore me. Yet deep and deep - er still
 main - ing. My fears in - creased till sheer
 va - tion. A Fa - ther's heart he turned
 va - tion. From sin and sor - row set



has done, How his right arm the vic - t'ry
 I fell; Life had be - come a liv - ing
 de - spair Left naught but death to be my
 to me, Sought my re - demp - tion fer - vent -
 them free; Slay bit - ter death for them that



won. How dear - ly it has cost him!
 hell, So firm - ly sin pos - sessed me.
 share And hell to be my sen - tence.
 ly; He gave his dear - est trea - sure.
 they May live with you for - ev - er."

Our Response to God's Word

M: In Christ, you have heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.

P: We believe in Christ and trust in the truth he has revealed to us in his Word.

M: Living and serving together in trust and hope, we confess our common faith.

NICENE CREED¹

**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 fully 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 in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy Christian 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.

¹ *The Nicene Creed is the only common confession of faith for the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox, the Anglican Communion of churches, the Oriental Orthodox churches, and many Protestant bodies—which includes Lutherans.*

THANK OFFERING



God's people respond with thankful hearts. The people of River of Life have joined to offer God the first-fruits of all he has given us. Our offerings support God's work in this community and the world. If you are a visitor with us, thank you for joining us today. Please do not feel obligated to support our ministry, but we ask that you do take time to fill out a digital connect card (azriveroflife.com/connect) so we can thank you for joining us. Thank you & God bless you!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: God of might, by nature we were your enemies. We did not trust you or your Word. We were suspicious of your designs. Yet, in your grace, you made your dwelling among us to bring peace to people on earth.

P: Glory to the God in the highest. You are merciful to us every morning!

M: Holy Spirit, you encourage us to be discerning spiritual consumers. Help us be faithful to the truth you have revealed to us in God's Word.

P: Lord of all truth, sanctify us by your truth. Your Word is truth.

M: Your truth continues to light the way in our lives. Give us a better understanding of your kingdom purposes for us. In a world of falsehood, form and fashion us to be people of truth—in word and in action.

P: Embolden us to speak the truth in love to many who need to hear it.

M: Loving Lord, we recognize there are people in our lives that we find hard to love. You know our struggles in this area. Help us love those who frustrate or disappoint us. Help us love those we believe have sabotaged or betrayed us. Help us love those who seem to have nothing to contribute to our present happiness or future dreams. Help us love like you have loved us.

We pray privately for help to love our spiritual and earthly family, as well as our enemies.

M: Trusting that you hear and love us dearly, we pray as you taught us:

P: 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Prayer of Preparation: Lord God, Heavenly Father, You called me by name and declared that I was Your child through the washing of my Baptism. I desire, now, to receive the true body and blood of my Savior, Jesus Christ, in this Holy Meal. Continue to grant me grace, that I may stand before You and the body of believers and faithfully speak of the hope that is mine through Your life, death, and resurrection. Strengthen me. Grant me the forgiveness of sins and the ability to do that which pleases you; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

M: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms and placed all things under his feet for the benefit of the Church. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever:



HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Sanctus | SWS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.



You are my God, and I will ex - alt you.



I will give you thanks, for you have be - come my sal -



va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my ✠ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my ✠ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

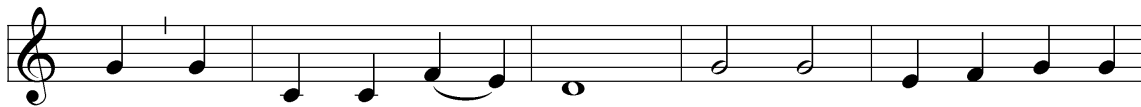
P: Amen.

LAMB OF GOD

Agnus Dei | SWS



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



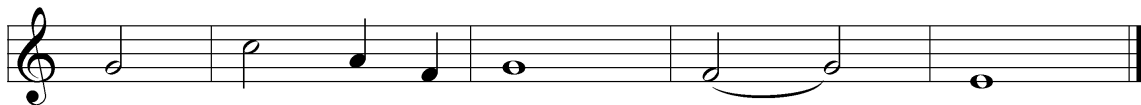
world; have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you



take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; grant us your peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION



At River of Life, we believe that in the Lord's Supper, along with the bread & wine, we miraculously receive the real body & blood of Christ for the full forgiveness of sins. Scripture directs believers in preparation and reception: **"A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself."** (1 Cor. 11:29)

This meal is also an expression of unity with one another: **"Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."** (1 Cor. 10:17) Therefore we ask that if you are not familiar with our teachings, please speak with Pastor Albrecht before taking the Lord's Supper. Thank you.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN



1 Lord Je - sus Christ, you have pre - pared This feast for
2 Al - though you did to heav'n as - cend, Where an - gel
3 Yet, Sav - ior, you are not con - fined To an - y
4 We eat this bread and drink this cup, Your pre - cious
5 Though rea - son can - not un - der - stand, Yet faith this



our sal - va - tion; It is your bod - y
hosts are dwell - ing, And in your pres - ence
hab - i - ta - tion, But you are pres - ent
Word be - liev - ing That your true bod - y
truth em - brac - es: Your bod - y, Lord, is



and your blood, And at your in - vi - ta - tion
they be - hold Your glo - ry, all ex - cel - ling,
ev - 'ry - where And with your con - gre - ga - tion.
and your blood Our lips are here re - ceiv - ing,
ev - 'ry - where At once in man - y plac - es.



As wea - ry souls, with sin op - pressed, We come to
And though your peo - ple shall not see Your glo - ry
Firm as a rock this truth shall stand, Un - moved by
This Word re - mains for - ev - er true, And there is
I leave to you how this can be; Your Word a -



you for need - ed rest, For com - fort, and for par - don.
and your maj - es - ty Till dawns the judg - ment morn - ing,
an - y dar - ing hand Or sub - tle craft and cun - ning.
naught you can - not do, For you, Lord, are al - might - y.
lone suf - fic - es me; I trust its truth un - fail - ing.

Additional stanzas for this hymn are in the red hymnal or on the screens in front of you.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

P: Amen.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING

Thank the Lord | SWS



Thank the Lord and sing his praise. Tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-news his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia!

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness. The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

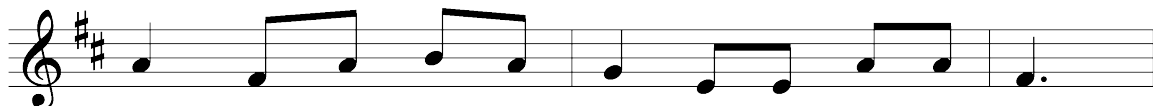
P: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

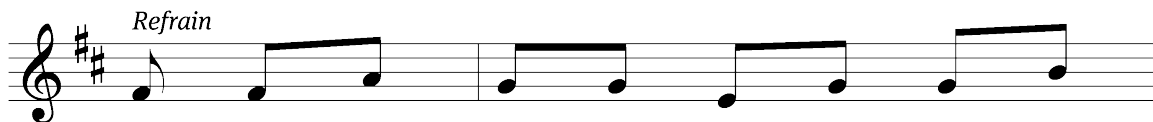
God Loves Me Dearly | 583



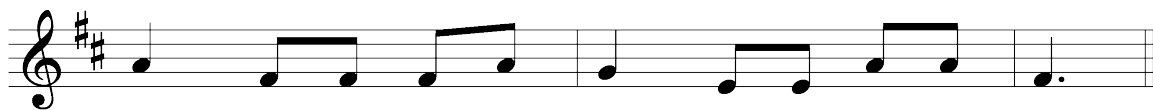
1 God loves me dear - ly, grants me sal -
2 I was in slav - 'ry, sin, death, and
3 He sent forth Je - sus, my dear Re -
4 Je - sus, my Sav - ior, him - self did
5 Now I will praise you, O Love e -



va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, loves e - ven me.
dark - ness; God's love was work - ing to make me free.
deem - er, he sent forth Je - sus and set me free.
of - fer; Je - sus, my Sav - ior, paid all I owed.
ter - nal; now I will praise you all my life long.



There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me



dear - ly, God loves me dear - ly, loves e - ven me.



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US THIS MORNING

We recognize how busy this world and your life can be. Thank you for setting aside a Sunday morning to be with us in God's house. Stick around for a bite to eat and a refreshing drink. One of life's greatest pleasures is meeting new people and growing lasting relationships. We'd love to get to know you better.

INTERESTED IN JOINING RIVER OF LIFE?

Would you like to learn what the Lutheran church believes and teaches? Are you interested in joining our church, or going through a refresher class? We would love to meet with you and study God's Word. If you're interested, speak with Pastor Albrecht.

NAME TAGS

Have you ever been at a big gathering where everyone seems to know one another but you can't quite remember their names as well as they do yours? It's not much fun! In an effort to help everyone get to know each other better—and remember names—we are ordering a fresh round of name tags. If you already have one, wear it on Sunday. If you don't have one, talk with Richard Hansen about ordering one.

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Hymn #221 **Blessed Jesus, at Your Word** Text: Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619-84, st. 1-3; *Geistreiches Gesang-Büchlein*, Berlin, 1707, st. 4; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, st. 1-3, alt.; unknown, st. 4, alt.

Hymn #169 **Alleluia! Sing to Jesus** Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98, abr., alt.

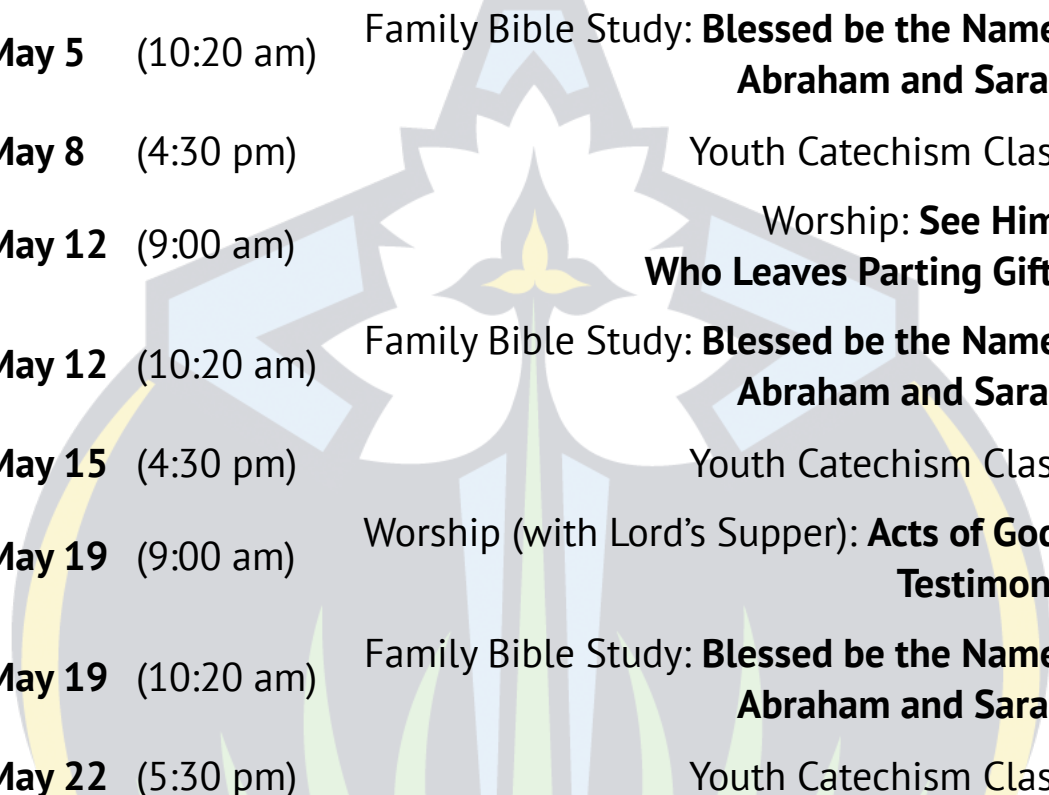
Hymn #377 **Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice** Text: Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. Richard Massie, 1800-87, alt.

Hymn #312 **Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared** Text: Samuel Kinner, 1603-68; tr. Emanuel Cronenwett, 1841-1931, alt.

Hymn #583 **God Loves Me Dearly** Text: August Rische, 1819-1906; tr. composite.

RIVER OF LIFE

Certainty & Hope In The Coming Days

- 
- May 5** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Blessed be the Name: Abraham and Sarah**
- May 8** (4:30 pm) Youth Catechism Class
- May 12** (9:00 am) Worship: **See Him: Who Leaves Parting Gifts**
- May 12** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Blessed be the Name: Abraham and Sarah**
- May 15** (4:30 pm) Youth Catechism Class
- May 19** (9:00 am) Worship (with Lord's Supper): **Acts of God: Testimony**
- May 19** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Blessed be the Name: Abraham and Sarah**
- May 22** (5:30 pm) Youth Catechism Class

CONNECTING WITH RIVER OF LIFE

Videos of recent worship services and audio recordings of weekly sermons are available online. Check out our website or our Facebook page.

AZRiverOfLife.com facebook.com/AZRiverOfLife

refreshing truth for you