

# 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter



*Sermon Series: Belong + Believe*

May 5<sup>th</sup> 2024

# JOY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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## Welcome!

There is a place for you here.  
*Just as you are.*

We extend welcome to those who are single, divorced, married, widowed, or if your relationship status is “complicated”. We love families, no matter how you define them.



We are glad you are here whether you come every Sunday or if this is your first time at our church or any church at all. You are welcome here if you know the bible backwards and forwards, or have never really read it, if you know Jesus or are just curious to hear what he is all about.

We welcome you if you have doubts about “organized religion” or are a “cradle Christian”. We welcome liberals, conservatives, moderates, and undecideds. If you cheer for the right team, or don’t like sports, you are welcome here.

We especially welcome those who could use a prayer right now, or an assurance that God loves them, those who are struggling, and those who are doing okay.

Whoever you are, whatever your past or present – God welcomes you and so do we.

**We embrace children!** We are used to the joyful sounds and wiggles of our youngest siblings in Christ and gladly welcome them in worship. We have a kids area with quiet toys and activities along with activity bags near the main entrance to the sanctuary to help keep restless hands busy. A family room is also available in the back and is equipped with a large window facing the sanctuary and a speaker to hear what is being said.

## Today's Introduction:

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.



+ WE GATHER TOGETHER +

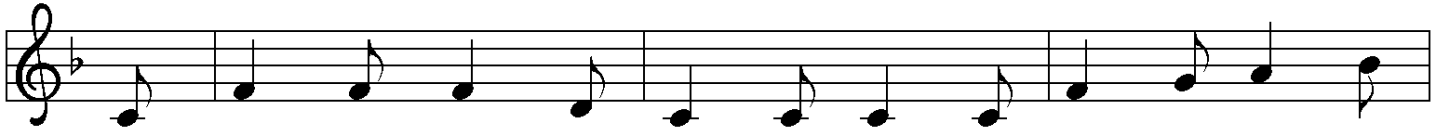
*The Spirit calls us together as God's beloved people*

Welcome to worship this morning! Everything you will need is in this bulletin or the red hymnal book beside your seat. During worship, words in **bold** are said by the assembly in response.

We practice an open table meaning that all are welcome to receive Holy Communion. You do not need to be a member of Joy or any other church. Jesus welcomes all to the feast! Kids of all ages are welcome to receive but we leave this decision to parents. If you prefer your child receive a blessing, please place your hand over your child's hands when the pastor comes to you.

Welcome & Announcements

Gathering Hymn: #482 "I Come with Joy"



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and  
2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are  
3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion  
4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er  
5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call in  
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in  
ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and  
near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -  
done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the



love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.  
Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.  
strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.  
live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.  
love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

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

Look, here is water!  
**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

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 water became the essence of life.  
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.  
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.  
In a desert pool the Ethiopian official  
entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

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.**

Look, here is water! **Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Canticle of Praise

**Refrain**

*Congregation:*



Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,



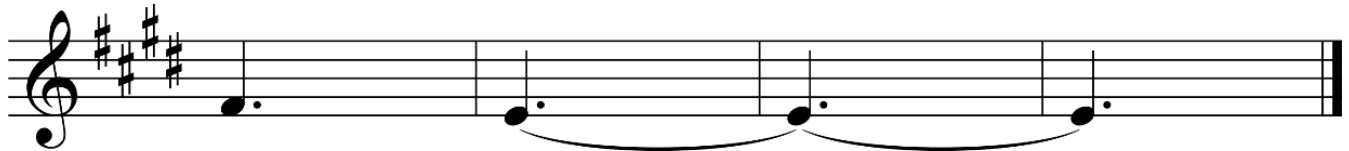
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy



to the God of life and love and



free-dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -



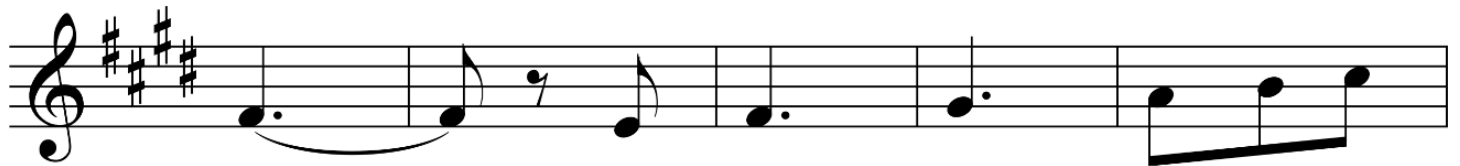
er - more!

## Verse 1

*Congregation or Congregation 1:*



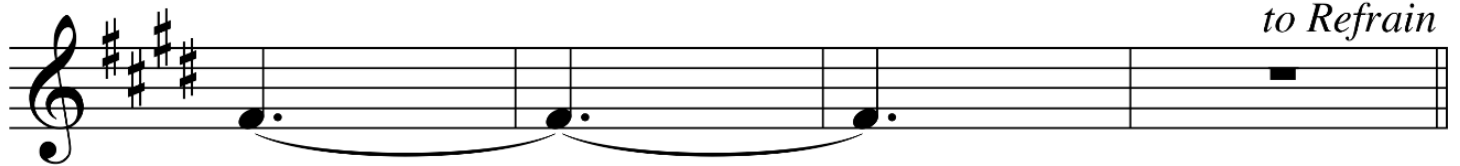
1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once



slain, whose blood has freed and u -



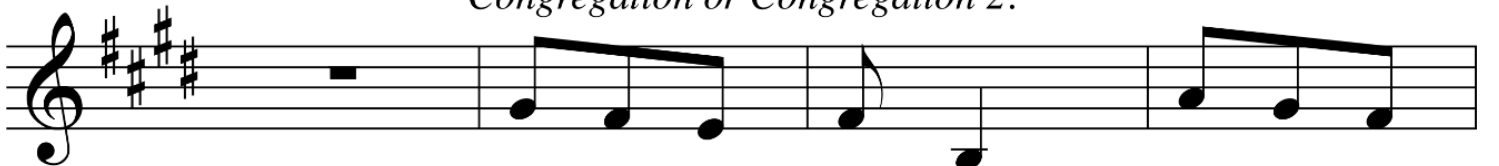
nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of



God.

## Verse 2

*Congregation or Congregation 2:*



2. Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and



might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ



for ev - er.

### Verse 3

*Congregation:*

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to  
make us peo - ple of God; to make  
all things new. *to Refrain*

### Greeting

*Presider:*

*Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

### Prayer of the Day

**O God, your love for us is endless. Pour your love and mercy into our hearts that they overflow with compassion for our neighbors, so that with you, we sing your praise with joyful songs; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

+ WE HEAR GOD'S WORD +  
*God speaks in scripture, preaching, and song*



Psalm Reading | Psalm 98

R: **Refrain:** *Make a joyful noise to the Lord!*

**C: (joyful noise)**

R: <sup>1</sup>O sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have gotten him victory.

**C: <sup>2</sup>The LORD has made known his  
victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the  
sight of the nations. *Refrain***

R: <sup>3</sup>He has remembered his steadfast love  
and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.  
All the ends of the earth have seen  
the victory of our God.

**C: <sup>4</sup>Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all  
the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing  
praises. *Refrain***

R: <sup>5</sup>Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody.

**C: <sup>6</sup>With trumpets and the sound of the  
horn  
make a joyful noise before the King,  
the LORD.  
(trumpet sound) *Refrain***

R: <sup>7</sup>Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who live in it.

**<sup>8</sup>Let the floods clap their hands;  
(clap, clap)  
let the hills sing together for joy  
(sing "Alleluia") *Refrain***

R: <sup>9</sup>at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity. *Refrain*

## Children's Message

Reading | Acts 10:44-48

*Introduction: While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

<sup>44</sup>While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. <sup>45</sup>The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, <sup>46</sup>for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, <sup>47</sup>Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have? <sup>48</sup>So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

## Gospel Acclamation (*sung twice*)

*Congregation:*

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Optional Repeat*

## Gospel Reading | John 15:9-17


<sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup>This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup>I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.


## Sermon | Pastor Sean Avery

### Hymn of the Day: #708 "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"

*Refrain*



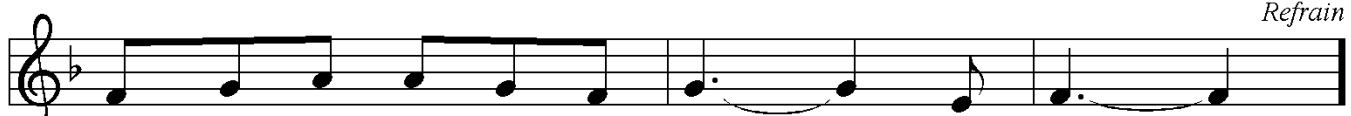
Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show



us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.



1 Kneels at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - es their feet,  
2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor, var - ied in col - or and race,  
3 These are the ones we will serve, these are the ones we will love;  
4 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their feet:



*Refrain*

mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.  
neigh-bors are near - by and far a - way.  
all these are neigh-bors to us and you.  
this is the way we will live with you.

## We Pray for All God's Creation

*Each prayer petition ends with the following prompt and response.*

Hear us O God,  
**Your mercy is great.**

## We Share Signs of Peace with Each Other

*All may respond with open arms in response to the presiding minister.*

The peace of Christ be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

*All share signs of peace with each other, saying "Peace" or "Peace be with you" or similar words.*

+ WE SHARE IN THE LORD'S MEAL +  
*We partake in Holy Communion*

## Offering & Offertory Response

### Refrain

*Congregation:*



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were



gath - ered in - to one to be - come our bread;



so may all your peo - ple from all the ends of earth be



gath - ered in - to one in you.

## Verses



1. As this cup of bless - ing is shared with - in our midst

2. Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when



may we share the pres - ence of your love.

all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

We Pray for God to Use the Gifts We Offer

Risen One,

**you call us to believe and bear fruit.**

**May the gifts that we offer here**

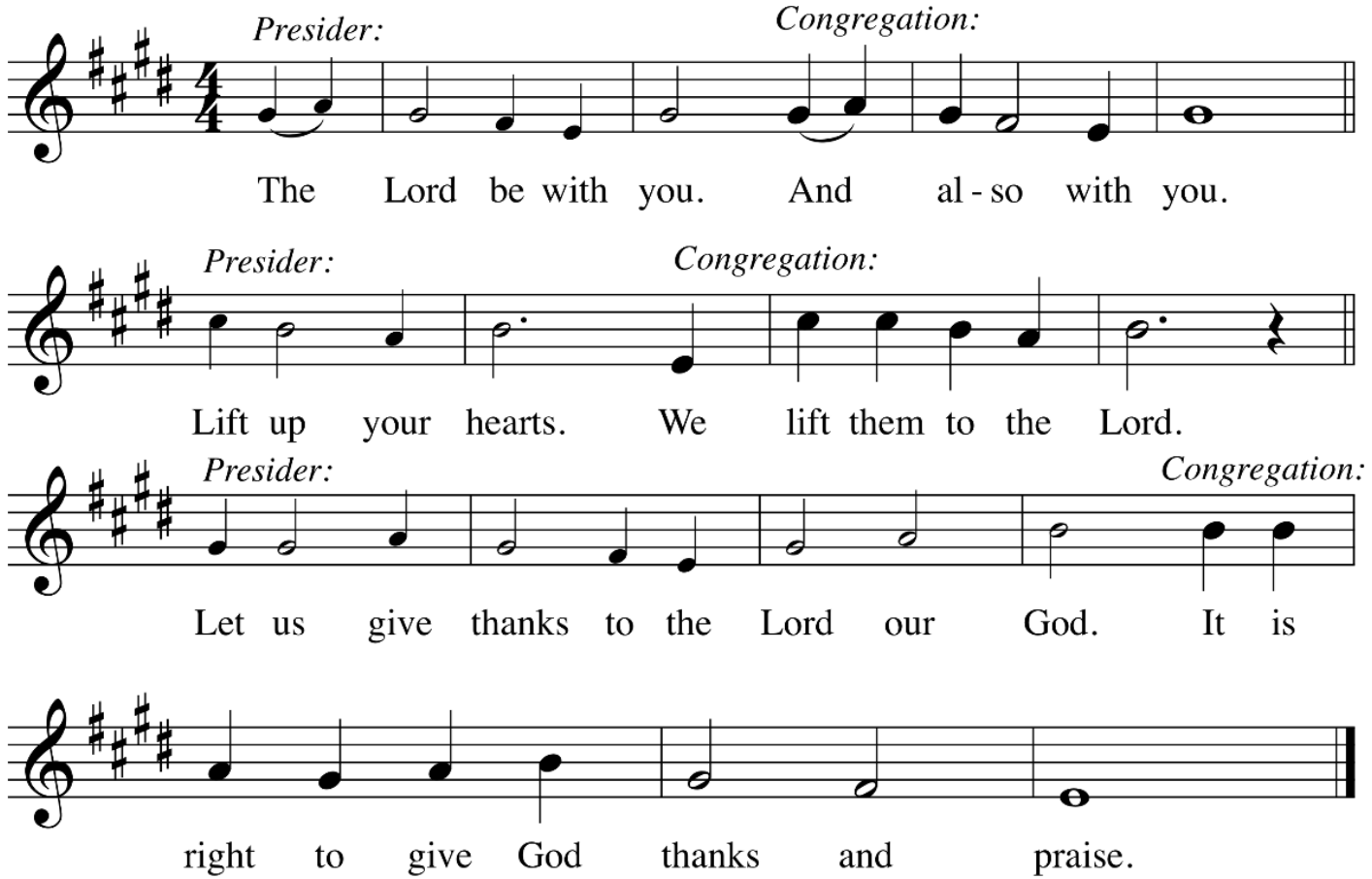
**be signs of your abiding love.**

**Form us to be your witnesses in the world,**

**through Jesus Christ, our true vine.**

**Amen**

# The Great Thanksgiving



*Presider:* *Congregation:*

The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.

*Presider:* *Congregation:*

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

*Presider:* *Congregation:*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is

right to give God thanks and praise.

## Preface

*The presiding minister continues singing:*

”It is our duty and delight....and join their unending hymn...”

*The assembly joins in singing “Holy, Holy, Holy...”*

# Holy, Holy, Holy

*Congregation:*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and  
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!  
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

The musical score is written on five staves. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!"

# Words of Institution

## The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

## Communion

*All are welcome at the Lord's Table.* You do not need to be a member of Joy Lutheran Church or any other church. Jesus welcomes you and you have a place here. We believe Jesus is truly present in bread and wine and in this meal, we receive God's gift of forgiveness, kindness, and love.

The ushers will guide you forward. You may either stand or kneel at the communion rail. If you require a gluten-free option, keep your hands folded to receive a gluten-free wafer.

Following communion, all are welcome to light a prayer candle along the west wall of the sanctuary. Prayer requests may be written on paper slips and placed in the wooden hands.

## Communion Hymn: #491 "Come, Let Us Eat"



- 1 Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread,
- 2 Come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured,
- 3 In Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest,
- 4 Rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word,



come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.  
come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured.  
in Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest.  
rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word.



Our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er,  
Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er,  
In the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er,  
Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom,

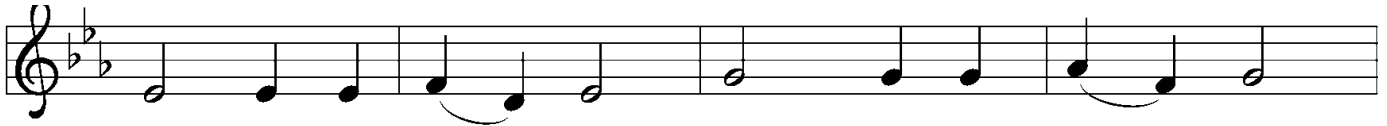


All



our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er.  
Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er.  
in the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er.  
Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom.

Communion Hymn: #838 "Beautiful Savior"



1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion,  
2 Fair are the mead - ows, fair are the wood - lands,  
3 Fair is the sun - shine, fair is the moon - light,  
4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions,



Son of God and Son of Man!  
robed in flow'rs of bloom - ing spring;  
bright the spar - kling stars on high;  
Son of God and Son of Man!



Tru - ly I'd love thee, tru - ly I'd serve thee,  
Je - sus is fair - er, Je - sus is pur - er,  
Je - sus shines bright - er, Je - sus shines pur - er  
Glo - ry and hon - or, praise, ad - o - ra - tion,



light of my soul, my joy, my crown.  
he makes our sor - rowing spir - it sing.  
than all the an - gels in the sky.  
now and for - ev - er - more be thine!

## Post-Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you in his grace.

**Amen.**

+ WE ARE SENT OUT +

*God blesses us for the ministry of our daily lives*

## Blessing

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The God of resurrection power,  
the Christ of unending joy,  
and the Spirit of Easter hope

✠ bless you now and always.

**Amen.**

## Sending Hymn: #543 "Go, My Children, with My Blessing"



- 1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
- 2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
- 3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.  
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap-tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.  
 Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.  
 Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com-fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."  
 Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."  
 Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."

## Dismissal

*Kids are invited to join Pastor Sean in the back to say the dismissal.*

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

Thank you for joining us for worship today!

*Join us for coffee, snacks, and conversation after worship in the narthex!*

*Want to learn more about our faith community?*

Visit **joy-lutheran.com** and sign-up for our weekly digital newsletter *Notes of Joy*. You can also send us a message on our homepage!



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## Please pray for those listed below:

*To add someone to this list, please send an email to [joylutheran@gmail.com](mailto:joylutheran@gmail.com)*

- + Hegna Family (as they grieve the loss of Jonny).
- + Pr. Sean, Becky & family (as they grieve the loss of Sean's mom)

- + Julie Meyer (facing the uncertainty after suffering a stroke)
- + Justin Dailey (Chris Dailey's brother, for comfort for the family and a successful surgery)
- + Bob & Candy Allen (for successful back surgery for Bob and comfort for Candy)
- + Tom & Debbie Bird (as they grieve the loss of Skip Lange)
- + Bentson family (as they grieve the loss of Al Bentson)
- + Eric & Margie Hall & family (as they grieve the loss of Eric's dad John)
- + Reimer & Oistad family (as they grieve the loss of Gary)
- + LaiMing Reimer (as she recovers from a successful kidney transplant)
- + Diana Flaherty (for pain and healing)
- + Trudi (for healing, wisdom for doctors)
- + Lisa Lind (healing, friend of Kristi Swain)
- + Dick Prien and family (as they mourn the passing of Sharon)
- + Stella Scamman (Kristi Swain's aunt)
- + Layli (Trudi's granddaughter, for peace and guidance)
- + Margie H. (for healing and recovery)
- + Harvey P. (for strength and healing)
- + Family of Anton Erickson (Margie and Eric's nephew)
- + The Fredeen Family (as they mourn Wayne and Amy)
- + Brittany Mumma (seizures)
- + Jennifer Huntington (health and healing)
- + Corrine Finnie (healing)
- + The McConell Family (as they mourn the loss of their mother and wife, Mary)
- + Gwendolyn Roth (peace of mind and that she will know God is with her)
- + Tom Clark (healing)
- + For our active-duty military personnel, especially those serving in Alaska and our veterans.

<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS:</b>
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**JUMP FOR JOY KIDS CLOTHES CLOSET – TODAY 1-3pm**

We are currently in need of boys and girls pant sizes 8-12. Thank you all for your donations and help serving our community in this way, you are a huge part of the success of our ministry.

**CHURCH BRUNCH | NEXT SUNDAY - MAY 12<sup>th</sup>**

Join us after worship for our church wide brunch following worship. All are welcome!

## **SATURDAY WORK GROUP SCHEDULE | MAY 11<sup>th</sup> & June 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Our Saturday Work Group will meet again on **Saturday, May 11** to take care of some routine tasks (lighting, filters), beginning at 9am and finishing by noon. Some of us will concentrate our efforts on reorganizing the kitchen and repatriating lost items.

Because of the Alaska Run for Women on June 8 (hint, hint), the work group will meet again on **Saturday, June 22**, and we'll focus on outdoor chores. More details will follow, including a list of tasks and volunteer opportunities both inside and outside. Feel free to connect with Nancy Hemsath if you have questions or want to add a project to the list.

Huge thanks to all who help to maintain our very organic building and grounds, especially those who take care of chores without recognition. **YOU ARE SO APPRECIATED!**

## **FREE ELECTRONICS RECYCLING EVENT | MAY 18<sup>th</sup>**

We will be having our electronics recycling event Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 10am – 2pm. This recycling is for household electronics and our partners in this are Total Reclaim and Eagle River High School green club. The cost is FREE / carload, which is quite a deal considering how much it costs to recycle. Monitors or large screen TVs will have a small cost. Appliances (refrigerator, dryer, washer) and smoke detectors are not allowed because appliances take up too much room and smoke detectors contain radioactive materials. If you'd like to help, they will set up at 9:30 and we've divided sign up into two slots 9:30 to 12 and 12 to 2:30 and we'll post that after church Sunday. Volunteers usually just help direct traffic, answer questions, etc. No real manual labor because Total Reclaim brings a bunch of guys to disassemble the materials into their component parts. Let your neighbors and co-workers know. Let's keep these things out of the dump!

## **JOYFUL WOMEN AT THE ALASKA RUN FOR WOMEN | JUNE 8<sup>th</sup>**

Joy's team will walk (or run) the 1- and 5-mile versions (timed and untimed) of the 32nd Alaska Run for Women [<https://www.akrfw.org/>] in Anchorage.

As in past years, we are participating to honor the many women in our congregation who have experienced breast cancer.

If you'd like to join Team **Joyful Women** in person or virtually, you can register to join us until June 7 at <https://www.akrfw.org/register/registration>. In order to include all women regardless of economic circumstances, the Run for Women has no set registration fee but relies solely on donations. Last year, we raised \$750 so we've set that as our goal again this year.

We'd love for you to cheer us on along the route. The event begins and ends at UAA, and the route circles the campuses and adjacent neighborhoods. You can find a map of the race at <https://www.akrfw.org/event-info/maps>. We'll acknowledge the entire team at church on Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup>.



*Registration Link*

There will be more information to follow, but feel free to contact Nancy Hemsath if you have questions in the meantime. [907.230.0641 or [nancyhemsath@gmail.com](mailto:nancyhemsath@gmail.com)].

**UPDATE FROM THE CARING FOR CREATION TEAM | SOLAR PANEL PROJECT**

We are over the moon—or should we say, “over the sun”, that we as a congregation have reached our goal of \$63,500 for the 44-panel solar project for our church and community! Thank you to all who supported the project with money or prayer. We have contacted the installer to set a date for the panels to become a permanent part of our roof sometime this summer. More to come on how we hope to encourage care for God’s creation.

**JOY OF READING BOOK CLUB | May- September 2024**

The Joy of Reading Book Club meets once a month to discuss the book selection for that month. We share thoughts on the book of the month, have a light dinner, and talk and laugh together.

Upcoming books and meetings:

**\*May 20-** is *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O’Farrell and Mona Mitton will be hosting.

**\*No Meeting in June**

**\*Friday July 12-** is *The Women* by Kristen Hannah- Mark your calendars for the book club anniversary celebration on Nancy Lake! This will be our 14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

**\*August 19-** is *Little Souls* by Sandra Dallas.

**\*September 16-** is *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni.

Books are meant to be shared! Please join us!

Please contact the office on 907-694-9601 if you would like any more information.

**JOY CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER- HIRING TEACHER/COOK POSITIONS**

JCDC is currently hiring, full descriptions can be found on the bulletin board at the main entrance and in the narthex. Feel free to take a flyer. If you have any questions, please contact JCDC [jcdcoffice@gmail.com](mailto:jcdcoffice@gmail.com) or 907-694-2755

*Do you have an announcement for the bulletin or Notes of Joy? Email Ericka in the office at [joylutheran@gmail.com](mailto:joylutheran@gmail.com). Submissions are due each week by Thursday at 9am.*

## WORSHIP LEADERS TODAY

**Presider:** Pastor Sean Avery  
**Assisting Minister:** Ray K.  
**Readers:** Jan O. & Hazel S.  
**Pianist:** Kathy H.  
**Altar Care:** Nancy W.

**Communion Assistant:** Jan O.  
**Acolyte:** Jasper S.  
**Ushers:** Henry H. & Mona M.

## WORSHIP LEADERS NEXT SUNDAY

**Presider:** Pastor Sean Avery  
**Assisting Minister:**  
**Readers:** Nancy H. & AbieLiz L.  
**Pianist:** Nancy W.  
**Altar Care:** Sue W.

**Communion Assistant:** Sue W.  
**Acolyte:** Arden P.  
**Ushers:** Lois L. & Nancy D.

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**Today's Flowers Provided by:**

**Johnson Family**

**In celebration of Wyatt's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

**Happy Birthday Wyatt!!**

## Joy's May Birthdays & Anniversaries

If we missed your birthday, or anniversary please email [joylutheran@gmail.com](mailto:joylutheran@gmail.com)

### Birthday's

5 Wyatt J.  
14 Mona M.  
25 Nicole S.

### Anniversaries

25 Dan & Nancy D.

## The Art of Spiritual Practice

Okay, I just forgot. April was National Poetry Month, and I neglected to suggest that reading poetry is a spiritual practice in April. Yet poetry knows no bounds. So I'm suggesting it now. I know. Not everybody loves poetry. But I offer this poem by Emily Dickinson (shared with me by Pastor Karen Sonray today)—one that continues to celebrate these days after Easter.

Love is like Life, merely longer.  
Love is like death, enduring the grave.  
Love is the fellow of the resurrection,  
Scooping up the dust and chanting, "Live!"

Notice which words or phrases strike you. How do they speak to your soul? Why? Why now?

Or if none of this poem touches you, notice that. Same question. Why?

For me, I'm sitting with how Love scoops up the dust and chants, "Live!" Maybe it reminds me that I am dust and to dust I shall return, but in the meantime—Live! Or maybe Love scoops us up in the dust of grieving and reminds me to keep on living. More to just sit with this morning.

That's what I like about poetry; it can meet your soul wherever it is.

*Pastor Marcia Wakeland is a retired ELCA pastor, a spiritual director and a listening advocate. She is interested in the actual experience of having faith and how that is lived out. She can be reached at [mwakeland@gmail.com](mailto:mwakeland@gmail.com) for comments or more questions Her ongoing blog of living out spiritual practices is [listeninglife.live](http://listeninglife.live).*