

May 17, 2026

Ascension of our Lord

THEME: Stories That Matter – Living the Sequel

10:15 AM Worship

Descriptor for front of bulletin:

The season of Easter, or Eastertide, is a time of embracing the promise and hope of Resurrection. It is a time of leaning into the stories that matter. Come and gather around the stories of those who wrestled with the Easter event and some of the words of preparation that Jesus gave to help us live the reality of eternity now. It is clear from these stories that Jesus wanted to equip us to thrive in a season of Easter promise. The Spirit abides in us, preserving and weaving our shared story as the body of Christ. Worship this week celebrates testimony, memory, and the ongoing narrative of God's love in our community.



+ GATHERING +

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE: Prelude and Fugue in d minor - J.S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Easter people, in this season of Eastertide, we remember the blessings God gives us—the blessings of Resurrection, salvation, and new life in Christ.

We come to praise God for the blessings of Easter!

We recall the blessings of creation—of clean air and water, of food and shelter, of beauty and awe.

We come to praise God for the blessings of creation!

We share in the blessings of community—of family and friends, of church and home, of help that is given and received.

We come to praise God for the blessings of community!

Easter people, we gather today to remember Christ's Ascension, when Jesus was taken up into heaven while blessing his disciples, marking not the end but the next chapter of God's salvific work among us.

We come to bless God with our praise as God continues to bless us with all that we need to live as God's Resurrection people. Thanks be to God! Amen.

HYMN ELW 392 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus vs 1-3

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

While we claim to celebrate the ascension of our Lord, the way we live proclaims our lack of faith in his power to deal with the world. Let us confess the incongruity between our faith and practice. Let us pray:

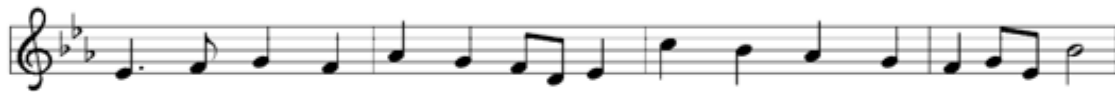
We come, O Lord, on this day of glory to confess our lack of trust. While we sing of your lordship over all creation, we have too often acted as though you are powerless in the face of today's events. Help us to live with confidence in your presence today and in hope for life with you forever. Amen.

Jesus promised his disciples that they would not be alone – that he would be with them to the end of the age. May this promise of the resurrected and ascended Lord remind us that God not only promises presence but forgiveness. You are forgiven by a merciful God who loves you. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

HYMN OF PRAISE: Praise the Lord!



1 Praise the Lord! O heav'ns, a - dore him; praise him, an - gels, in the height;
2 Praise the Lord, for he is gra - cious; nev - er shall his prom-ise fail.



sun and moon, re - joice be - fore him; praise him, gleam - ing stars and light.
God has made his saints vic - to - rious; sin and death shall not pre - vail.



Praise the Lord, for he has spo - ken; worlds his might - y voice o - beyed;
Praise the God of our sal - va - tion; hosts on high, his pow'r pro - claim;



laws which nev - er shall be bro - ken for their guid - ance he has made.
heav'n and earth, and all cre - a - tion, laud and mag - ni - fy his name!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised, he abides with us on earth to the end of time, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

+ WORD +

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Acts 1:1-11

At the conclusion of the reading:

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:15-23

At the conclusion of the reading:

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 24:44-53

At the beginning of the reading:

The holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the reading:

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 430 Rejoice, for Christ is king!

NICENE 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 THE PEOPLE

Each prayer petition will end with the phrase:

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

Amen.

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor - setting by Larry Shackley

OFFERTORY



1 We place up - on your ta - ble, Lord, where you by
2 Ac - cept them, Lord; they come from you; we take them



grace have bid us dine, these to - kens of our dai - ly
hum - bly from your hand; put these your gifts to high - er



work, the food of life, the bread and wine.
use: the ho - ly meal that you com - mand.

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessing God of Presence, even as Christ ascended, you did not leave us alone. While he was blessing them, you were preparing us to carry the story forward, to be your witnesses, to live in hope and power. In this sacred act of giving, we return a portion of what you have entrusted to us. May these gifts be a blessing to others, as Christ has been to us. Clothe us with courage.

Remind us that your Spirit goes with us. And send us, renewed and ready, to be your church in the world. In the name of Christ, we pray **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

LAMB OF GOD –



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

SHARING OF COMMUNION

Communion will be shared continuously. Please come forward down the center aisle and return to your seat by the side aisle. You will receive the bread from the pastor and then be invited to take a pre-filled cup from the tray held by the communion assistant. Wine is in the clear cups and grape juice is in the purple cups. Empty cups can be placed in the bowls at the end of the first pew as you return to your seat. All are welcome!

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION ELW 494 For the Bread which You have broken

TABLE BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

+ SENDING +

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

May God bless you
with the understanding, wisdom, and grace
to follow the way of Christ,
that in all things,
your life may be a blessing of praise to God.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN ELW 392 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus vs. 4-5

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Praise the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Postlude on "Blaenwern" (Love Divine, all Loves excelling) - Ian Higginson

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Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday May 13

7 – 8:15 PM Confirmation

Sunday May 17

9 AM Sunday School – end of year celebration

10:15 AM Worship service

Summer Newsletter articles deadline

Thursday May 21

Heavenly Helpers Hoagie order pick up between 5-6 PM
Contact Elaine Keller at elaineakeller@comcast.net or
call 215-262-5366
Card Crew meets @ 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall.
Coffee and cake will be available. All are welcome!

Sunday May 24

Pentecost Sunday
10:15 AM Worship service

Sunday Morning Coffee Bar - Join us at the coffee bar at the back entrance for coffee, hot tea, breakfast treats and conversation starting at 8:30AM. Volunteers are needed to cover the coffee bar each week - which means set up, bring treats to share and clean up. The sign up sheet is available outside Pastor Becky's office - please sign up to help!

The **first food truck night** of the 2026 season is coming up on Wednesday, May 27th from 5-8 PM. Watch the weekly email for the ability to sign up for set up and clean up shifts!

Graduate Recognition Sunday is coming on Sunday, June 7th! Do you have a graduate in your family? Then we want to celebrate with them – whether it’s preschool thru high school or graduate school and beyond. Submit the graduate’s name, where they are graduating from and what comes next to the church office by Sun. May 31.

Heavenly Helpers next event – June 3 @ Moccia’s in Schwenksville. Available all day, when you stop by, mention Heaven Helpers to the waitress staff and we will receive a portion of the proceeds.

SAVE THE DATE – Outdoor Worship and Church Picnic with Friedens UCC will be held here at St. John’s on Sunday, June 14th. Worship at 10:30 AM with the picnic to follow.

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD’S LOVE		
Worship Attendance		
05/10/2026 – 10:15 – 55 Zoom -6		
	Total received between 4/13 – 4/26/2026 \$9,131	Amount Needed per 2 weeks in 2026 \$11,656
<i>Weekly average is based on the 2026 budget. The above numbers include electronic giving. Mint duty is being done every other week.</i>		

Family Bathroom The family bathroom project is progressing – the fixtures have been ordered and construction should begin in May. If you feel it in your heart, we have a designated fund for donations. As you know, many hands make the lift easier! Just write “Family Bathroom” on an envelope, OR online through St. John’s website!



*Ignited by Spirit
Growing in Love*

SERVING THIS SUNDAY

Cathy Sweeney, Reader
Joyce Foesig & Andi Swavelly, Ushers
John Hovanec & Kathy Fitser, Communion Assistants
Erika Haldeman & David Ramil, A/V Team

COUNCIL MEMBERS

David Ramil, Council President
Shannon Renninger, Council Vice-President
Robyn Schramm, Council Secretary
Mike Herm, Council Treasurer
Tony Aleide, Finance
Brandon Bolton, Property
Joyce Foesig, Staff
Sheila Hercek, Outreach
Travis Hobson, Marketing and Communications
John Hovanec, Faith Formation
Nate Schramm, Youth Representative
Mike Wolf, Worship and Music

STAFF

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(pastorbecky74@gmail.com)

Denise Fox, Office Administrator (stj.stown@verizon.net)

Ben Modica, Director of Music (ben@patriciakeith.com)

Michele Peart, Bookkeeper
Jamie Nonkovic, Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation
Bob Ernst, Facilities Manager
Michael Herm, Treasurer

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