

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Easter 6 - May 9, 2021

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #431 - "I Walk in Danger All the Way"

**I walk in danger all the way;
The thought shall never leave me
That Satan, who has marked his prey,
Is plotting to deceive me.
This foe with hidden snares
May seize me unawares
If e'er I fail to watch and pray;
I walk in danger all the way.**

**I pass through trials all the way,
With sin and ills contending;
In patience I must bear each day
The cross of God's own sending.
Oft in adversity
I know not where to flee
When storms of woe my soul dismay;
I pass through trials all the way.**

**Grim death pursues me all the way;
Nowhere I rest securely.
He comes by night, he comes by day,
And takes his prey most surely.
A failing breath, and I
In death's strong grasp may lie
To face eternity today.
Grim death pursues me all the way.**

**I walk with angels all the way;
They shield me and befriend me.**

**All Satan's pow'r is held at bay
When heav'nly hosts attend me.
They are my sure defense;
All fear and sorrow, hence!
Unharmed by foes, do what they may,
I walk with angels all the way.**

**I walk with Jesus all the way;
His guidance never fails me.
He takes my ev'ry fear away
When Satan's pow'r assails me,
And, by his footsteps led,
My path I safely tread.
In spite of ills that threaten may,
I walk with Jesus all the way.**

**My walk is heav'nward all the way;
Await, my soul, the morrow,
When you farewell can gladly say
To all your sin and sorrow.
All worldly pomp, begone!
To heav'n I now press on.
For all the world I would not stay;
My walk is heav'nward all the way.**

Confession of Sins:

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

P: Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

First Lesson: Acts 11:19-26

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that took place at the time of Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. But there were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch and also began to speak to the Greeks, preaching the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a large number of people believed and turned to the Lord. A report about this reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to go on to Antioch. When he arrived and saw God's grace, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts. He was a good man who was full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a large number of people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul. When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year they met with the church and taught a large number of people. It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians. (EHV)

Psalm 98

Refrain: Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things.

**Sing to the LORD a 'new song,
For he has done mar'velous things.**

**The LORD has made his sal'vation known
And revealed his righteousness to the 'nations.**

**He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of 'Israel;
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation 'of our God.**

Refrain: Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things.

**Shout for joy to the LORD, 'all the earth,
Burst into jubilant song with 'music;**

**Make music to the LORD 'with the harp,
With the harp and the sound of 'singing.**

**Shout for joy before the 'LORD, the King.
He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with 'equity.**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son
And to the Holy 'Spirit,
As it was in the be'ginning,
Is now, and will be forever. 'Amen.**

Refrain: Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things.

Second Lesson: 1 John 4:1-11

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit who does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and is already in the world. You are from God, dear children, and you have overcome the false prophets, because the one in you is greater than the one in the world. They are from the world. That is why they speak from a worldly perspective and the world listens to them. We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. That is how we can distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. The one who does not love has not known God, because God is love. This is how God's love for us was revealed: God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we may live through him. This is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

Gospel: John 15:9-17

“As the Father has loved me, so also I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you hold on to my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have held on to my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that my joy would continue to be in you and that your joy would be complete. This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this: that someone lays down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you continue to do the things I instruct you. I no longer call you servants, because a

servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because everything that I heard from my Father, I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will endure, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. These things I am instructing you, so that you love one another.” (EHV)

The Apostles’ Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn #411 - “*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*”

**What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Ev’rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Ev’rything to God in prayer!**

**Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged -
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev’ry weakness -
Take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge -
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you;
You will find a solace there.**

**The Sermon: 1 John 4:1-11
 “Two Ways To Express Our Friendship With Jesus”**

Friendship is a **gift** from God. Good friends **care** for each other, they talk **honestly** with one another, and they are **there** for each other in **good** times as well as in **bad**. I hope that **all** of you **have** good friends - people whom you **know** you can always **count on**. One of the **greatest** gifts which we have from our God is the friendship which we all have in **common** - our friendship with **Jesus**, our **Savior**. Jesus Himself said, “*You are my **friends**,*” and He **showed** that friendship most **vividly** when He laid down His **life** for us on the **cross** to pay for our **sins**. As our **friend**, Jesus didn't keep important truths **away** from us, but rather, He **revealed** those precious truths to us in His holy **Word**. He **confided** in us. Jesus is completely **in tune** with us, so when we're faced with **worries** and **cares** in this life, we know that we have a **friend** in **Jesus**, and that we can give all our cares and griefs to **Him**. We stand in **awe** together with the hymn writer, Joseph Scriven, who wrote the widely-loved hymn, What a **Friend** We Have in Jesus. Jesus continually expresses His friendship with **us**, so we want to find ways to express **our** friendship with **Him**. And that's where the words of John in our sermon text today can **help** us. These words teach us **Two Ways To Express Our Friendship With Jesus**.

The **first** way to express our friendship with Jesus is by **paying attention** to what other people **say** about our dear friend, and **recognizing why** they say the things they say. In our text John tells us, “*Dear friends, do **not** believe **every** spirit, but **test** the spirits to see if they are from **God**, for many **false** prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can **recognize** the Spirit of **God**: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the **flesh** is from **God**, and every spirit who does **not** confess Jesus is **not** from God.*” The spirit of **false prophets** can come from **anywhere**, so we shouldn't automatically **believe** everything we **hear**. Instead, we are encouraged to put everything we hear to the **test**. Rather than just

going along with the **crowd**, or what seems to be the **majority opinion**, we need to **check out** the things people are saying - **especially** what they are saying about **Jesus**. If they're telling us that Jesus is the **Son of God** who became fully **human**, **died** on the cross and **rose** again, then they're from **God**, and we should pay close **attention** to what they have to say. But if they **don't** confess these truths about Jesus, then they're **not** from God, and they're not worth **listening** to.

In John's day, a man named **Cerinthus** taught that Jesus was the natural son of Mary and Joseph, and that the "**God part**" came to Jesus at the time of His **baptism**. He also said that the "**God part**" **left** Him again before He **died**. Cerinthus taught that only a **man** died on the cross, **not** the Son of God. Cerinthus was **not** from God, and he wasn't worth **listening** to. **Jehovah's Witnesses** teach that Jesus is **a** son of God, but not **the** Son of God sent from heaven. Jehovah's Witnesses are **not** from God, and they aren't worth **listening** to. Some **preachers** today say that Jesus was **not** conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in other words, they say that Jesus was not **fully** God's Son. They are not from **God**, and they're not worth **listening** to. Even the largest church-body in the **world** says that Jesus' death on the cross was **not enough** to save us, that we need to add **our** good works to what **Jesus** did in order to be **saved**. In other words, they say that Jesus' sacrifice came up **short** of what God **demand**s. They are **not** from God, and they're not worth **listening** to. **False prophets** are **everywhere** in our world. John says they have the spirit of the **antichrist** - in other words, they work **against** Christ. They **undermine** the **truth** that our salvation rests **entirely** on the one **perfect** sacrifice for sins, which **Jesus** made on Calvary's cross.

As **friends** of Jesus, God encourages us to **test** the spirits, and to **measure** their message by what **Jesus** has revealed to us in His **Word**. Through **God's Word** we know that Jesus **is** the Son of **God** - that He was born of the **virgin Mary** - that He **suffered** and **died** to **free** us from all **guilt** and **shame** - that He physically **rose again** from the dead - and that even now He **speaks** to us in His written **Word** - and **feeds** us with His body and blood in **Holy Communion**. Jesus didn't keep these truths **away** from us, but rather, He graciously **revealed** them to us, so we would be able to possess a true and saving **faith** in Him as our **Savior**, and that He would be our dearest **friend** for all **eternity**.

John tells us, "*You are from **God**, dear children, and you have overcome the false prophets, because the one in you is greater than the one in the world. They are from the world. That is why they speak from a worldly perspective and the world listens to them. We are from **God**.*" John continues by telling us about how people of his day viewed **himself** and his fellow **apostles**. He wrote, "*The one who*

*knows God **listens** to us, but whoever is **not** from God does **not** listen to us. That is how we can distinguish between the spirit of **truth** and the spirit of **error**.*”

There is **comfort** in those words. Jesus is **in** us, and He has won the **victory** over the **devil** who is in the **false** prophets. The world may appear to be **religious**, with all **sorts** of religious **ideas** floating around, but Jesus makes it very **simple** and **clear** where **our** focus should be. It all comes down to the **truth** of **God’s Word**. The Holy Spirit leads us to **hear** that truth - the **whole** truth, and nothing **but** the truth.

In Acts 17, Luke tells us that one Sabbath day the believers in the city of **Berea** went to their synagogue, and they heard a **newcomer** preach to them. His name was **Paul**. What they did when they went **home** that day was very **important**. They checked Paul’s **sermon** to see if it matched what was said in their **Bibles**. It was only after they knew that his message **passed the test**, that they went back to hear him **again** the **next** week. The **Bereans** showed that they were **friends** of Jesus by taking His Word **seriously**. They really **cared** about what people were **saying** about their **Savior**, and they would only **listen** to the **truth**.

A **second** way we can show our friendship with Jesus is found in **these** words. John writes, *“Dear friends, let us **love** one another, because love comes from **God**. Everyone who **loves** has been born of God and **knows** God. The one who does **not** love has not known **God**, because **God is love**. This is how God’s love for us was **revealed**: God has sent his only-begotten **Son** into the world so that we may live **through** him. This is **love**: not that **we** have loved **God**, but that **he** loved **us** and sent his **Son** to be the atoning **sacrifice** for our sins. Dear friends, if God loved us **so much**, we also should love **one another**.”*

God is **love**, and He **showed** His love for us when sent His only-begotten **Son** to the earth to **save** us. God gave us His **best**. Without the gift of **Jesus**, we would still be **dead** in our sins and **lost** for all eternity, because we all go **astray**, we all **disobey** God’s commandments, and we all fail to **love** God as He **deserves** to be loved. God showed His love for us by giving us His **Son** - the **only one** who could offer His **perfect life** as a **sacrifice** to pay for the sins of the world. His sacrifice **covered** our sins with His holy, precious **blood** - canceling our **guilt**. and **reuniting** us with the heavenly Father. Now by **faith** in Jesus, we live in God’s presence, and we will **continue** to live with Him **forever** in heaven.

*“Dear friends, if God loved us **so much**, we also should love **one another**.”* Jesus **wants** us to **love** one another. We have received God’s love in **Jesus**, and we

have become **new people** - people who are to **love** one another. So, let's **show** our love for one another in the most **positive** way we can - by sharing our **Savior** with them. It's **easy** to love your husband or wife - to love your children and grandchildren - to love your father and mother. That's **easy** because we know they **love** us. But it's **not** so easy to show love to those who **don't** love us - those who **oppose** us - those who **despise** us - our **enemies**. Yet, that's exactly what **God did**. He **loved us** - loved us **so much** that He gave up His **Son** for us, even while we were still His **enemies**.

It seems as though an increasingly larger number of people of our world today are **offended** by **everything** - except for the one thing that they **should** be offended by - and that's **sin**. We need to **realize** that we are **all** sinners. We need to **realize** that **no one** has done **everything right all the time**. We need to **realize** that we are **no better** than **anyone else**. And when we finally realize **those** things, we need to turn to our friend, **Jesus** - the one friend whom we can **always** count on - because Jesus has already provided the gift of **forgiveness** for the sins of all people. That gift **becomes ours** when we put our trust in **Him**, and **receive** His gift with the hand of **faith**.

Let's be sure that whenever we have the opportunity, we will **show our love** for one another by **sharing Jesus**. When our co-workers **despise** us, let's **share Jesus** with them. When our earthly friends **desert** us, let's **share Jesus** with them. When the trolls on social media **cancel** us, let's **share Jesus** with them. After all, Jesus **cares** for us, Jesus **speaks honestly** with us, and Jesus is always **there** for us. What a **friend** we have in Jesus. He's the **best friend** we could ever hope for, so let's be sure to **share** Him with **everyone**. Amen.

Prayers:

O Jesus, our crucified and risen Lord, accept our offering of **thanks** and **praise**. How **great** was Your devotion to the task of our **redemption**. How totally **unselfish** was the sacrifice You made on our behalf. Our **sins** brought **You** pain, and suffering, and death; but You brought **us life** and **salvation**. The debt we owed to a holy and just God, You **paid in full** with Your sacrifice on the cross. You exchanged Your **righteousness** for our **sins**, so that we can now stand before our God **unashamed**, and fully **accepted**. In Your glorious resurrection from the dead we find the **certainty** of our **own** resurrection. And now, Your intercession to God on our behalf gives us the courage and boldness to **pray**, and the **confidence** that our prayers are **answered**. Through the Holy Spirit encourage us to call on Your name **continually**.

Grant that our love for **You** may never be **replaced** by a lust for the things of this **world**. Keep us from **yielding** to soul-destroying sins. May the Holy Spirit keep us from trusting in **anyone** or **anything** to save us, besides **Your** merit and sacrifice. Help us always to walk in the **Spirit**, that being **led** by Him, we may **follow** Your pure example, and **encourage** one another, as we testify to the source of our faith and love.

Forgive every occasion when we have **failed** to **trust** You, to **love** You, to keep You in our **thoughts**, to **serve** You, to continue in Your **Word**, to **pray** to You, to **praise** You, or to **witness** about You to others. Cover us with Your **righteousness**. How it **comforts** us to know that You are our ever-living King who reigns **supreme**, hearing and answering our **prayers**, and causing **all things** to work for our **good** - even those things that **frighten** and **afflict** us. 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.**

Hymn #380 - "Lord, 'Tis Not that I Did Choose You"

**Lord, 'tis not that I did choose you;
That, I know, could never be,
For this heart would still refuse you
Had your grace not chosen me.
You removed the sin that stained me,
Cleansing me to be your own;
For this purpose you ordained me,
That I live for you alone.**

**It was grace in Christ that called me,
Taught my darkened heart and mind,**

**Else the world had yet enthralled me,
To your heav'nly glories blind.
Now I worship none above you;
For your grace alone I thirst,
Knowing well that, if I love you,
You, O Father, loved me first.**

**Praise the God of all creation;
Praise the Father's boundless love.
Praise the Lamb, our expiation,
Priest and King enthroned above.
Praise the Spirit of salvation,
Him by whom our spirits live.
Undivided adoration
To the great Jehovah give.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Blessing:

P: 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.
C: **Amen.**

Hymn #322 - "On What Has Now Been Sown"

**On what has now been sown
Your blessing, Lord, bestow;
The pow'r is yours alone
To make it spring and grow.
O Lord, in grace the harvest raise
And you alone shall have the praise!**

**To you our wants are known;
From you are all our pow'rs.
Accept what is your own**

**And pardon what is ours.
Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive
And to your Word a blessing give.**

**Oh, grant that each of us
Now met before you here
May meet together thus
When you and yours appear
And follow you to heav'n, our home.
E'en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!**