



TREE OF LIFE

Christian Fellowship

“for Healing, Obedience, & Peace on Earth” (H.O.P.E.)



Ascension of Our Lord | 1 Jun 2025
“It Is Not for You to Know”
Acts 1:1-26

✠ The Way of Jesus Liturgy ✠

Invocation

Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth, ♦ **you save us from our selfishness and make us your children through Baptism, Repentance, and Communion.** ♦ Through your Son Jesus, who is your Lamb and Word embodied in flesh, ♦ **we die to Civilization's Way of arrogance, fear, and violence.** ♦ Through your Holy Spirit, who dwells among us and within us, ♦ **we are reborn in Jesus's Way of faith, hope, and love.**

Processional Song — LSB 512 “At the Name of Jesus”

- ♪ *At the name of Jesus ev'ry knee will bow, ev'ry tongue confess him King of earth right now. It's the Father's desire we should call him Lord, who from the beginning was the mighty Word.* ♪
- ♪ *At his voice creation sprang at once to sight. All the seas and forests, all the stars of light, all plants and animals, rivers on their way, creatures all big and small, in their great array.* ♪
- ♪ *In your hearts enthrone him, there let him subdue, all that is not holy, all that is not true. Look to him your Savior, in temptations' hour, let his will embrace you, in its light and pow'r.* ♪
- ♪ *Christians this Lord Jesus has not come in vain, through his Father's Spirit he does truly reign. For all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow, and our hearts confess him King of mercy now.* ♪

Ascension Litany

Jesus has ascended to the Father! ♦ **He is Lord of all creation! Alleluia!**
All authority in heaven and earth ♦ **has been given to Jesus!**
He is now present throughout creation! ♦ **He will be with us always!**
We are his Church, ♦ **his Body on earth!**
We wait for his coming! ♦ **He will return through his Spirit!**
We wait for his coming! ♦ **He will judge and restore all creation! Alleluia!**

Prayer of the Day

Jesus says, “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there with them.”

(the Christ candle is lit to remind us that Jesus is coming among us)

♪ *All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let all before him fall. Lay down to him all pow'r and fame, and crown him Lord of all. Lay down to him all pow'r and fame, and crown him Lord of all!* ♪ (LSB 549)

The Lord Jesus be with you. ♦ **And also with you.** ♦ Let us pray. Heavenly Father, help us to be content with not knowing everything and trusting that you are taking care of it all. In the name of Jesus, your Son, our Lord. † **Amen.**

† Baptism — The Way of Faith †

Surrendering to the Creator

Jesus says, “If you hold onto your life, ♦ **you will destroy it.** ♦ But if you let go of your life, ♦ **you will save it.** ♦ You must be born again through water and the Spirit ♦

to enter the Creator's Kingdom." ♦ Father, Son, & Holy Spirit ♦ I surrender to you all of my † mind, all of my † heart, and all of my † body and † soul.

(we make the sign of the cross—touching forehead, heart, and shoulders)

Father, into your hands ♦ **I commit my spirit.** ♦ Father, not my will, ♦ **but your will be done.** ♪ *Take my life and all my heart, take my whole soul ev'ry part. Take my mouth and let it be, filled with your truth and mercy. ♪ Take my hands and let them love, with compassion from above. Take my feet and let them go, on the Way that Jesus showed. ♪ Take my money and fam'ly, give me faith and set me free. Take my life and teach me how to love all creation now. ♪ (LSB 783)*

Listening to the Creator

Jesus says, "Come to me, all of you who are tired and burdened. Learn from me and practice my teachings and you will find rest for your souls. Those who listen will live."

♪ *Listen to what Jesus teaches, listen to him every day. Listen as you walk and follow, listen also as you pray. Listen to him every moment, listen with an open mind. Listen to find peace and patience, listen so you will be kind. ♪ (LSB 770)*

Remembering the Saints & Martyrs — Denise of Mysia

Father, we give you thanks for the great cloud of saints and witnesses who have gone before us and have embodied the Way of Jesus. Today we remember Denise who, while witnessing the trial of three Christian men, publicly rebuked the one who recanted his faith. She was immediately arrested, tortured, and beheaded for her faithfulness in 250 AD. Help us learn from her faith and example, † **Amen.**

Chanted Psalm — *Psalm 125*



♪ *Those who trust in the Lord can | not be moved.*
* *Like mountains the Lord surrounds | his people.*
The wicked cannot control | God's people.
* *Unless the righteous turn away | from the Lord.*
Do good, O Lord, to those | who are good,
* *and to those who are upright | in their hearts!*
But those who turn aside to their | selfish ways
* *the Lord will give them over | to evil. ♪*

Law & Prophets — Isaiah 30:15-26

The Prophets reading comes from Isaiah 30. ♦ **Blessed are the ears that listen.**
We do not live on bread alone, ♦ **but on every word from the Lord.**

Epistle — Romans 1:1-17

The Epistle reading comes from Romans 1. ♦ **Blessed are the ears that listen.**
We do not live on bread alone, ♦ **but on every word from the Lord.**

† Holy Gospel † — Acts 1:1-11

We stand for the word of Jesus. ♪ *Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia. ♪ (LSB 156)*

The holy Gospel comes from Acts 1. ♦ **Blessed are those who listen to Jesus.**
If you have ears to hear, then listen! ♦ **Lord Jesus, help us to practice your Word.**

Message

† Repentance — The Way of Hope †

Confronting Our Past

Jesus says, “I know everything you do. Pay attention and remove the log from your own eye. I have called you out of Civilization. Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!”

(silence for reflection)

For prostituting ourselves with the false lovers of self, family, and nation,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to love you with every thought, word, and deed.**

For trusting the technology and works of human hands, especially money,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to trust in your power alone.**

For being double-minded hypocrites who misrepresent your name,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to obediently live as your children.**

For overworking and oppressing land, animals, and each other,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to live in restful peace with all creation.**

For not respecting those you send to guide us and teach us,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to listen to our fathers and mothers in Christ.**

For being violent to our bodies and your creation,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to love all creation, including our enemies.**

For degrading ourselves and others with our sexuality,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to keep our sexuality within marriage.**

For trying to possess and control your creation,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to share everything we have.**

For not being vulnerable and honest with others,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to be truthful in all situations.**

For competing with others and desiring more than we need,

♦ **Father, forgive us and help us to be content in all circumstances.**

Father, turn us back to walking in your Spirit. ♪ *Lord Father we have wandered and hidden from your face. Rescue your whole creation with your almighty grace. From trust in wealth and weapons and blindness to your Way, save us and all creation with your own hands, we pray.* ♪ (LSB 449) Jesus says, “I discipline those I love. If you love your self, family, or nation more than me, you cannot be my disciple. Come out of Civilization, my people, so you will not share in its sicknesses. Not one stone will be left standing, it will all be torn down.” Will you turn away from Civilization’s Way of arrogance, fear, and violence and reaffirm your Baptism into Jesus’s Way of faith, hope, and love? ♦ **Yes, I renounce Civilization’s Way and pledge to follow Jesus.** ♦ Jesus says, “Put your sword away. If you live by the sword, you will die by the sword. But if you forgive others, your heavenly Father will forgive you.” Will you release all debts and grudges that you hold against anyone—including every member of this church? ♦ **Yes, I forgive all those who have hurt me, frustrated me, or owe me anything.** ♦ Jesus says, “Your sins are forgiven. Get up and walk. Go and sin no more.” † **Amen.**

Song of the Day — “O Christ, When You Ascended” (tune: LSB 478)

- ♪ *O Christ, when you ascended, you took your rightful throne; Your time on earth had ended — yet we weren't left alone. You reign o'er earth and heaven; your Spirit guides our way. Your prayers uphold your people; you're with your church each day.* ♪
- ♪ *We look at earthly rulers and see what they command: We note their years of power, the borders of their land. Yet, Lord, you are not bounded by things like time and space; Your reign is never-ending, you rule in every place.* ♪
- ♪ *We're tempted. Lord, to leave you in stories nicely told; Sometimes we don't believe you and say your ways are old. Sometimes we feel so lonely and live in doubt and fear — But your ascension means, Lord, you're present with us here.* ♪
- ♪ *It's often quite a challenge to follow in your Way; We're easily distracted! It's hard, Lord, to obey. Sometimes we give you Sundays — an hour, maybe two — But your ascension means, Lord, all life belongs to you.* ♪
- ♪ *One day, O Lord, we'll know you, as we are fully known; One day this world of sinners will bow before your throne. One day, God's whole creation will sing and praise your name; On earth as now in heaven, we'll celebrate your reign.* ♪

Waiting on the Creator

- ♪ *Our Father, bring your Rule and will to earth. Give what we need for worry-free rebirth. Bring peace among us and forgive us too, as we forgive and love in all we do.*
- ♪ *Protect us from all things that will mislead. Keep us from selfishness, violence, and greed. We place our lives into your hands this day. Teach us to listen and to walk your Way. Amen.* ♪ (LSB 637)

(incense is lit to symbolize our prayers ascending to God and as its smell fills this space we are reminded of his presence among us)

Jesus says, “Learn from the birds. They do not store up for tomorrow and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Do not fear or worry about tomorrow. Seek only your Father’s Kingdom and he will give you everything you need.”

*In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪* Father, set us apart from Civilization in all our thoughts, words, and deeds. Take charge of our lives and all those in authority. Use everything that happens to bring your good judgment and healing upon all creation. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪* Father, provide for us, protect us, and heal our brokenness. Especially this day we remember Charlene Sargent, John Espino, Cebra Sims, and those we name in our hearts... Father, give us exactly what we need this day and teach us to be content with that. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪* Father, forgive us and free us from all that enslaves us. Help us to walk away from our anxieties, traumas, and addictions to Civilization’s Way, so we may walk in Jesus’s Way. Empower us to love and forgive everyone, even our enemies, in the way you have loved and forgiven us. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪* Father, humble us and remind us that we have no strength apart from you. Stay with us in difficult times and save us from our selfishness. Comfort us in the certain hope that all your creation and children will be renewed and raised from the dead. *In peace, let us pray to the Lord, ♪ **Lord have mercy.** ♪* Father, help us to let go and surrender everything into your loving hands, trusting that you work all things for the good of those who love you. ♦ **Our Father in**

Heaven, may your name be holy, may your Kingdom come, and may your will be done—on Earth as in Heaven. Give us this day what we need for today. Forgive us in the same way that we forgive others. Do not abandon us when we are tempted, but pull us away from what is evil. For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours—now and forever. † Amen.

† Communion — The Way of Love †

Sharing the Lord's Peace

Jesus says, "Make peace with each other ♦ **before you come to the Lord's altar.** By this all people will know that you are my disciples: ♦ **if you love each other.**"

Offering & Musical Offering

Jesus says, "Do not store up things on earth. To be my disciple you must give up everything you own. Sell your possessions and give to the poor." We offer all we have to the Lord, while also offering gifts to support this communion.

Pledge of Allegiance

♫ *We come before you, Lord, to bow. We lay our lives at your feet now. All things are yours, we own nothing! Our lives are in your hands this day. Give what we need, O Lord, we pray. Please protect us, provide for us! Watch over us, ever with us, always love us!* ♫ (LSB 816) Jesus says, "If you pledge your allegiance to me before others, then I will pledge my allegiance to you before my heavenly Father."

♦ **I pledge allegiance to one God, the all-powerful Father, who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, of all things visible and invisible.**

♦ **I pledge allegiance to one Lord, Jesus Christ, who is God's only Son. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He loved and he suffered. Under Pontius Pilate, he was crucified, died, and was buried. On the third day he was raised from the dead. He ascended to heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. He is coming to judge the living and the dead. His Kingdom will not end.**

♦ **I pledge allegiance to the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of life, the holy universal Church, the communion of saints, the baptism for forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life in the age to come. † Amen.**

Thanksgiving — Εὐχαριστία

Let us give thanks to our Creator! ♦ **It is right to give him thanks and praise!**

Father, we praise and thank you, ♦ **for you provide, protect, love, and renew us and all creation!** ♦ We are grateful for all that you give, especially for... Father, we thank you for marrying yourself to us and uniting Heaven and Earth, Spirit and Flesh, and Christ and the Church through your Son Jesus!

♫ *I know that my Redeemer lives! What comfort this sweet sentence gives! He lives to silence all my fears, he lives to wipe away my tears. ♫ He lives to give me daily breath, he lives and I will conquer death. He lives my body to repair, he lives to keep me in his care. ♫ (LSB 461)*

† Words of Our Lord Jesus †

On the night before our Lord Jesus was crucified, he revealed his Way of rescuing all creation from the Way of Civilization. Before supper, Jesus humbly washed the feet of his students and enemies. Jesus said, ♦ **“Follow my example. Love each other, even your enemies, in the same way I have loved you.”** ♦ During supper, Jesus then took the bread and broke it. He gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is being given for you. Do the same for each other in my memory.” After supper, Jesus then took the cup and gave thanks. He said, “This is my blood which is being shed for you, for the forgiveness of all of your sin. Do the same for each other in my memory.”

♫ *Oh come Lord Jesus come and dine and give yourself through bread and wine. Feed us so we may have new birth, and bring your rule ov'r all the earth. Come now, come now! Our Lord Jesus and bring your healing love to us!* ♫ (LSB 357)

Sharing the Bread & Wine

Jesus says, “I am the bread of life. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood is united with me and will be raised from the dead.” As we feed on the Bread of Heaven ♦ **we are made members of Christ’s Body.** ♦ We no longer live for ourselves ♦ **but Christ lives within us.** ♦ We invite all Baptized members of the holy universal Church, who give their undivided allegiance to Jesus and are at peace with their brothers and sisters in Christ, to join us ♦ **as the Creator’s Lamb mysteriously gives himself to us in, with, and under this bread, wine, and communion.**

REFRAIN: ♫ *This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.* ♫
♫ *Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.* (REFRAIN) ♫ *Power, riches, wisdom and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his.* (REFRAIN) ♫ *Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation. Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.* (REFRAIN) ♫ *For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.* (REFRAIN) ♫ (LSB 155)

Recessional Song — “*Hear the Story of the Church*” (tune: LSB 398)

- ♫ *Hear the story of the church and how it came to be, The early church found new birth and new community. Here in the words Luke conveys — in stories that he told — our church can learn faithful ways by listening to the old.* ♫
- ♫ *The friends of Christ asked the Lord, “When will you come to reign?” For they still thought strength and sword would make them great again. Yet Jesus said God would send the Spirit, full of love; then they saw the Lord ascend to reign in heaven above.* ♫
- ♫ *The friends of Christ met to pray — a tightly gathered few. Bright flames of fire appeared there; a mighty wind came through. God’s Spirit helped them embrace the ones who were outside. The church began in one place and moved to be worldwide.* ♫

Altar-top Decommissioning

Ἀγάπη Feast & Text Discussion

Jesus says, “Do you love me? Then feed my sheep.” We now move to our Bible study

room to continue devoting ourselves ♦ “to the Apostles’ teaching, to communion with each other, to the sharing of bread, and to prayer.”

Sent to “Do the Same in My Memory”

Christ Jesus, you are the Lamb, who has laid down your body and blood for us, ♦ **help us to be lambs who do the same for each other in your memory.** † Amen.

Jesus says, “Go and live this truth: ♦ **The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!** ♦ Heal the sick, raise the dead, ♦ **cleanse the unclean, and cast out evil spirits.** ♦ Freely you have received from the Creator, ♦ **now freely you must give.** ♦ I am sending you like lambs among wolves, ♦ **but do not fear, take up your cross and follow me.”**

♫ *The day of resurrection! May our hearts be set right! The Lord is raised to new life, in resurrection light. And list’ning to his teachings, may we learn to obey, his word of “Follow me!” that calls out to us today.* ♫ (LSB 478)

Blessing

Jesus says, “Blessed are you in your poverty and suffering, for you are in the Creator’s Kingdom. Blessed are you in your humility, for you will inherit the earth. Blessed are you when you are merciful and peaceful, for you will find mercy and peace.” † Amen.

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- * Faith & Film: “Mother!” (Jun 2) | “1883” (Jun 9, 23, Jul 7, 14, 28, Aug 4, 18, 25, Sep 1, 8) | “Doubt” (Sep 15, 22)
 - * Growing in H.O.P.E.: Wednesdays @ DG, 5:30 pm food/fellowship, 6:00 pm study
Soup & Psalms: Jun 4 (potluck), 25, Jul 9 (potluck), 23, 30, Aug 6 (potluck), 20, 27
 - * Altar-top Decommissioning Liturgy: June 1 before our Agape Feast
 - * Pentecost Liturgy & Agape Feast: 10 am, Jun 8 @ DG (new member welcome)
 - * Annual Church Assembly: July 13, between Liturgy and Agape Feast.
 - * Vacation Bible School: July 11 & 12 at the Disciple Garden.

Weekly Calendar | June 1 - 8, 2025

Sun, Jun 1	9:30 am	Liturgy & Αγάπη Feast Acts 1:1-26
Mon, Jun 2	6:00 pm	Faith & Film
Wed, Jun 4	6:00 pm	Growing in H.O.P.E.
Sat, Jun 7	7-9 am	Devotion & Breakfast
Sun, Jun 8	9:30 am	Liturgy & Αγάπη Feast Acts 2:1-47

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Donate Online Through Venmo: @StLukes-Church



Altar-top Decommissioning Liturgy

We who are gathered know that this altar-top, which has been present for the ministry of God's Word and Sacraments in this place, will no longer be in this space. Let us offer our thanks for God's work that has been done in the presence of this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For many, this altar-top has been made sacred to you through cherished memories, and we know that some will suffer a sense of loss. Yet in our loss, we thank the Lord that his presence and work is not tied to any building, altar, or thing made by human hands. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

We give thanks for all who have worshiped and been nurtured in the faith of Jesus Christ before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For the power of God's Word proclaimed before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For all the prayers said before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For all the baptisms done before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For all of Jesus's forgiveness shared before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For the sharing of Jesus's body and blood before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For all the confirmations done before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For all the marriages done before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

For all the funerals done before this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**

As we mark the end of this altar-top serving in this place, we thank the Lord that his mission will continue in this place beyond this altar-top. ♦ **Lord, we thank you.**