



ABOUT
WHOM . . .
DOES THE
PROPHET
SAY THIS?

ACTS 8:34

Fifth Sunday of Easter – Confirmation Sunday

April 28, 2024

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

3210 Maple Drive, Plover, Wisconsin 54467

Phone: Church 715-341-2898; Cell 715-498-0093

Website www.beautifulsaviorploverwi.com

Pastor David E. Ficken

Our Mission

“To Know Jesus and to Make Him Known”

Our Vision

Educate, Equip and Encourage ourselves and our families through worship and study, and engage our community through discipleship, example and Acts of Kindness, using the unique gifts bestowed on each member of our congregation by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Worship Information

Parents with Young Children: We encourage families to worship together.

Worship Bulletin: Our order of service is printed out in your worship folder.

Worship Form: There are 5 “Movements” in our Worship.

- God grants us the gift of forgiveness.
- God speaks to us from His Word.
- God receives our offerings and prayers.
- God offers us His real presence in Holy Communion.
- God blesses us and sends us out.

Communion: Please read the Statement of Communion below.

(If you are *gluten intolerant* please speak with Pastor or an elder prior to the worship service so we can accommodate you.)

STATEMENT OF COMMUNION

BECAUSE THE WORD OF GOD TEACHES THAT:

- We are all sinners in need of forgiveness.
- Jesus is our only Savior from sin through His death and resurrection.
- The True Body and Blood of Christ is present in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion

 Please see Pastor if you have any questions about this or do not believe in the Lord’s Supper in this way. You are welcome to come forward for a blessing if you are not communing.

- Please see Pastor if there is something going on in your life that needs the attention of Christ in private confession *and* absolution.

AS WE GATHER-- When Jesus uses the image of the vine and speaks of vineyards, He is choosing something very familiar to His hearers. Viticulture is well known around the world. More than eighteen million acres worldwide is used for growing grapes—from Panama to Tajikistan to Zimbabwe! Today, the cultivation of vineyards is still an important agricultural component in both Israel and the Jordan, lands where Jesus walked and taught. Life in the vineyard is vital! As branches grafted to the Vine that is Christ, we are vitalized by His power. As we worship, God’s life-supporting power infuses us! It is time to continue growing!

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AS WE GATHER-- How far can the human voice travel? Scientists tell us that the normal outdoor range for an adult voice traveling through still air is about 180 meters or 590 feet. Communication in Silbo, a whistled language of Spanish-speaking inhabitants of the Canary Islands, can travel five miles under ideal conditions. The sound of a voice traveling across still water at night can range up to 10.5 miles. Voices can carry! The message that the voices carry is what is most important. The spoken message about Jesus shared by Philip the deacon with the Ethiopian stranger made an eternal difference in that man’s life. The words that we speak and the messages that we share are of great importance and have the divine potential to “spread the reign of God the Lord” (LSB 830:1).

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WITNESS AND OUTREACH-- John 15:1-8: Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches. Apart from the Vine, we can do nothing to please God. In fact, apart from the vine, we can do nothing at all! But, staying attached to the True Vine makes us productive branches who bear much fruit, including the fruit of sharing the Good News of Jesus with hearts that are afire for Him.

WELCOME to GUESTS & VISITORS

Hymns will be from the Lutheran Service Book (LSB).

✠ PREPARATION ✠



HYMN

“Hark the Voice of Jesus Calling”

LSB 827

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 66:1–4, 8–9; 40:5*

Pastor: Shout for joy to God, all the earth;

People: **sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise!**

Pastor: Say to God, “How awesome are Your deeds!

People: **All the earth worships You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to Your name.”**

Pastor: Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of His praise be heard,

People: **who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip.**

Pastor: You have multiplied, O LORD my God, Your wondrous deeds and Your thoughts toward us; none can compare with You!

People: **I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.**

Pastor: We prepare for our time of confession as we sing the confession hymn, “O Jesus, Lamb of God, Thou Art.” As penitent people, we ask God for His grace and mercy.



HYMN

“Borning Cry”

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old. I
rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well; In
a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.

When you heard the wonder of the Word I was there to cheer you on;
you were raised to praise the living Lord, to whom you now belong.

If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as
one, I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk till rising sun.

In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young, I'll be
there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.

When the evening gently closes in and you shut your weary eyes, I'll
be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old. I
rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

I was there to hear your cry, to see your life unfold.

Text: John Yslivsaker, 1985

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.

People: **O almighty God, most merciful Father, I, a repentant sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended You. By nature, I am a sinful creature. In thought, word, and deed I have continually transgressed Your law. For this I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a penitent and contrite being. Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of Your Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful life and bear fruit in keeping with true repentance.**

Pastor: God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: As you believe, so let it be. As a called and ordained servant Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

✠ WORD ✠

FIRST READING *Acts 8:26–40* (Philip witnesses about Jesus to the Ethiopian official.)

Lector 1: An angel of the Lord said to Philip,

Pastor: “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.”

Lector 1: This is a desert place. And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip,

Pastor: “Go over and join this chariot.”

Lector 1: So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said,

Lector 2: “How can I, unless someone guides me?”

Lector 1: And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

Pastor: “Like a sheep He was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opens not His mouth. In His humiliation justice was denied Him. Who can describe His generation? For His life is taken away from the earth.”

Lector 1: And the eunuch said to Philip,

Lector 2: “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”

Lector 1: Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said,

Lector 2: “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?”

Lector 1: And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

PSALM

Psalm 150

People: Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens!

Women: Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

Men: Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with lute and harp!

Women: Praise Him with tambourine and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe!

Men: Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals!

People: Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

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.

EPISTLE *1 John 4:1–11* (An exhortation to lives of Christian love)

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HOLY GOSPEL *John 15:1–8* (Jesus says that He is the vine and
His people are the branches.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**



HYMN

“Earth and All Stars” LSB 817 vv. 1,3,6,7

SERMON

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH LSB, *p. 215*

Pastor: Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God
and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely
promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your
needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy
name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure
and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown
forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine
and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed
and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

OFFERTORY (in offering plate at entrance to sanctuary)



HYMN

“We Give Thee But Thine Own” Sts. 1: LSB 781

We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

rites of Confirmation

Trisha, Evalee, Marina, Sam, and Brenna - please rise.

Pastor: Trisha, Evalee, Marina, Sam, and Brenna have been instructed in the Christian faith and desire to make a public affirmation of their Baptism.

Brother and Sisters in Christ,

In Holy Baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you a member of His Church. In the community of God's people, you have learned God's loving purpose for you and all creation. You have received instruction in the Christian faith as it is taught in God's Holy Word and summarized in Luther's Small Catechism.

According to rites of the Lutheran Church and Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, we now ask you to reject sin and to confess your faith in Jesus Christ. Then in professing your faith, do you desire to become a disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ by continuing to be in the Word and Worship and be fed by the Lord's Supper as well as be a witness to Jesus in your lives.

Confirmands: I do, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises? Then answer: I Do.

Confirmands: I DO!

Pastor: Do you believe in God, the Father?

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

All: I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit And born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontus Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, And is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

All: 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!

Congregation rises for the responsive prayer.

Pastor: Let us pray for them affirming their Baptisms, and for all the baptized everywhere:

That they may be redeemed from all evil and rescued

from the way of sin and death, Lord, in your mercy,

All: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: That the Holy Spirit may open their hearts to your grace and truth: Lord, in your mercy,

All: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: That they may be kept in the faith and communion of your holy Church: Lord, in your mercy:

All: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: That they may be sent into the world in witness to your love: Lord, in your mercy,

All: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: That they may be brought to the fullness of your peace and glory; Lord, in your mercy:

All: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **AMEN!**

Congregation is seated. Confirmands remain standing.

Pastor: You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism by being a disciple of Jesus and following His commands:

- **PRAY** without ceasing
- **WORSHIP** weekly – to hear His Word and share in His Supper.
- **READ** the Bible
- **SERVE** at and beyond Beautiful Savior as God calls you to serve Him and others
- Be in **RELATIONSHIP** to encourage spiritual growth in others, proclaiming the good news of God in Christ through your words and deeds
- **GIVE** of your time, talents and Resources (*Power Surge by Michael W. Foss*)

Then please answer: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

Confirmands: **I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

Pastor: Gracious Lord, through water and the Spirit You have made Trisha, Evalee, Marina, Sam, and Brenna Your very own. You forgave them all their sins and brought them to newness of life. Continue to strengthen them with the Holy Spirit, that their mind and heart will be opened to the Scriptures and Your Word. Daily increase in them Your gifts of grace: the

spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in Your presence; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

All: **AMEN!**

(Trisha, Evalee, Marina, Sam, and Brenna will come forward and kneel with their family as the following prayer of blessing is spoken over them with the laying on of hands. The parents and sponsors (Godparents) may also participate in the laying on of hands and offer a prayer, a blessing, or a song.)

Pastor: Father in heaven, for Jesus' sake, stir up in _____ the gift of your Holy Spirit; confirm his/her faith, guide his/her life, empower him/her in his/her serving, give him/her patience in suffering and bring him/her to everlasting life.
Amen!

(After the laying on of hands and blessing, they will share their Confirmation verse & project/essay theme.)

Trisha Edmundson

Baptized: September 6, 2009

Confirmation Verse: Revelation 7:9

Art Project:

My confirmation verse is Revelations 7:9. I chose to do an art project for my confirmation project because of my love for art and the talent for painting I was given. I believe that art is able to bring people together which is the main part of the verse. Within the verse the main thing is that the people came together before the Lamb of God.

Evalee Kraemer

Baptized: December 5, 2010

Confirmation Verse: 1 John 4:19

Art Project: I chose this verse because it shows how much Jesus loves us. It also shows how much Jesus wants us to love others. It's saying that since we are loved, we should love others. I feel like I am very loving and other people think that too. So that's why it is important to me because I show love to others.

Marina Kubisiak

Baptized: September 13, 2008

Confirmation Verse: Isaiah 41:10

Art Project: The Bible verse that I chose that represents me is Isaiah 41:10. "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." I

feel that this verse represents me because I have had to face a lot of adversity in the past couple of years, but I have always been able to overcome that because I know that God is with me. The project I have chosen to do to illustrate this verse is by taking five pictures that represent the major points of the verse and make a MixTiles collage for the wall of our living room.

Sam Lipke

Baptized: November 7, 2010
Confirmation Verse: Mark 1:17

Art Project: I chose the fishers of men story from Mark 1:17. I chose this story because I love to fish, and it's very exciting when I have a fish on and am reeling it in. When we share Jesus with people, they want to follow Him just like the fishermen did when Jesus came to them. I chose John the fisherman because he is one of the fishers of men in the story. John was fishing in the sea when God came to him and said “drop your nets and I will make you fishers of men.” Now John, being a man of God, he chose to follow him and like John, I would drop my stuff and follow him. My project consists of a piece of wood with my verse on it, a piece of net attached to it, some sea animal toys, and pictures of me fishing.

Brenna Lockman

Baptized: September 9, 2010
Confirmation Verse: Psalm 23:1

Art Project: My Project is an embroidery on a plushy sheep for my little cousin Willam. My verse is Psalm 23, The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. This verse is meaningful to me because when I got baptized, I got this little stuffed animal and it said ” The Lord is my shepherd, Psalm 23”. On every trip I have ever gone on Cuddle Sheep was right by my side. Which reminded me that God is always with me. Another reason why this verse is memorable to me is because I own a lot of chickens at home, I raise and breed different types of chickens. The chickens produce eggs for my neighbors and my family. A shepherd cares deeply not only for all his sheep as a whole but also for every single one. This is how God cares for me. He also knows who I really am and loves me because of Jesus.

✂ SACRAMENT ✂

PREFACE 2 *Timothy* 4:22
Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24;
Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.
People: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

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.

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People: **And also with you. Amen.**

AGNUS DEI “Lamb of God” LSB p.163



Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

See LSB 329: Christian Questions with Their Answers prepared by Dr. Martin Luther for those who intend to go to the Sacrament.



Note: These questions and answers are no child’s play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and devout Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one pay attention and consider it a serious matter; for St. Paul writes to the Galatians in chapter six: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked.”

NOTE: Pastor will come around again, offering the COMMON CUP.

 **DISTRIBUTION HYMNS**

- “At the Lamb’s High Fest We Sing” LSB 633
- “The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want” LSB 710
- “Children of the Heavenly Father” LSB 725
- “Christ Be My Leader” LSB 861

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

 **HYMN** “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing” LSB 643

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve our living Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 2.
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NEXT WEEK’S READINGS:

OLD TESTAMENT READING Acts 10:34-48

EPISTLE 1 John 5:1-8

HOLY GOSPEL John 15:9-17

TITHE & OFFERING – our sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord

Our “tithes” are our first fruits returned to God in proportional, joyful, thankful and faithful response to His grace. “Offerings” are special gifts for ministries, memorials and needs over and above the tithe.

(If you are a guest, we welcome you as a guest. Please do not feel obligated to give an offering unless you feel moved to do so by the Spirit.)

March Financial Recap:

March Givings (Thank you!)	\$19,705.25
Monthly Need (5 Sundays):	<u>\$22,050.20</u>
Shortage:	-\$ 2,344.95

Life Quotes: April 28 “It is He who sustains us each and every day. It is He who brings us into the world, and He who draws our earthly lives to a close at the proper time. It is He who was born for us, He who died for us, He who rose for us, and He who reigns on high for us. His is the pattern of our lives.” *Deaconess Bethany Stoeber, Director-at-Large, LFL of Kansas – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty: April 28 “The Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty needs you! The more subscribers to the LCRL email list, the greater the reception Dr. Seltz has when meeting with elected officials. Please encourage your family, friends, golf buddies, card club, coffee gather, Bible study group, walking partners, book club members, etc. to subscribe to the LCRL email list. They will be blessed with devotions, podcasts, and interesting Op-Ed writings. See <http://www.lcrlfreedom.org/> to subscribe.

CALENDAR:

April 29—Men’s Night at Mike’s Wood Shop, 6pm

April 29—Women’s Prayer time, Mission Coffee House, 5:30pm

May 1—Pastor Ficken leads chapel at St. Paul, 8:10am

May 6-7—Teresa on vacation

May 19—Last Sunday School, Lutheran Hour Ministry Sunday, Ice Cream Social after church!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Many thanks to everyone who attended, baked, donated, and served at the Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction last Sunday. Final numbers are still being tabulated (as donations are still coming in), but it’s safe to say over \$2,200 was raised. All the money will go to Orphan Grain Train shipping costs. It costs \$11 per box to ship donated items. Your generosity will go a long way!

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Prayer List : 4/28/2024 – 5/4/24

Ongoing prayers for Grief & Loss: (Named & Not Named)

Loved Ones –

Lori Hopp – Sister Jo Ann; Dave Norrgran--Mother Marlene; Paul Hansen – father Donald; Family of Bob Helmrick; Family of Robert Kowalski (Chad’s father); Family of Luan Wendlick (Cheryl Wagner’s mother); Family of Elaine Idsvoog, Ashley Pawlowicz—Mother Yvonne, Andy Weden—Father Gary

Situations

Suicide Attempts, Cancer, Christian Parenting, Caregivers, AODA

Military:

Devante; Emily; Nick

Pending Diagnosis & Treatment: Ken Resch (Father of Julie Barge); Paula; Phil

Idsvoog; Rose Janke (Karen Holman’s mother); Melissa (Caleb Schultz’s aunt); BSLC friend new cancer diagnosis; BSLC friend, Sarah, new cancer diagnosis

Hospitalized/Recovering:

Sharon Hughes--Hospice

Circuit 17: St Luke-Rapids (starting the Call process for a Pastor)

Shut-ins:

Merry Kampmeier, Mary S., and Anita C.

Birthdays:

5/03 Tammy Kubisiak

5/03 Tim Lipke

5/04 Joey Diekelman

Baptism Birthdays:

4/30 Pam Lutz

5/01 David Lutz

5/03 Kyla Barge

5/04 Austin Norrgran

Anniversaries:

Missions:

First Choice Resource Center

Camp Luther

Peace Campus Center & Pastor Andy Weden

St. Paul Lutheran Elementary School
Wycliffe & Lutheran Bible Translators
& Linda Jordan

J.P. & Aimee Cima & Family

Orphan Grain Train Center

Adam Tanney (Seminary Student)

Christ Care / Carpenter’s Crew

***Please let us know if you have any prayer requests – Thank you! ***

First Reading: Acts 8:26–40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. ²⁷And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” ³⁰So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter
and like a lamb before its shearer is
silent,
so he opens not his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Epistle: 1 John 4:1–11

¹Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from

God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. ⁴Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Holy Gospel: John 15:1–8

¹[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”



Easter

About the Cover: Without someone to assist him, the Ethiopian eunuch could not clearly envision the figure God’s Word painted in Isaiah. But the Holy Spirit used Philip to lead him to Jesus, in whom the full picture of the Scriptures comes together. Christ’s generous love and sacrifice is for the sake of the whole world as He delivers forgiveness of sins through Word and Sacrament.