

**BULLETIN TEMPLATE: Minnesota Valley Church
Association of Free Lutheran Congregations
Date: Sunday, April 16, 2023
Church Year Date: 2nd Sunday of Easter**

Prelude: Rebekah Olson

Hymn #98 "Thine Is the Glory"

Responsive Reading from Psalm 33:

PASTOR: For the word of the LORD is right and true;
CONGREGATION: he is faithful in all he does.
PASTOR: The LORD loves righteousness and justice;
CONGREGATION: the earth is full of his unfailing love.
PASTOR: By the word of the LORD were the heavens made,
CONGREGATION: their starry host by the breath of his mouth.
PASTOR: Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,
CONGREGATION: the people he chose for his inheritance.
PASTOR: But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him,
CONGREGATION: on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,
PASTOR: We wait in hope for the LORD;
CONGREGATION: he is our help and our shield.

Hymn: Faith is the Victory (on power point only)

Encamped along the hills of light,
Ye Christian soldiers rise,
And press the battle ere the night
Shall veil the glowing skies;
Against the foe in vales below
Let all our strength be hurled;
Faith is the victory, we know,
That overcomes the world.

REFRAIN:
Faith is the victory!
Faith is the victory!
O glorious victory,
That overcomes the world.

His banner over us is love,
Our sword the Word of God;
We tread the road the saints before
With shouts of triumph trod.
By faith, they like a whirlwind's breath,
Swept on o'er every field;
The faith by which they conquered death
Is still our shining shield.

REFRAIN:

Faith is the victory!
Faith is the victory!
O glorious victory,
That overcomes the world.

Reader: Nathan Kalstad

Gospel Lesson: *John 20:19-31 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." 24 Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." 26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." 28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." 30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

READER: Here ends the reading of God's Word.

CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!

CONFESSION OF FAITH: *Apostles' Creed- I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth; And 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, dead and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From where He shall 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*

Gloria Patri: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

(Invite children to sit in front row.)

Announcements, Offertory Prayer

Hymn #263 "When He Cometh"

Baptism of Truett James Johnson: Born February 13, 2023 in Maplewood, Son of Luke & Krista Johnson,
Sponsors, Josh & Katie Johnson

Special Music: "Dreaming Jacob's Dream"

“FAITH IS IMPORTANT, EVEN VITAL”
1 John 5:4-10; Pastor Tom Olson; April 16, 2023

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

This week I listened to a forum about palliative care from Harvard University school of medicine. John Lennox...he has watched believers die and atheists die...that is where faith becomes important and even vital. Even in Boston, not exactly the Bible belt, faith is very important to people at the end of life or in severe illness. We believe in the Resurrection of the Body...this makes such a difference. The Old Testament lesson talks about the resurrection of Israel. Our gospel lesson is “The Road to Emmaus” where the resurrected Jesus walks with two men and shows them from the Old Testament scriptures how the Son of God would be killed and rise on the third day. They were transformed after that meeting. We look at our Epistle Lesson today and see that **FAITH IS IMPORTANT, EVEN VITAL**. If you want to summarize in a nutshell all the problems that are going on in our culture you could really simply say that we are experiencing the natural consequences of a culture that has no faith in the resurrected and returning Lord Jesus Christ. That is the root: **FAITH IS VITALLY IMPORTANT**. I John 5:4-10...

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NEW BIRTH *1 John 5:4-5 For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD’S INITIATIVE *1 John 5:6-9 This is the one who came by water and blood-Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.*

It's not so much about us looking for God but God looking for us. John Lennox

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL FAITH *1 John 5:10 Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.*

“Now may the peace of God that surpasses all human comprehension guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen”

Hymn #97 “I Know That My Redeemer Lives”

Lord’s Prayer

Benediction

Doxology (AH #390) *Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him all creatures here below, Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men. A-men. A---men.*

Postlude: Rebekah Olson