



*I am the vine, you are  
the branches. Those who  
abide in me and I in  
them bear much fruit...*

*May 2, 2021*

*Saint Thomas Lutheran*

*23801 Kelly Road, Eastpointe, Michigan 48021 - 586-772-3370*

*[www.stl-eastpointe.org](http://www.stl-eastpointe.org)*

*Rev. Mark W. Hetzner, Senior Pastor*

*Specific Ministry Pastor - Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Deacon Don Cooley*

# *Saint Thomas Lutheran*

## *Eastpointe, Michigan*

*Connecting Individuals to Jesus and to One Another*  
*Educating Minds – Growing Faith – Serving People*

**We are here to serve our community.** As you worship with us online, the Lord Jesus is at work, uniting us as friends and family. If you are curious to learn more out ministry in the community, go to [www.stl-eastpointe.org](http://www.stl-eastpointe.org), or like us on Face Book. To get your questions answered in a more personal way, contact the church office (586-772-3370) and ask for a pastor/staff member to give you a call.

## *Divine Service*

***Stories of God @ Work***

### **INVITATION**

*God draws us into his presence.*

***Entrance Hymn***

*“Alleluia! Jesus is Risen”*

[LSB 474, vv. 1-3]

Alleluia! Jesus is risen!

Trumpets resounding in glorious light! Splendor, the Lamb,  
Heaven forever! Oh, what a miracle God has in sight! **Refrain**

**Refrain: Jesus is risen and we shall arise: Give God the glory! Alleluia!**

Walking the way, Christ in the center

Telling the story to open our eyes; Breaking our bread,  
Giving us glory: Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise. **Refrain**

Jesus the vine, We are the branches;

Life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree; Heaven to earth,  
Christ to the people, Gift of the future now flowing to me. **Refrain**

Text: © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

***Entering Prayers***

[Psalm 145]

L: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

L: We will exalt you, our God the King. We will praise your name forever and ever.

**C: Every day we will praise you and extol your name forever and ever.**

L: The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich I love.

**C: All you have made will praise you, O Lord. Your saints will extol you forever.**

L: Our mouths will speak in praise of the Lord.

**C: Let every creature praise his holy name forever and ever.**

L: Hear, O Lord, when we cry to you.

**C: Be gracious to us and answer us as we pray.**

L: O God, form the minds of your faithful people into a single will. Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that, amid all the changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joy is found; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

### ***Hymn of Praise***

*“Alleluia! Jesus is Risen”*

[LSB 474, vv. 4-5]

Weeping, be gone; Sorrow, be silent:  
Death put asunder, and Easter is bright. Cherubim sing:  
“O grave, be open!” Clothe us in wonder, adorn us in light. **Refrain**

**Refrain: Jesus is risen and we shall arise: Give God the glory! Alleluia!**

City of God, Easter forever,  
Golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb, River of life,  
Saints and archangels, Sing with creation to God the I AM! **Refrain**

## ***INSTRUCTION***

*God feeds our heart, soul, and intellect.*

### ***Today’s Gospel***

L: Today’s Gospel reading is from the Gospel of John, chapter 15.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

**(John 15:1-8)** <sup>1</sup>[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup>Every 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. <sup>3</sup>Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Abide 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. <sup>5</sup>**I 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.** <sup>6</sup>If 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. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: (sung) Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia.**

### ***Announcements***

## **Children's Sermon and Attendance Registration**

*Please let us know you are watching by sending us a comment or an emoji.*

### **Hymn of the Day**

*"Fruitful Trees, the Spirit's Sowing"*

[LSB 691]

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's sowing, May we ripen and increase,  
Fruit to life eternal growing, Rich in love and joy and peace.

Laden branches freely bearing Gifts the Giver loves to bless;  
Here is fruit that grows by sharing, Patience, kindness, gentleness.

Rooted deep in Christ our Master, Christ our pattern and our goal,  
Teach us, as the years fly faster, Goodness, faith, and self-control.

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's tending, May we grow till harvests cease;  
Till we taste, in life unending, Heaven's love and joy and peace.

Text: © 1984 Hope Publishing Co.

### **Sermon**

*"Fruitful Vines"*

**John 15:5**

### **Voluntary**

[Personal notes and reflections]

## **INTROSPECTION**

*God convicts us to action.*

### **KINGDOM THOUGHTS**

*"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:11)*

*Each day provides every person with multiple opportunities to show love.*



**EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE STL MISSION** There is a variety of ways to give your support to the mission of STL. For many the easiest is to simply mail in a check or drop your offering off at the church. If you prefer electronic giving, STL offers multiple options:

- Text "GIVE" to 1-586-800-2223
- Visit: <https://www.stl-eastpointe.org/2015/07/13/mission-support/>
- Go to <https://www.elexiogiving.com/app/giving/stthoms>
- Through your Pay Pal account
- Scan this Quick Response (QR) code

These will connect you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account or use your credit or debit card (STL is charged extra fees for debit and credit card transactions). **You can even set up recurring giving with many of these options!** IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, OR DESIRE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (586-772-3370).

### ***A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles***

L: Acts 8 tells the story of the church being scattered by persecution, which is led by Saul, and of the evangelistic work of Philip, one of the seven deacons. We pick up the story in verse 26.

**(Acts 8:26-38)** <sup>26</sup>An 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. <sup>27</sup>So 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 <sup>28</sup>and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>The Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." <sup>30</sup>So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup>He said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. <sup>32</sup>Now 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. <sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

<sup>34</sup>The eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>And 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?" <sup>38</sup>Then he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

L: This is the word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### ***Offertory***

### ***"We Believe"***

In this time of desperation when all we know is doubt and fear,  
there is only one foundation: We believe, we believe.

In this broken generation, when all is dark, You help us see.  
There is only one salvation: We believe, we believe.

**Chorus: We believe in God the Father. We believe in Jesus Christ.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, and He's given us new life.  
We believe in the crucifixion, We believe that He conquered death.  
We believe in the resurrection, and He's coming back again. We believe.**

So Let our faith be more than anthems, greater than the songs we sing,  
in our weakness and temptations we believe, we believe. **Chorus All**

**Chorus: We believe in God the Father. We believe in Jesus Christ.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, and He's given us new life.  
We believe in the crucifixion, We believe that He conquered death.  
We believe in the resurrection, and He's coming back again.**

Let the lost be found, let the dead be raised;  
In the here and now let love invade. Let the church live love!  
Our God, will see, "We believe! We Believe!"  
And the gates of hell will not prevail, for the pow'r of God has torn the veil.  
Now we know Your love will never fail. We believe! We believe!

**We believe in God the Father. We believe in Jesus Christ.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, and He's given us new life.  
We believe in the crucifixion, We believe that He conquered death.  
We believe in the resurrection, and He's coming back, coming back again, coming back again.  
We believe, We believe!**

Words and Music by Travis Ryan, Matthew Hooper and Richie Fike

Arranged by Heather Sorenson

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Integrity Worship Music (ASCAP) and Integrity's Praise! Music (BMI)

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### ***Confession and Absolution***

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

**C: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

L: Almighty God in his mercy has given his Son to die for you and through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus, has paid for your transgressions, and defeated death and all your enemies. Therefore, your sins are all forgiven, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Alleluia! Amen!**

### ***The Prayer of the Church***

L: As God's forgiven people and at his invitation let us pray:

*(after each petition)*

L: Lord in your mercy:

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Hear us as we pray in Jesus' name and as he has taught us:

**C: 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**

## ***INVOLVEMENT***

*God makes his absolution shown in the world.*

### ***The Canticle***

*“This is the Feast”*

[LSB 171]

**Cantor:** This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**All:** Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.  
Power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and blessing and glory are His.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen

This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain  
has begun His reign. Alleluia, alleluia.

### ***Service of the Sacrament***

L: Christ has risen from the dead! Alleluia!

**C: God the Father has crowned him with glory and honor. Alleluia!**

L: Alleluia. Alleluia. Since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again.

**C: Death no longer has mastery over him. Alleluia!**

### ***The Words of Institution***

#### ***Private Prayer before Communing***

Almighty God, grant me a steadfast faith in Jesus Christ, a cheerful hope in your mercy, and a sincere love for you and my neighbor, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### ***The Distribution of the Sacrament***

#### ***Distribution Hymns***

*“Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”*

[LSB 955]

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, And fill to the brim our cup of blessing.  
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, That we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; Unite them with the prayers we offer now.  
Grace our table with Your presence, and give us A foretaste of the feast to come.

Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship.

*"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"*

[LSB 611]

Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed His blood for me,  
Died that I might live on high, Lives that I might never die.  
As the branch is to the vine, I am His, and He is mine.

Oh, the height of Jesus' love, Higher than the heav'ns above,  
Deeper than the depths of sea, Lasting as eternity!  
Love that found me—wondrous thought! Found me when I sought Him not.

Chief of sinners though I be, Christ is all in all to me;  
All my wants to Him are known, All my sorrows are His own.  
He sustains the hidden life Safe with Him from earthly strife.

***Prayer as you go home***

Merciful Father, through Holy Baptism you called me to be your own possession. Grant that my life may evidence the working of your Holy Spirit in love, joy, peace patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, according to the image of your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, my Savior. Amen.

*You are living in  
the (your)  
Mission Field*

*"The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few.  
Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send YOU out into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37-38)*

**NEXT SUNDAY:**

*The 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter*

May 9, 2021

Scripture Readings: John 15:9-17 / Acts 10:34-48

Sermon Topic: "Fruitful Love" - Text: John 15:13

**Virtual Sunday School**

Find information on THE FLOCK at [www.STL-eastpointe.org](http://www.STL-eastpointe.org).



## Community Events

**Clothing Closet open 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month – 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Food Pantry open 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month – 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**Drive Thru Communion – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month  
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**



Now enrolling at CrossBridge, St. Thomas Preschool! We offer the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) free for 4 year olds on Monday – Thursday. **Call Michele Jones for more information or an appointment to enroll; 586-260-6576.**



**WHERE CAN YOUR CHILDREN:** experience Christian growth while swimming, canoeing, shooting archery, riding horses, and zip-lining? **At Camp Concordia!** Camp Concordia is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Don't let your children miss the adventure, joy and wonder that a week at a Christian camp can bring. Camp nurtures faith inside of kids! The week of June 13-18 has a special rate of \$300 for Grades 3-6! To read what parents have to say, please visit the camp's website at [www.campconcordia.org](http://www.campconcordia.org) or call the camp office for more information at 616-754-3785.

**Office Hours are Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Friday 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Please be aware that the alarm will be set when office is closed,  
and no activity is scheduled for the building!**

### *Our Confession of Faith*

As members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS), we subscribe to the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian) and the Christian faith as confessed in the Book of Concord. This includes believing that:

- Jesus Christ is both true God and true man who died for our sins and rose again to save us.
- His body/blood are truly present in communion under the form of bread/wine (page 326).
- Communion is, among other things, an expression of doctrinal unity.
- Infant baptism is a Means of Grace through which God delivers one from sin and gives eternal salvation to all who believe (page 325 in Lutheran Service Book).

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH - May 2, 2021

### Our Primary Prayer focus for this week is on Christ's people on earth:

- For the Holy Spirit to be at work enriching faith through our Barnabas Ministry.
- Giving us hearts that remain cautious, courteous, courageous, and creative.
- For children to be raised in the nurture and encouragement of the Gospel.
- For faith to grow in everyone who is a part of our 'virtual congregation'.

And we remember all children who hear the gospel in church and from their parents, and those in hospice care.



To connect to the **STL PRAYER CHAIN**, contact Karen Dolan ([mdolan421@gmail.com](mailto:mdolan421@gmail.com)), text "Prayer" to 1-586-800-2223, or scan this QR code, with your phone's camera, to be taken to the prayer request form.

### † In Our Thoughts and Prayers †

†**For Loved Ones Called Home:** For the Cherry family as their great-grandson, Joshua, was called home. For the Kruse family as their nephew, Thomas, was called home. For the family of Emil Birdsong, husband of Beatrice (friend of STL) who was called home last week.

†**God's Healing Hand on:** Eleanor Cardamone, Cathy Hubmeier, Loletta Hogan, Glenn Koepplin, Henry Bradychok, Janet Semenjuk, David Stolzenfeld (husband of Lori), Pam Sherry (friend of Larry Petangelo), Wyatt Cichocki (great grandson of the Cichocki's), Richard Kelly (former member), Trina and Kenny Blocki (sister and brother of Dave), Barbara Singelyn (friend of Caroline Henze), Rocco Marti (friend of Rachel Hetzner).

†**Continued prayers for Healing & Strength for:** Vada Habermas, Lori Kucharek, Sieg Gannon, Elsie Adams, Chris Huber, Don Habermas, John Lemke (friend of Monica Hetzner), Beth White, Robert Laroche and Jan Adams (family of Elsie Adams), Tiffany Crow (granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Kathy Johnson (friend of Vicki Leberg), Claire Armstrong (granddaughter of Clyde & Carolyn Armstrong), Luella Riske (granddaughter of Jim, Thrivent Rep.), Karl Hallberg (son-in-law of Cardamone's), Payton Gifford (great-granddaughter of Jane Gurnack), Emily Henze (daughter-in-law of Caroline).

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