

The Sixth Sunday of Easter
Worship with Holy Communion
May 14, 2023

***Good morning & welcome to Grace
in this Holy Season of Easter,
the 50 days between the Resurrection of Jesus,
and his Ascension to the right hand of God.***

*Our mission is to invite and welcome all
to the fellowship of Christ in service to our community.*

We are glad you are with us for worship today, and to give thanks for the grace, mercy and hope offered to us in the life, death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We offer a special welcome to any guests who may be with us this morning, and to all those who are joining us via Live-Stream.

Children are welcome in worship at Grace! The voices of children only enhance worship, and they are welcome in this space! There is also a Children's Message for them, just prior to the reading of scripture. And, if needed, there is a nursery available for any family to use.

Your bulletin contains the worship service in its entirety, **and your parts are printed in bold type.**

In thanksgiving to God for the saving grace shown to all of us in the death and resurrection of Christ, we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion each week. All are welcome at the Table. We do come forward to the front of the sanctuary for communion. The Pastor stands in the center of the aisle with the bread. Gluten free bread is available – just ask when you come forward. Finally, communion assistants are located on both sides of the sanctuary, with both **wine (red)** and **juice (white)** based on your preference. Please place your empty cup in the bowl on your way back to your seat after you commune.

For those participating from home, please have a small glass of wine or juice and a small piece of bread available for all who are planning to commune. When we come to the Meal portion of the service, and the people who are present in person are coming forward, please eat your bread and drink your cup as you are moved to do so.

If you have questions about our worship service, please don't hesitate to ask someone around you. For more information about Baptism or Communion, about what Lutherans believe, or even about Grace Lutheran Church, please do not hesitate to reach out to our pastor.

**Again, we're glad you're here!
Welcome to worship!**

GATHERING ~ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

“In the Garden”

Mark Hayes

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTER GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

All may make the sign of the cross as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, by whose hand we are given new birth, by whose speaking we are given new life. **Amen**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported as citizens of the new creation. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and mighty, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring. In mercy and might you have freed us from death and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead. In baptismal waters our old life is washed away, and in them we are born anew.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes, for rivers and streams. Honor to you for waters that wash us clean quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures. Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism, the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you. Empower our witness to your resurrection. Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.

Satisfy the world’s need through this living water. Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment. Where despair prevails, grant hope. Where chaos reigns, bring peace. We ask this through Christ, who with you and the Spirit reigns forever. **Amen**

GATHERING HYMN

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

ELW 631

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The grace of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all! **And also with you.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (*Glory to God*)



1 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
2 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
3 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;



yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
yours the ho - san - nas, the dy - ing, re - birth.
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.



Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
Ours the re - joic - ing for na - ture re - claimed;
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;



ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.



Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;



yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

MUSICAL OFFERING

"Sweet By and By"

Mark Hayes

WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

In Athens, Paul faces the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to Greeks who know nothing of either Jewish or Christian tradition. He proclaims that the “unknown god” whom they worship is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will judge the world with justice through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead. And we read:

²²Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said,
‘For we too are his offspring.’

²⁹Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 66:8 - 20 (*read in unison*)

⁸Bless our God, you peoples; let the sound of praise be heard.

⁹Our God has kept us among the living and has not allowed our feet to slip.

¹⁰For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us just as silver is tried.

¹¹You brought us into the net; you laid heavy burdens upon our backs.

**¹²You let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water,
but you brought us out into a place of refreshment.**

¹³I will enter your house with burnt offerings and will pay you my vows –

**¹⁴those that I promised with my lips
and spoke with my mouth when I was in trouble.**

**¹⁵I will offer you burnt offerings of fatlings with the smoke of rams;
I will give you oxen and goats.**

**¹⁶Come and listen, all you who believe,
and I will tell you what God has done for me.
¹⁷I called out to God with my mouth, and praised the Lord with my tongue.
¹⁸If I had cherished evil in my heart, the Lord would not have heard me;
¹⁹but in truth God has heard me and has attended to the sound of my prayer.
²⁰Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer,
nor withheld unfailing love from me.**

SECOND READING

1st Peter 3:13 - 22

The author of 1 Peter encourages Christians to remain faithful even in the face of defamation and persecution. In baptism we are made clean to act in accordance with what is right. And we read:

¹³Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. ¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you - not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.

GOSPEL

John 14:15 - 21

The holy gospel, according to Saint John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In final words to his disciples on the night of his arrest, Jesus encourages obedience to his commandments and speaks of the Spirit, who will be with them forever. And we read:

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁵"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

"We Know That Christ Is Raised"

ELW 449

THE CREED ~ *Let us affirm our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE PEACE

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need (*a brief silence*).

God our faithful companion, you promise to never leave us and to send your Spirit to guide us in wisdom and truth. Send your people into the world to serve as mirrors that reflect and magnify your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

All the earth sings praises to you. Grant your care to the creatures, plants, and places that are suffering, and equip us to respond to their song. Make us agents of restoration and refreshment for all your beloved creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You call all people of the world your children. Judge the nations justly, show mercy to all who are oppressed, and speak truth to power through your prophets. We continue to lift up to you all who are suffering under the weight of injustice, especially the people of Ukraine. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nurturing Lord, you sent your Spirit to grant us peace. Make your presence known to those who feel abandoned or alone, and to all who are sick or grieving. Today we lift up to you all those on our prayer list, all those in any need, and everyone we name before you now in our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You hold us in your loving care. We pray for mothers, mother figures, and all those who nurture and guide us. Console all who long to be mothers; children estranged from their mothers; anyone grieving the death of a mother; and mothers who have lost a child. Help us to celebrate with those who are honored this day, and to support all for whom this day is difficult. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Almighty God, you give life and breath to all things. We give thanks for the apostle Matthias and all your saints, especially those who have touched our lives. Sustain us by your love until we join the saints in glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

At this time, you are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

MEAL ~ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

CHANCEL CHOIR *“Children of the Heavenly Father”* **arr. Austin C. Lovelace**

OFFERING

We give thanks to you, the people of Grace, for your faithful commitment to supporting our ministries through your giving. If you would like to offer a gift, the collection plate is located at the back of the sanctuary for your convenience. Thank you again.

OFFERING PRAYER

Generous God, in this meal you offer your very self. We give thanks for these gifts of the earth. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Lord. Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Those moved to do so may rise.)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The presiding minister continues with the proper preface:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places, give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb, who gave himself to take away our sin, and who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter, and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



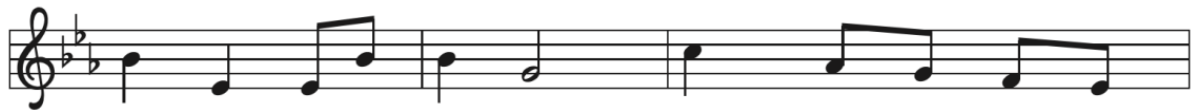
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the



Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and



God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

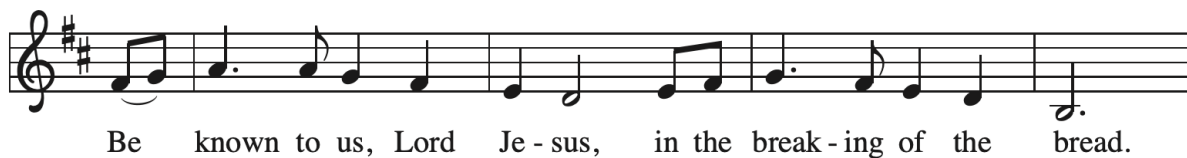
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and know Christ, broken and poured out for you. **Amen**

BE KNOWN TO US LORD JESUS



COMMUNION HYMNS

“Thy Holy Wings”
“Now Thank We All Our God”

ELW 613
ELW 840

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

PRAYER

Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together. Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus’ name. **Amen**

SENDING ~ God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of all, who raised † Jesus from the dead, bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live as a new creation in Christ. **Amen**

SENDING HYMN

“Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”

ELW 392

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**
Go in peace. Serve the Risen Lord. **We will! Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

“The Day of Resurrection!”

ELW 361

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