

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
MAY 2, 2021**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

A PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Vine-grower, during this time of worship, we come to grow and learn. You offer us life, nourish us, and create a space to thrive. May our worship draw us closer to you. Shape and form our hearts and minds as we hear your word, sing your praises, and seek your guidance through prayer. Strengthen us to bear good fruit today and in the days to come. In the name of the one who proclaimed, I am the vine. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

SENTENCES OF ADORATION

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Pastor: As we gather, may our ears be opened to receive holy dialogue.

People: As we pause from our busy lives, may our words be inspired in holy dialogue.

Pastor: As we seek God's wisdom, may God interweave our presence and words to create holy dialogue.

People: In this time of worship, let us engage in holy dialogue, as children of God seeking to learn, seeking to teach, seeking to be one.

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

***CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:**

Life-giving God, you have gifted each with the ability to love, yet there are times we fail to act in loving ways. We confess there are times we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. Instead, we have ignored, coveted, stolen from, and hurt those who live in community with us. We confess there are times when we reject the love of others. Instead, we have been too proud, too busy, too narrow-minded, too consumed with our own lives. We confess there are times when we have not loved ourselves. Instead, we have neglected our needs, denied ourselves forgiveness and grace, put others before ourselves in unhealthy ways. In each of these failures, we have distanced ourselves further from you, our creator and sustainer. In confessing these things, we desire to give and receive love more honestly and to abide with you fully. Amen

***ASSURANCE**

***THE GLORIA PATRI**

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.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE - *Based on St. Patrick, facing each other:

Unison: Christ's peace be with you,
Christ's peace within you,
Christ's peace behind you,
Christ's peace before you,
Christ's peace beside you,
Christ's peace to win you,
Christ's peace to comfort you and restore you. Christ's peace be
with you.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Psalter: Psalm 22:25 – 31

New Testament: Acts 8:26 – 40

Gospel: John 15:1 – 8

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON: *When Does the Discussion End?*

HYMN: *I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY*

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I love to tell the story of unseen things above
Of Jesus' radiant glory, of Jesus' endless love
I love to tell the story because I know it's true
It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do
Refrain:

I love to tell the story and when I am in Glory
I'll tell the old, old story of Jesus' endless love

I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems
Than all the golden visions of all our golden dreams
I love to tell the story I tell it now to you
Because I want to share it, because I know it's true [Refrain]

I love to tell the story it's pleasant to repeat
What seems each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet
I love to tell the story for some have never heard
The message of salvation from God's own Holy Word [Refrain]

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it, like the rest
And when I sing in glory, I know the new, new song
will be the old, old story that I have loved so long. [Refrain]

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL AND WORK

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *I BELIEVE

Written by Bruce Prewer

In spite of many unanswered questions, I believe.

**I believe in the living God, the joy of the universe,
who is the pulse and purpose of all things seen and unseen,
who from the dust of earth calls up living beings to be children of eternity,
who through countless ages has provided for us many liberators
and tirelessly seeks to bring victory out of defeat and life out of decay.**

**I believe in Jesus the Christ, God's true Son,
who is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh,
who took upon himself the healing of the human race,
who bearing the burden of our sins went to Golgotha carrying his cross,
who was betrayed, crucified, dead and buried in a borrowed tomb,
who on the third day was found to be gloriously alive,
meeting with those who trust him and serve him to the end of the world.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit of God,
within and among all who cherish Christ and his way,
who brings hope out of despair, love out of apathy, and joy out of sorrow,
who unceasingly regenerates and reforms the church
that it may always be the contemporary body of the risen Christ,
loving the world through prayer, word and deed.**

**I believe that even I am caught up in the resurgent life of Christ Jesus,
and that nothing in life or death can separate me from his love and joy.**

In spite of unanswered questions, yes, I believe. Amen!

***SPECIAL MUSIC: *NO LONGER SLAVES* – Bethel Music**

Darin Jellison

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: In times of sadness, loss, and disorientation,

People: **we pray, Holy One, that you would abide in us.**

Pastor: In times of anger, betrayal, and slander,

People: **we pray, Holy One, that you would abide in us.**

Pastor: In times of hopelessness, brokenness, and failure,

People: **we pray, Holy One, that you would abide in us.**

Pastor: In times of hopefulness, renewed faith, and the assurance of the good yet to come,

People: **we pray, Holy One, that you would abide in us.**

Pastor: In times of forgiveness, happiness, and thankfulness,

People: **we pray, Holy One, that you would abide in us.**

Pastor: In times of joy, unity, and peace,

People: **we pray, Holy One, that you would abide in us.**

Pastor: Your love, O God, is ever-present in our times of deepest despair as well as through the vastness of our praise. Your invitation to abide in you has no qualifications, but promises to be ever-close and ever-present when life is at its best, at its worst, and at every time in-between.

People: **Abide in us, Holy One, as we abide in you.**

Pause for private intercessions

Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass.
We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

Unison: **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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

HYMN: *LET US WITH A JOYFUL MIND*

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Let us with a joyful mind praise our God forever kind,

Refrain:

Rich with mercies that endure, ever faithful, ever sure.

New-made earth was filled with light through God's all commanding might,
[Refrain]

Dazzling bright the sun obeys God who shines with brighter rays,
[Refrain]

Stars and moon that spangle night all depend on heaven's light,
[Refrain]

Creatures of the sea and land all are fed by God's own hand,
[Refrain]

Therefore with a joyful mind, praise our God forever kind,
[Refrain]

***THE DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Generous Giver of Life, we bring before you now the fruits of our lives. In celebration and thankfulness for all we are given, we now give back to further your kin-dom. May these fruits meet the basic needs of those in our community. May they nourish and strengthen our community, and be used to grow bigger gardens to feed your children yet to come. You are the vine, and we are the branches. Connected in love, may we share all that we have, in your holy name. Amen.

GO IN GOD'S NAME

***CLOSING HYMN: SAVIOR, AGAIN TO YOUR DEAR NAME 80**

Savior, again to your dear name we raise with one accord our parting hymn of praise. We give you thanks before our worship cease, and now departing, wait your word of peace.

Grant us your peace upon our homeward way; with you began, with you shall end the day. Guard now the lips from sin, the hearts from shame, that in this house have called upon your name.

Grant us your peace, Lord, through the coming night; turn all our darkness to your perfect light. Then, while we sleep, our hope and strength renew, for dark and light are both alike to you.

Grant us your peace throughout our earthly life: comfort in sorrow, courage in the strife. Then, when your voice shall make our conflict cease, call us, O Lord, to your eternal peace.

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

*Lead Pastor: Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Stevenson
Music Director and Organist: Dennis Duda*

Special thanks our volunteers:

*Head Usher: Tracy Adams
Ushers: Cindy Talaber & Jerry Trexler
Lay Reader: John Barone
Special Music: Darin Jellison
Stream Team: Avery Koser
Financial Secretary: Jerry Trexler*