



# 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021

*Christ Revealed - The Journey Continues*

## Council at Jerusalem

*We are cleansed and saved by God's grace, not our own ability (inability) to follow God's laws.*

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*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

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### Prelude

*"Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"*

### Announcements

### Call to Worship

Holy Risen One,  
we gather this day and we come as we are:  
we come from different places,  
we share one love.  
Accept all we bring forward to you today.  
Accept our worship, we pray.

### Opening Song

*Gather Us In*

Red ELW 532 vv. 1, 4

**Here in this place the new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away;  
see in this space our fears and our dreamings  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**

**Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven, light years away—  
here in this place the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.**

**Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

## Confession and Forgiveness

We confess our sins before God and one another.

*Pause for silence and reflection.*

Risen Lord,

**We admit that we are slow to believe, and even slower to follow where you lead us. We doubt your promise, divide your people, and fail to proclaim the power of your resurrection. We choose to live small lives when you have given us the biggest gift of all: your eternal life. Forgive us. Raise us up to a place where we can serve you faithfully.**

Christ is arisen, bringing gifts of life, mercy and pardon for sin! Believe that you are forgiven, and go out and live in the joy of your Lord's resurrection in the power of God's Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## Prayer of Day

Loving God, You showed your followers that their salvation didn't depend upon culture or traditions, but on the grace freely offered by your Spirit. Show us the same open vision of mercy offered to all, regardless of background or practice, for the sake of the whole world. **Amen.**

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*God speaks to us in scripture, preaching & song*

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*The early Christian church had a debate that brought the concept of grace to the surface. It would be God's gifts, not people's adherence to the laws, that would cleanse and save.*

# Invitation to the Word

Lord, I lift your name on high; Lord, I lift to sing your praises.  
I'm so glad you're in my life, I'm so glad you came to save us.  
You came from heaven to earth to show the way,  
from the earth to the cross, my debt to pay,  
from the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky;  
Lord, I lift your name on high.

## Scripture Reading

Acts 15:1-18

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." <sup>2</sup>And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. <sup>3</sup>So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers. <sup>4</sup>When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. <sup>5</sup>But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses."

<sup>6</sup>The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. <sup>7</sup>After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. <sup>8</sup>And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; <sup>9</sup>and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. <sup>10</sup>Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup>On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." <sup>12</sup>The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. <sup>13</sup>After they finished speaking, James replied, "My brothers, listen to me. <sup>14</sup>Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name. <sup>15</sup>This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written, <sup>16</sup>'After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; from its ruins I will rebuild it, and I will set it up, <sup>17</sup>so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called. Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things <sup>18</sup>known from long ago.'"

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

# Message

## Special Music

"Earth and All Stars"

- Kolander

## Apostles' Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayers of the People

**Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord make us whole,  
peace to all people, hope for each soul.  
God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.**

We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*A brief silence.*

You helped changed the minds of the early disciples, guiding them towards grace and away from legalism. Likewise keep us focused on your wide mercy and inclusion of all, instead of the trivial things that would serve to keep us divided.

*Prayer petitions response*  
God of all, **hear our prayer.**

*Other petitions offered.*

Incline your ear to our prayers and fill us with power to begin living out our faith, by the power of your Son our savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

# Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.

# Sharing God's Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

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*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

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# Blessing

May the message of the women who found the tomb empty, bless you with the death transforming love of our living Savior, Jesus Christ. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

# Song

***My Hope is Built on Nothing less***

Red ELW 597 vv. 1-3

**My hope is built on nothing less  
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
no merit of my own I claim,  
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.**

*Refrain*

**On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;  
all other ground is sinking sand.**

**When darkness veils his lovely face,  
I rest on his unchanging grace;  
in ev'ry high and stormy gale  
my anchor holds within the veil. *Refrain***

His oath, his covenant, his blood  
sustain me in the raging flood;  
when all supports are washed away,  
he then is all my hope and stay. *Refrain*

## Sending

Be amazed! The tomb is empty! Christ is risen!

Go and share this good news.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia.**

## Postlude

*"As the Grains of Wheat"*



### **Participants**

- Pastors: Courtney Steitz, Michael TeKrony
- Prelude/Special Music: Jordan Ortman
- Assisting Minister: Amy Evancheck
- Liturgy leaders: Diane & Kevin Klinkerfues, Lisa Grimm, Andy Steitz,  
Susan Parks, Gaylene Szaltzer
- Opening Song: Diane & Kevin Klinkerfues
- Closing Song: Chancel Choir – Directed by Dave Gleason  
Susie DiPaolo, Brenda Gleason, Denise Ikenberry,  
Linda TeKrony, Mike Madsen, Ron Skabo, Scott Ikenberry
- Postlude: Diane Klinkerfues
- Photographs: Ray Johnson, Michael TeKrony, Amy Evancheck,  
Winston Herbert