

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 14, 2023

10:15 am

Prelude

Welcome

Jesus does not abandon his followers. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to abide with his disciples of every generation. As Pentecost draws near, we are reminded that the risen Christ dwells in us as the Spirit of truth. We receive this Spirit in baptism and pray that in our gathering around the Lord's table the Spirit will transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

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 ELW #631 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

- 1. Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of Heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us they humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown, Jesus thou are all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art; visit us with thy salvation, , enter ev'ry trembling heart.**
- 2. Breathe, oh, breathe thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast; let us all in thee inherit; let us find they promised rest. Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be; end of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.**

3. **Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all thy life receive; suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave. Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above, pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.**
4. **Finish then thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be; let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee! Changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love and praise!**

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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.

Readings and Psalm

First Reading: Acts 17:22-31

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.

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."

Psalm: Psalm 66:8-20

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

⁹**Our 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.

¹¹**You 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.

¹³**I 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.

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

¹⁶Come and listen, all you who believe, and I will tell you what God has done for me.

¹⁷**I 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;

¹⁹**but 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: 1 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.

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.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. *Alleluia.* (John 14:23)

The Holy Gospel according to the book of John, beginning with the Fourteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 14:15 -21

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.

[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 our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day ELW #396 "Spirit of Gentleness"

Refrain: **Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free; Spirit, Spirit of Restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.**

- 1. You moved on the waters, you called to the deep, then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep; and over the eons you called to each thing; "Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings." *Refrain***
- 2. You sept through the dessert, you stung with the sand, and you goaded your people with a law and a land; and when they were blinded with idols and lies, then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. *Refrain***
- 3. You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill, then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still; and down in the city you called once again, when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. *Refrain***
- 4. You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes. From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams; our women see visions, our men clear their eyes. With bold new decisions your people arise. *Refrain.***

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Apostle's 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.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering

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.

Prayers of Intercession

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Lord's Prayer

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.

Blessing

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

Sending Hymn ELW #392 "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus"

- 1. Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; his the scepter, his the throne; alleluia! his the triumph, his the victory alone. Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood; "Jesus out of ev'ry nation has redeemed us by his blood."**
- 2. Alleluia! Not as orphans are we left in sorrow now; Alleluia! he is near us; faith believes, nor questions how. Though the cloud from sight received him when the forty days were o'er, shall our hearts forget his promise: "I am with you evermore"?**
- 3. Alleluia! Bread of heaven, here on earth our food, our stay; Alleluia! her the sinful flee to you from day to day. Intercessor, friend of sinners, earth's redeemer, hear our plea where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal sea.**

4. **Alleluia! King eternal, Lord omnipotent we own; Alleluia! born of Mary, earth you footstool, heav'n your throne. As within the veil you entered, robed in flesh, our great high priest, here on earth both priest and victim in the eucharistic feast.**
5. **Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; his the scepter, his the throne; Alleluia! his the triumph his the victory alone. Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood: "Jesus out of ev'ry nation has redeemed us by his blood."**

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

Thanks be to God.

Prelude

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