

Sixth Sunday of Easter Sunday, May 14, 2023

Introduction to the day

Welcome to morning worship. This is the season of Easter. As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, the gospel of John tells us that 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.

GATHERING

Thanksgiving for Baptism

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,
by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life.

C **Amen.**

P 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.

C **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.**

P 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.

- C** 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 *"This Is My Father's World" ELW 824*



1 This is my Fa-ther's world, and to my lis-t'ning ears all
 2 This is my Fa-ther's world; the birds their car-ols raise; the
 3 This is my Fa-ther's world; oh, let me not for-get that,



na - ture sings, and round me rings the mu - sic of the spheres.
 morn - ing light, the lil - y white, de - clare their mak - er's praise.
 though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the rul - er yet.



This is my Fa-ther's world; I rest me in the thought of
 This is my Fa-ther's world; he shines in all that's fair. In the
 This is my Fa-ther's world; why should my heart be sad? The



rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the won - ders wrought.
 rus - tling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me ev-'ry-where.
 Lord is king, let heav - en ring; God reigns, let earth be glad!

Text: Maltbie D. Babcock, 1858–1901
 Music: TERRA PATRIS, Franklin L. Sheppard, 1852–1930, adapt.

GREETING

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C **Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

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.

C **Amen.**

WORD

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.”

R Word of God, Word of life,

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 66:8-20

Bless our God, you peoples; let the sound of praise be heard. (Ps. 66:8)

8Bless our | God, you peoples;

let the sound of | praise be heard.

9Our God has kept us a- | mong the living

and has not allowed our | feet to slip. R

10For you, O God, have | tested us;

you have tried us just as sil- | ver is tried.
11 You brought us in- | to the net;
you laid heavy burdens up- | on our backs.
12 You 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—
14 those 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 ox- | en and goats. R
16 Come 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.
18 If 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.
20 Blessed be God, who has not reject- | ed my prayer,
nor withheld unfailing | love from me. R

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.

13 Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? 14 But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, 15 but 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; 16 yet 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. 17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. 18 For 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, 19 in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, 20 who 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. 21 And 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, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

R Word of God, Word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Be Not Afraid” (ELW 388)

Be not a-fraid, sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le - lu - ia!

Be not a-fraid, sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le - lu - ia!

Text: Matthew 28:5; Taizé Community
 Music: BE NOT AFRAID, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994
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Gospel: John 14:15-21

P The holy gospel according to John.
C **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.

[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.”

P The gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY “*Come, Gracious Spirit Heavenly Dove*” (LBW 475)

1 Come, gra - cious Spir - it, heav'n - ly dove, with light and
 2 The light of truth to us dis - play and make us
 3 Lead us to Christ, the liv - ing way, nor let us
 4 Lead us to heav'n, that we may share full - ness of

com - fort from a - bove. Come, be - our guard - ian
 know and choose your way; plant ho - ly fear in
 from his pas - tures stray; lead us to ho - li -
 joy for - ev - er there; lead us to our e -

and our guide; o'er ev - 'ry thought and step pre - side,
 ev - 'ry heart, that we from God may ne'er de - part.
 ness, the road that we must take to dwell with God.
 ter - nal rest, to be with God for - ev - er blest.

Text: Simon Browne, 1680–1732, alt.
 Music: WARBHAM, William Knapp, 1698–1768

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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Joining the faithful around the world, we pray for the church, the whole creation, and all who are in need of God's mercy. The response is God of new life, **hear our prayer***

PEACE

P The Risen Christ announces peace to all, both near and far. Peace be with you.

C **And also with you.**

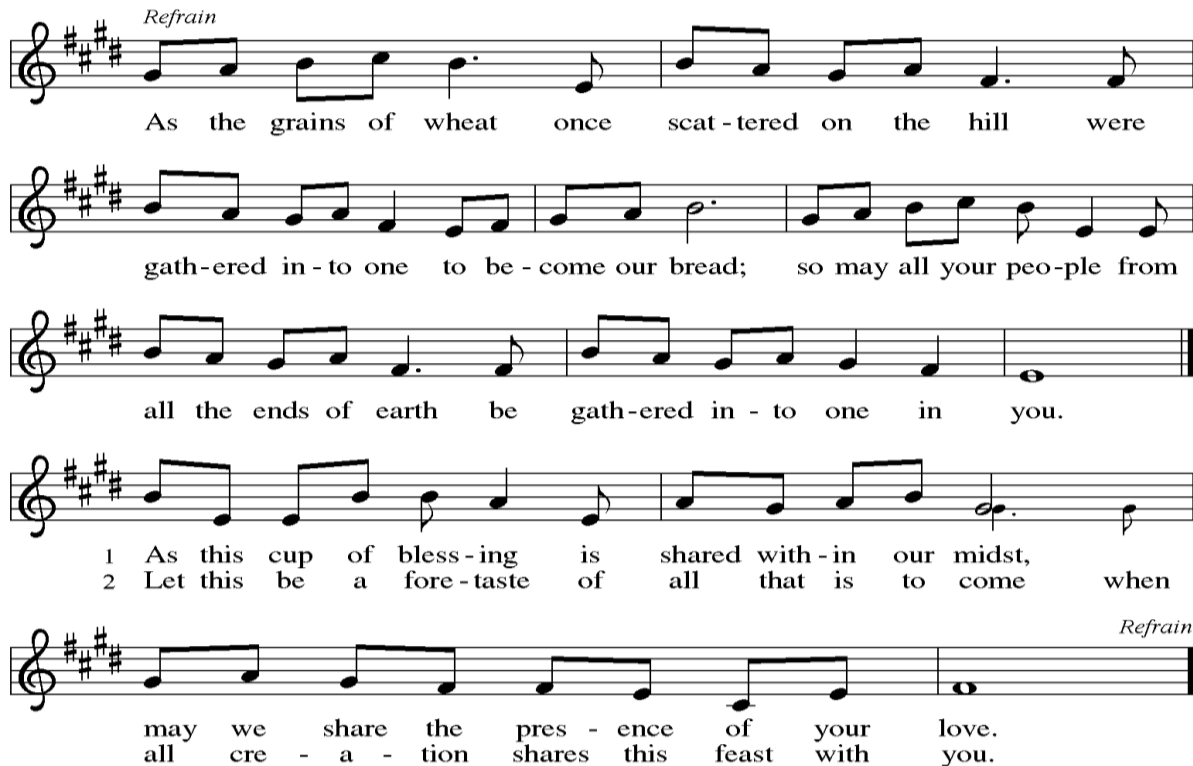
We share a sign of peace with one another; a hug, a handshake, and the words, "peace be with you."

OFFERING

*We receive an offering for the mission and ministry of the church. Your gifts support weekly worship, pastoral ministry, and service to those in need locally and globally. **Please deposit your gifts in the offering plate located on the stand in the back of the sanctuary.** You may also give online at www.zionakron.org.*

OFFERING SONG *As the Grains of Wheat* (ELW 465)

Refrain



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.

1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore-taste of all that is to come when

Refrain

may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: AS THE GRAINS, Marty Haugen

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OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray.

C **Generous God,**

in this meal you offer yourself to us.

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.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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 God thanks and praise.

President: *Congregation:* *President:* *Congregation:*

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Bless - ed is the
One who comes in your name. Ho - san - na in the
high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Congregation:

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The pastor gives thanks to God for the gifts of creation, for the cross of Christ and the means of salvation, for the bread and cup that become His body and blood, and for the Holy Spirit, sent to dwell in our hearts and minds by faith. 'Eucharist' literally means 'thanksgiving' and so we come to the table with thankful hearts lifted up to God, the giver of life.

We hear the instructions of St. Paul to the Corinthian church on celebrating the Lord's Supper; and we hear the words of Jesus to his disciples: "Take and eat, take and drink, this is my body, this is my blood, given and shed for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Trust that Christ is present for you in this meal.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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

P Taste and see that the Lord is good.

C **Blest are all invited to the feast.**

MEAL

COMMUNION

We practice the ancient rite of the Lord's Supper every week. All people who hunger for God's grace and peace in their lives are welcome to receive the bread and cup. Please come forward in the center aisle, take an empty cup, kneel at the altar, and return by the side aisle. In this meal, you are joined with Christ, your sins are forgiven, and you receive God's strength for daily life. We are sent from the table to serve others in his name. We offer gluten free bread and grape juice, as an alternative to the bread and wine, for those who require or prefer it. All are fed at the table of grace!

LAMB OF GOD

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
 * you break the chains of ha - tred and
 you are the way of jus - tice and
 you are the way of mer - cy and

Congregation:

world:
 fear: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
 peace:
 love:

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Congregation:

take a - way the sin of the world: grant us peace,

grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION SONG *Now the Green Blade Rises* (ELW 379)



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,
 2 In the grave they laid him, love by ha - tred slain,
 3 Forth he came at Eas - ter like the ris - en grain,
 4 When our hearts are win - try, griev - ing, or in pain,



wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;
 think - ing that he would nev - er wake a - gain,
 he that for three days in the grave had lain;
 your touch can call us back to life a - gain,



love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;
 laid in the earth like grain that sleeps un - seen;
 raised from the dead, my liv - ing Lord is seen;
 fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

Text: John MacLeod Campbell Crum, 1872–1958
 Music: NOËL NOUVELET, French carol
 Text from *Oxford Book of Carols*, © Oxford University Press 1928. All rights reserved.

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.
 C **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

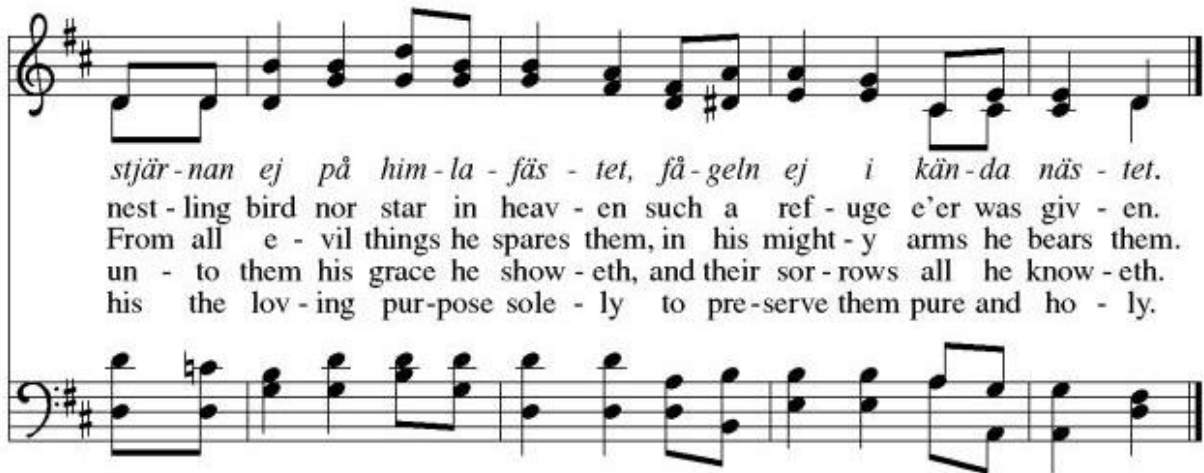
BLESSING

P May the God of all creation, the one who raised + Jesus from the dead, the one who sends the Holy Spirit upon us, bless you with the abundance of life, the fruit of creation, and the joy of salvation.
 C **Amen.**

SENDING SONG “*Children of The Heavenly Father!*” ELW 781



Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra,
 1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
 2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish.
 3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
 4 Though he giv - eth or he tak - eth, God his chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth;



stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - geln ej i kän - da näs - tet.
 nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
 From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
 un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
 his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958
 Music: TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA, Swedish folk tune
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DISMISSAL

- A Go in peace. Share the good news.
 C **Thanks be to God.**

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