



Order of Worship

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 5, 2024

Gathering and Welcome *St. Clement Melody*

Prelude *Immortal, Invisible* – arr. Howard Helvey

Jessye Whitis, pianist

***Call to worship**

We come to join with all the earth in praise:

**to sing a new song to the Lord, who has done marvelous things,
who has shown us steadfast love and faithfulness.**

We praise the Lord with joyful noises joining the symphony of the earth:

**the roar of the ocean, the call of the birds,
the wind across the hills,
people in every corner of the globe.**

On this sabbath day of rest and gladness,

we greet you with joy, our living God!

***Opening Hymn # 515** *I Come with Joy*

***Call to confession**

There is nothing that can separate us from God's love.

Therefore, let's confess our sins, trusting that God will forgive us and help us transform our lives.

***Prayer of confession**

Tender God, forgive us for our half-hearted faith that loves only when it is easy, and reaches out only to those who are like us, that ignores your less convenient commandments and fails to bear fruit anyone would rejoice in. How can a faith like that conquer the world? Nourish us again, to blossom with whole-hearted faith that abides in your love and shines forth with joy. Through the grace of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

***Assurance of pardon**

Hear the Good News! The only one who could judge us calls us friends.

Jesus chose us over his own life, so let us choose Jesus in the life we have now.

By the power of the Spirit, our sins are washed away, and we are made new.

Let us live as God's forgiven children. Alleluia! Amen.

Choral Anthem *Now the Table is Set* – Jay Althouse

George Weaver, director

Prayer for illumination

Holy Spirit, help us to hear familiar words with fresh ears, and to take your Holy Word to us seriously, as guide and pattern for our lives. Amen.

Scripture readings | John 5: 1 – 6; John 15: 9 - 17

Sermon *The Included Club*

Rev. Kathy Vineyard, H.R.

Affirmation of faith (from the Belhar Confession)

We believe in the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the Church, as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another; that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the Church of Jesus Christ.

We believe that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another, and that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another.

We believe that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God. Jesus is Lord. Amen.

Call for the offering

With gratitude for all God has given us, let us return our offerings to God.

Offertory *Children of the Heavenly Father* – Swedish Folk Melody

Jessye Whitis, pianist

***Doxology # 606 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow**

Prayer of dedication

Generous God, we bring you our offerings today, and ask that you bless them. Bless the money in the plates that it might be saved, stewarded, and spent in ways that honor you. Bless the tasks we will undertake this week that we might be coworkers in your coming kingdom. Bless the hours of our week – 167 until we meet again – that our lives may be our offering to you. Bless us to be blessings in this world. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Holy God of joy and peace, we thank you for life and health, for morning and evening, for rain and sun, for all you give us to sustain life; and most of all for Jesus, who died and rose again to make real the promise of new life. We thank you for your unfailing mercy.

We ask, God, for a church that ministers every day to bring people together in your name, for hearts that will not judge, for minds that recognize injustice and oppression in all its forms, for hands that are open to answer your call. Hear us, God, and help us be your church.

Powerful God, the nations of this world are many and full of marvels. We pray for their well-being; for leaders and workers, teachers and soldiers, scholars, artists, parents, and peacemakers, and especially for nations and peoples in conflict, that your abundant love be known in all the lands. Hear us, God, and help the world find peace.

Turn our hearts, Holy One, to respect and honor those we think are different from us; let us see in peoples of every nation the beauty of the diversity you have created. Hear us, God, and help us see as you see.

We pray for bodies and spirits healed, for those who are in pain, for those awaiting surgery, for those undergoing physical therapy or seeking counseling, for those awaiting death and those awaiting new life. Hear us, God, and help us be compassionate.

For the prayers on the hearts of this congregation, those we name now and those that remain unspoken.

Into your hands we place our prayers and all whose welfare we trust you to watch over. Bless them and all who have needs only you know.

Grateful for all your gifts, we pray in the name of the one God, creator of us all, and through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, saying, “**Our Father ...**”.

Hymn # 521 *In Remembrance of Me*

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Hymn of Sending # 516 *For the Bread Which You Have Broken

Charge and benediction

Friends, Christ has called us to love but has not left us to fulfill that command on our own. Christ drenches us in love every moment of our lives. So go out to live in that love, to share it, and to rejoice in it.

And may the God who made you uphold you, the Christ you saved you enfold you, and the Spirit who dwells within you embolden you, this day and forevermore. Amen.

Postlude *Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy* Jessye Whitis, pianist

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2024 Liturgy written by Carol Prickett.