

SUNDAY PRAYER

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 10, 2020

GRACE CHURCH, TRUMBULL

THE WORD OF GOD

Hymn: The Church's one foundation (Hymnal #525)

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'The Church's one foundation'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are arranged in five lines, with the first line of each system corresponding to the first line of the lyrics. The piano accompaniment is primarily block chords, with some moving lines in the bass. The vocal line is a simple melody with some grace notes and slurs.

1 The Church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ her Lord;
2 E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
3 Though with a scorn - ful won - der men see her sore op - pressed,
4 Mid toil and tri - bu - la - tion, and tu - mult of her war
5 Yet she on earth hath un - ion with God, the Three in One,

1 she is his new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word:
2 her char - ter of sal - va - tion, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
3 by schi - sms rent a - sun - der, by her - e - sies dis - tressed;
4 she waits the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for ev - er - more;
5 and mys - tic sweet com - mun - ion with those whose rest is won.

1 from heaven he came and sought her to be his ho - ly bride;
2 one ho - ly Name she bless - es, par - takes one ho - ly food,
3 yet saints their watch are keep - ing, their cry goes up, "How long?"
4 till with the vi - sion glo - rious her long - ing eyes are blessed,
5 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! Lord, give us grace that we

continued

1 with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
 2 and to one hope she presses, with every grace endowed.
 3 and soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.
 4 and the great Church vic - to - rious shall be the Church at rest.
 5 like them, the meek and low - ly, on high may dwell with thee.

Words: Samuel John Stone (1839-1900) Music: *Aurelia*, Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876)

Leader Alleluia. Christ is risen.
 People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
 and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our
 hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
 perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;
 through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Hymn of Praise *Pascha Nostrum*

Alleluia.
 Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; *
 therefore let us keep the feast,
 Not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, *
 but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.
 Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; *
 death no longer has dominion over him.
 The death that he dies, he dies to sin, once for all; *
 but the life he lives, he lives to God.
 So also consider yourselves dead to sin, *
 and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia.
 Christ has been raised from the dead, *
 the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.
 For since by a man came death, *
 by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.
 For as in Adam all die, *
 so also in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Romans 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

The Collect of the Day

Leader The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Leader Let us pray.

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The First Reading

Acts 7:55-60

Reader A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

In te, Domine, speravi

- 1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame; *
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; *
make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold; *
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.
- 4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, *
for you are my tower of strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, *
for you have redeemed me,
O Lord, O God of truth.

15 My times are in your hand; *
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.

16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *
and in your loving-kindness save me."

The Epistle

1 Peter 2:2-10

Reader A reading from the First Letter of Peter.

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

"See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner",

and

"A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Gospel

John 14:1-14

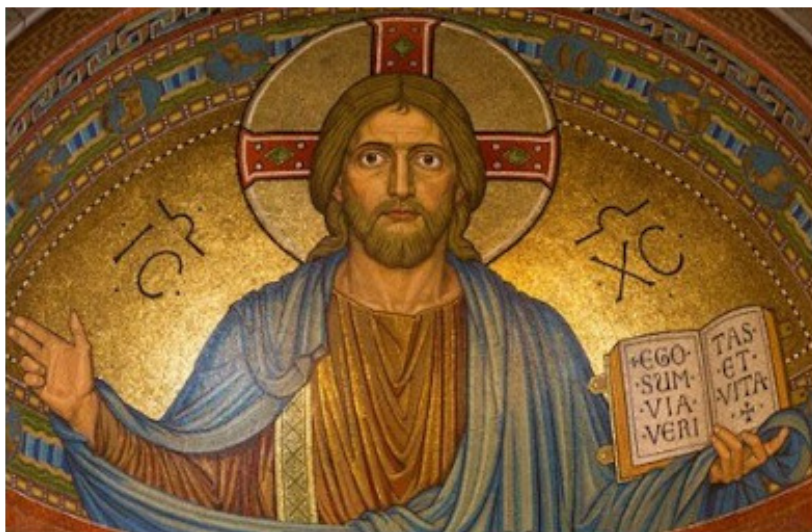
Reader A reading from the Gospel of John.

Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.



Mosaic of Christ Pantokrator
Benedictine Abbey Church of Maria Laach, Germany

A Reflection

The Rev. Dr. Paul Jacobson

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

To help us think about what the resurrection might mean to us in our time, today's gospel reading takes us back in time. On the night of what we now call the Last Supper, Jesus is preparing the disciples for his death. He tells them that he is going to prepare a place for them, so that he might come and bring them there. Thomas and Phillip give voice to the doubts we all have, "where?" "we don't know how to get there!" "show me!"

It is precisely this anxiety, expressed in words of longing and protest, that rings loud today. In this time of profound unknowingness, we are desperate for answers. We spend hours consuming cable news of some stripe or other. We scroll through our screens for hours on end. In our hearts, we know that it's neither productive nor healthy, but we're terrified to miss that one item that will tell us what we want to know. How long will this last? Will my loved ones be OK? When can I get back to "normal"? What if I have to change the way I live? And on and on; the questions are endless. The less we know, the more we grasp at knowing.

My colleague David Lose reminds us that these questions arise out of isolation, confusion, sorrow, and desperation. The biblical term is lament. Psalm 13 begins: *How long, O Lord? Will you forget me for ever? How long will you hide your face from me?*

Jesus told his disciples, *do not let your hearts be troubled*, because their hearts were troubled. Our hearts are troubled. But in allowing ourselves to lament, to acknowledge (and say out loud!) everything that is difficult to understand or endure, it becomes possible to make room in our hearts to hear a word from God as being genuine and true. In permitting ourselves to give voice to our pain, we can hear Jesus' response not simply as comfort, but as promise.

Jesus' response is, *in my Father's house are many dwelling places*. I am of a generation that automatically hears "many mansions," but the point is the same: God is roomy! And generous, and hospitable. God has a place for you, and for all the "yous" that God has created.

Still more, God's promise of belonging extends far beyond our mortality. On that last night, in the shadow of his own cross, Jesus promises, *I go and prepare a place for you.*

In these days of lamenting enforced isolation, spend a moment in that promise. *I go and prepare a place for you.* You have a place with God. You have a home with God.

Even before most of us needed to stay home all the time, home was one of the most powerful ideas in our culture. Our language is littered with such images:

Home is where the heart is
Hearth and home
Home-made
"ET, phone home"

Thoughts of home often have a sense of nostalgia. Garrison Keillor built an entire industry around a fictional home in Lake Wobegon, itself an entirely fictional place. And none of us can forget that young girl from Kansas who taught us that "there's no place like home."

When I was four years old, my family lived in, ironically now perhaps, Indiana. The house was in what we used to call "the country." We lived between two farms, so there was a lot of space, woods, and fields, just ripe for exploring.

I am told that one of my favorite pastimes was to head out to the field all duded up with my cowboy hat and beaded cowboy belt. There, I would build a perfect "campfire" and then sit and sing "Home, Home on the Range" at the top of my lungs. Over and over. For hours.

Somewhat earlier, in the year 410 CE, the city of Rome had been sacked by the Gothic king Alaric, a portent of the eventual collapse of Rome itself and the Empire. In the midst of that rapidly changing world, Augustine of Hippo (in what is now Algeria), gave voice to the longing that is in each one of us ... to know where we will end up. We want to reach home; we

want to know where it is and how to get there. Augustine wrote, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”¹

The promise that Jesus makes to his disciples, to us, is not about where, or when, or even how we will get home, to God. Instead, Jesus makes a promise of who, the promise of himself. *Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*

My friends, in these days of deep unknowingness, I encourage you to give voice to your lament to God. No one ever said that faith makes things easier – or that things will turn out the way we want. Reading both the Bible and history makes such a conclusion silly. The difficult emotions of pain and fear and confusion are real, and worth giving voice to.

But, they are not the only reality, because the life of faith makes things richer and deeper. Sometimes that means just hanging on by your fingernails. It can also mean flourishing even in the most challenging of times. And so, when your lament is paused, I invite you to remember the promise of Jesus, the promise of himself, and welcome him anew into your hearts and lives. George Herbert, the 17th century priest and poet, put it this way:

¶The Call.²

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joyes in love.

¹Augustine of Hippo (354-430), *Confessions*, I;1. *Fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.*

² From *The Temple* (1633) by George Herbert (1593-1633).

My dear and precious friends in Christ, do not let your hearts be troubled. We've not been down this particular road before. But neither do we travel it alone. Jesus has already traveled it and walks with us now. Jesus really is the way, the truth, and the life, the one who leads us to abundant life in and through his Father. Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

+ + +

On this Mother's Day, we give thanks to God for the divine gift of motherhood in all its diverse forms.

Let us pray for all the mothers among us today; for our own mothers, those living and those who have passed away; for the mothers who loved us and for those who fell short of loving us fully; for all who hope to be mothers some day and for those whose hope to have children has been frustrated; for all mothers who have lost children; for all women and men who have mothered others in any way — those who have been our substitute mothers and we who have done so for those in need; for the earth that bore us and provides our sustenance. We pray this all in the name of God, our great and loving Mother. Amen.³

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:

³ From *Women's Common Prayers: Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated* (Morehouse Publishing, 2000).

by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Form II

In the course of the silence after each bidding, the People offer their own prayers, either silently or aloud.

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for our Bishops Ian and Laura; for this gathering; and for all ministers and people.

Pray for the Church.

Silence

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people.

Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison.

Pray for those in any need or trouble.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.

Pray that they may find and be found by him.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the departed [especially _____],

Pray for those who have died.

Silence

Members of the congregation may ask the prayers or the thanksgivings of those present

I ask your prayers and thanksgivings for _____ .

Grace's Parish Prayer Cycle

Agnes Feige.

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

St. Mark's, New Britain; St. Mark's, New Canaan; Christ Church, New Haven.

Parish prayer groups; intercessory prayer chains; healing prayer groups, and parish and community bible studies.

Anglican Cycle of Prayer

The Anglican Church of Kenya.

Silence

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored [especially _____ whom we remember today].

Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Silence

Hasten, O Father, the coming of your kingdom; and grant that we your servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *feel free to use whatever version you prefer*

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 for ever. Amen.

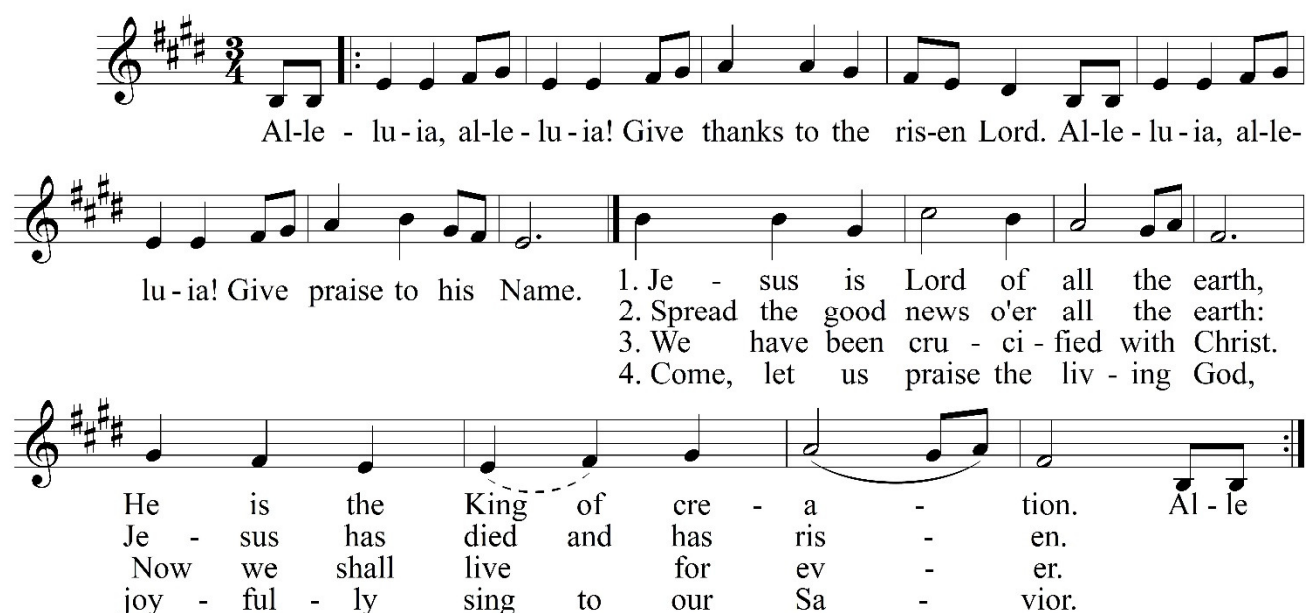
Leader Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Leader May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. *Romans 15:13*

People Amen.

Hymn: Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord (Hymnal #178)



Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia! Give thanks to the ris-en Lord. Al-le - lu - ia, al-le-
lu - ia! Give praise to his Name.

1. Je - sus is Lord of all the earth,
2. Spread the good news o'er all the earth:
3. We have been cru - ci - fied with Christ.
4. Come, let us praise the liv - ing God,

He is the King of cre - a - tion. Al - le
Je - sus has died and has ris - en.
Now we shall live for ev - er.
joy - ful - ly sing to our Sa - vior.

MISCELLANEOUS PRAYERS

A Collect for Sundays

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

For Peace

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Mission

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

For those who face great uncertainty

God of the present moment,
God who in Jesus stills the storm
and soothes the frantic heart;
bring hope and courage to all
who wait or work in uncertainty.
Bring hope that you will make them the equal
of whatever lies ahead.
Bring them courage to endure what cannot be avoided,
for your will is health and wholeness;
you are God, and we need you.

Adapted from A New Zealand Prayer Book, p. 765

A Collect in Times of Pandemic

Grant we beseech thee, merciful Lord, help and deliverance unto us, who are visited with grievous sickness and mortality. Sanctify to us this our sore distress, and prosper with thy continual blessing those who labor to devise for mankind protection against disease and pain; through him who both healed and hallowed pain, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Proposed Prayer Book 1928 (Church of England)

For the Victims of Addiction

O blessed Lord, you ministered to all who came to you: Look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Restore to them the assurance of your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery; and to those who care for them, give patient understanding and persevering love. Amen.

A Prayer Attributed to St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, union;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

The General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up our selves to your service,
and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one
accord to make our common supplication to you; and you
have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two
or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the
midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions
as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of
your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.