

April 25, 2021
Fourth Sunday of Easter

GATHERING

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

WELCOME

PRELUDE: *Nun Freut Euch (Ernst Pepping)*

MEDITATION

Amos 5:21-24
Eugene Petersen

I can't stand your religious meetings.
I'm fed up with your conferences and conventions.
I want nothing to do with your religion projects,
your pretentious slogans and goals.
I'm sick of your fund-raising schemes,
your public relations and image making.
I've had all I can take of your noisy ego-music.
When was the last time you sang to me?

Do you know what I want?

I want justice—oceans of it.
I want fairness—rivers of it.

That's what I want. That's all I want.

GATHERING SONG: *Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!* (ELW 377)



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Je - sus is ris - en!
4 Weep-ing, be gone; sor - row, be si - lent:
5 Cit - y of God, Eas - ter for - ev - er,



Trum - pets re - sound-ing in glo - ri - ous light!
death put a - sun - der, and Eas - ter is bright.
gold - en Je - ru - sa - lem, Je - sus the Lamb,



Splen-dor, the Lamb, heav - en for - ev - er!
Cher - u - bim sing: O grave, be o - pen!
riv - er of life, saints and arch - an - gels,



Oh, what a mir - a - cle God has in sight!
Clothe us in won - der, a - dorn us in light.
sing with cre - a - tion to God the I AM!



Je - sus is ris - en and we shall a - rise.



Give God the glo - ry! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926
Music: David N. Johnson, 1922-1987
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Music © 1969 *Contemporary Worship 1*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

GREETING/ PRAYER OF THE DAY - *Holly Batstone*

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

And also with you.

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us
into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be
whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE: *Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!* (ELW 389)



1 Hal-le - lu - jah! Je - sus lives! He is now the Liv - ing One;
2 Je - sus lives! Why do you weep? Why that sad and mourn - ful sigh?
3 Je - sus lives! And thus, my soul, life e - ter - nal waits for you;



from the gloom-y halls of death Christ, the con - quer - or, has gone,
Christ who died our broth - er here lives our broth - er still on high,
joined to Christ, your liv - ing head, where he is, you shall be too;



bright fore - run - ner to the skies of his peo - ple, yet to rise.
lives for - ev - er to be - stow bless - ings on his church be - low.
with the Lord, at God's right hand, as a vic - tor you shall stand.

Text: Carl B. Garve, 1763–1841; tr. Jane L. Borthwick, 1813–1897, alt.
Music: FRED TIL BOD, Ludvig M. Lindeman, 1812–1887

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

THE WORD: Acts 8:26-44 - *Jeff Kosman*

²⁶Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰So Philip ran up

to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.

³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Word of God,
word of life.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD: *O Blessed Spring (Cherwien/Farlee)*

Michelle Richards, Soloist

CHILDREN'S SERMON: *Roger Steinke*

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *In Christ There Is No East or West* (ELW 650)



- 1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
- 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev-'ry-where their high com-mu-nion find;
- 3 Join hands, dis-ci-ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
- 4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com-mu-ni-ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser-vice is the gold-en cord close bind-ing hu-man-kind.
All chil-dren of the liv-ing God are sure-ly kin to me.
all Christ-ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852–1941, alt.

Music: MCKEE, African American spiritual; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1866–1949

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH -*Clint Bastin*

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God. We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION - *Beth and Mark Bowers*

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Loving Shepherd, you know your own and your own know you. Your voice calls us to your loving embrace. Strengthen your church throughout the world that we bear witness to your expansive love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious Shepherd, you are generous with the gifts of goodness and mercy. Restore your creation to wholeness so that cities and towns, countryside and wilderness, may abound with life. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Hope-giving Shepherd, the nations and peoples are your heritage. Place into the hearts of all leaders and rulers the passion to serve. Crucify any desire to overpower others and give leaders joy in lifting up the lowly. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Abiding Shepherd, your love flows as we reach out to those around us. Move us with your Spirit, so that we lay down our lives for those in need. Help us love one another in truth and action. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Saving Shepherd, you restore us to wholeness. Help our community in our life together and give us vigor as a people of faith. In the midst of challenges and opportunities, fill us anew with you Holy Spirit. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Eternal Shepherd, you hold us securely in your loving hands. In the assurance of resurrection hope, we remember our loved ones who have died in you. Bring us, with them, to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism. We thank you, risen Christ, for these waters where you make us new, leading us from death to life, from tears to joy. We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth, like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls, like cups of cool water shared with strangers. Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear. Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness. Send us companions on our journey as we share your life. Make us one, risen Christ. Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life. To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY: *Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table*



1 Look who gath - ers at Christ's ta - ble! Hear the sto - ries
2 Clouds of light sur - round the ta - ble; an - cient fol - low -
3 Their sad sto - ries are re - peat - ed in a thou - sand
4 Bring your joy and bring your sad - ness, and pre - pare to



that they bring. Some are weep - ing; some are laugh - ing;
ers ap - pear, saints con - fess - ing how they wres - tled
dif - f'rent ways, but they share one thing in com - mon:
be sur - prised by the host whose hands are wound - ed,



some have songs they want to sing. Oth - ers ask why they're in -
with their guilt, their doubt and fear. Pe - ter tells of his de -
they all end in thanks and praise for the host who has in -
who will o - pen wide your eyes when he bless - es bread and



vit - ed, bur - dened by the wrong they've done. Christ in - sists they
ny - ing Christ was ev - er in his sight; Paul re - lates his
vit - ed north and south and east and west to con - verge a -
breaks it— truth and man - na from a - bove!— and then pass - es



all are wel - come. There is room for ev - 'ry - one.
fruit - less ef - forts to ob - lit - er - ate the light.
round this ta - ble, where all life is fed and blest.
wine that wa - kens in your heart the taste of love.

Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: COPELAND, Michael Corzine, b. 1947

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OFFERING PRAYER

God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth. We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.

Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

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

BLESSING

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: *We Know That Christ Is Raised* (ELW 449)



1 We know that Christ is raised and dies no more.
2 We share by wa - ter in his sav - ing death.
3 The Fa - ther's splen - dor clothes the Son with life.
4 A new cre - a - tion comes to life and grows



Em-braced by death, he broke its fear - ful hold,
Re-born, we share with him an Eas - ter life,
The Spir - it's fis - sion shakes the church of God.
as Christ's new bod - y takes on flesh and blood.



and our de - spair he turned to blaz - ing joy.
as liv - ing mem - bers of our Sav - ior Christ.
Bap - tized, we live with God the Three in One.
The u - ni - verse re - stored and whole will sing:



Hal - le - lu - jah!

Text: John B. Geyer, b. 1932
Music: ENGELBERG, Charles V. Stanford, 1852-1924
Text © John B. Geyer.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE: *Christ Is Arisen* (J.S. Bach)

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