



SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Bethel & Hemnes Lutheran Churches
May 17, 2020

Jesus does not leave His followers orphaned. 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 Word of God the Spirit will transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.

✠GATHERING✠

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the minister begins.

P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the ✠Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

P. Rejoicing in the resurrection, let us seek God's forgiveness, that dying to sin, we may walk in newness of life.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P. Loving God,

C. we fear, we doubt, we do not trust You; we do not love our neighbors as ourselves; we have failed to recognize You in the poor and needy; we sin against You in thought, word, and deed. We pray for Your mercy, forgiveness, and grace. We hope in the gift of Your Spirit and we rejoice in the resurrection promise of Jesus Christ, our living Savior. Amen.

P. God, Who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin and made us alive with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins. May you be strengthened daily with the power to walk in God's light and love.

C. Amen.

GREETING

P. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C. Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P. The grace of our risen Savior, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE *This is the Feast of Victory for Our God*

P. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia

C. Worthy is Christ, the Lamb Who was slain, Whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are His. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God and join in the hymn of all creation.

Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God,
for the Lamb Who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia. Alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. O God, from Whom all things come: Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to think those things which are right, and by Your goodness help us to do them; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our 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.

Then Paul 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.”

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 66:7–18

Bless our God, you peoples;
make the voice of His praise to be heard,

⁸Who holds our souls in life,
and will not allow our feet to slip.

⁹For You, O God, have proved us;
You have tried us just as silver is tried.

¹⁰You brought us into the snare;
You laid heavy burdens upon our backs.

¹¹You let enemies ride over our heads; we went through fire and water,
but You brought us out into a place of refreshment.

¹²I will enter Your house with burnt-offerings and will pay You my vows,
which I promised with my lips and spoke with my mouth when I was in trouble. ¹³I will
offer You sacrifices of fat beasts with the smoke of rams;
I will give You oxen and goats.

¹⁴Come and listen, all you who fear God,
and I will tell you what He has done for me.

¹⁵I called out to Him with my mouth,
and His praise was on my tongue.

¹⁶If I had found evil in my heart,
the Lord would not have heard me;

¹⁷but in truth God has heard me;
He has attended to the voice of my prayer.

¹⁸Blessed be God, Who has not rejected my prayer,
nor withheld His love from me.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:13–22

Christians have a zeal for doing what is right in God's eyes no matter what the circumstances because in baptism we are saved and made alive. Thus our Christian beliefs and behavior are to be a matter of public record just as our baptism is.

Now who 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.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Hallelujah! Jesus lives! He is now the Living One;
From the gloomy halls of death Christ, the Conqueror, has gone,
Bright forerunner to the skies of His people, yet to rise.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 14:15–21

John's gospel is concerned for the faith of disciples who no longer have Jesus with them physically. Jesus promises that they will receive the Spirit and that He will continue to reveal Himself to those who love Him.

C. (spoken) Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “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.

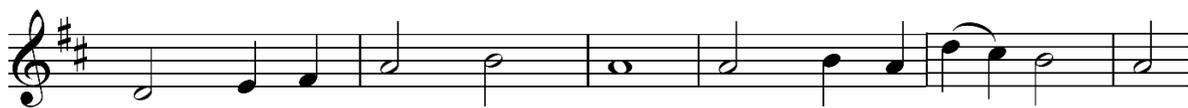
¹⁸“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹They who have My commandments and keep them are those 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. (*spoken*) Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Come Down, O Love Divine*



1 Come down, O love di - vine, seek out this soul_ of mine
 2 O let it free - ly burn, till earth - ly pas - sions turn
 3 And so the year - ning strong with which the soul_ will long



and vi - sit it with your own ar - dor_ glo - wing: O Com - for - ter, draw
 to dust and ash - es in its heat con - _su - ming: and let your glo - rious
 shall far sur - pass the power of hu - man tel - ling: for none can guess God's



near, with - in my heart ap - pear, and kin - dle it, your
 light shine e - ver on my sight, and clothe me round, the
 grace till love cre - ates a place, where - in the Ho - ly



ho - ly flame bes - to - wing.
 while my path il - lu - ming.
 Spi - rit makes a_____ dwel - ling.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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

✠ THE BLESSING OF THE ROGATION ELEMENTS ✠

- P. The words of the LORD are like rain on the earth,
C. **where muddy furrows sprout and grow.**
P. Even our land is filled with God's glory,
C. **the soil is alive with creative power.**
P. To be sure, the LORD will yield all that is good
C. **and our land will yield a harvest.**
P. God has spoken the future - Righteousness goes before the LORD
C. **and makes a road to our hearts, sustaining us with peace.**
P. For thousands of years, believers have gathered to seek the blessing of God at the time of spring planting so that the earth might sustain their lives and grow their families. Today we participate in this ancient ritual with new perspectives and experiences while still acknowledging our dependence on the gifts of the Creator for our survival. In addition to the three traditional elements of seed, soil, and water, we add human industry, also a gift from God, whose importance to agriculture is more connected than ever.

Prayer for the Soil

- P. Creating God, out of the ground You formed living things. We give You thanks for the creative power that covers the earth and for the new life it births each spring. We thank You for the feel of mud between our toes, for the smell of black earth, and for the intricate cycles of life that never cease beneath the surface. Bless this soil and all soil that is planted or grazed. Empower us to be wise stewards of its use and protectors of its fertility. In the name of the one who gives us new life, Jesus Christ our Lord. C. Amen.

Prayer for the Seed

- P. Author of Life, in Your wisdom, You speak creation into being through every seed, every flower, every spore. Nourish and protect these seeds and all seeds so that the mystery of resurrection might once again sprout and grow to yield a harvest of abundance for all people. Teach us again the profound mystery of planting in faith, caring with love, for the hope of harvest. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. C. Amen.

Prayer for the Water

- P. We give You thanks, O God, for in the beginning Your Spirit moved over the waters and in the waters of baptism, You wash away our sin and call us to new life. We praise You for the rain that refreshes the earth, for the sweet satisfaction of cold water on a hot summer day, and for the moisture that sustains both plants and animals. We pray, Lord, that the rains would come when they are needed so that crops will thrive and the harvest will be abundant. In the name of Christ our Lord. C. Amen

Prayer for Human Industry

P. Loving God, in Your image You created humanity, male and female You created them. You have gifted us with minds that are capable of dreaming, building, exploring, and discovering. We have designed machines that ease our burdens and increase our abilities. We have uncovered some of the mysteries of life. Bless us and guide us, O Lord, so that we may wisely use the gifts of science and reason in the service of all creation and not just for selfish ends. We dedicate all agricultural equipment and technology, along with those who create it, to Your purpose and ask that You grant protection and safety to those who use it. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **C. Amen**

✠ PRAYER ✠

OFFERING

If you have not signed up for electronic giving, you can mail your offering in to Bethel (P.O. Box 126, Porter, 56280), you may drop it in the offering box at the church, or you may make your offering online at our website (www.bethelofporter.com).

OFFERTORY *He Is Arisen, Glorious Word*

He is arisen! Glorious Word! Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
the gates of heav'n are open. My Jesus rose triumphantly,
and Satan's arrows broken lie, destroyed hell's fiercest weapon.
Oh, hear, what cheer! Christ victorious, rising glorious,
life is giving. He was dead, but now is living!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P. Blessed are You, O God, ruler of heaven and earth.

C. Day by day You shower us with blessings. As You raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise You and to respond to those in need through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Still worshiping from our homes, but with our hearts bonded into one and uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and all places praying for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Abiding God, come into all the homes around the globe from which Your people offer their prayers. Bless Christian leaders as they guide the church through this pandemic. Show our pastors and our church councils the way forward. Make us agents of peace in the world so the promises of Christ may be fulfilled. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Creating God, revitalize the health of oceans, rivers, lakes, springs, glaciers, and other bodies of water that give life to Your creatures. Form us unto a baptized body that protects the waters on which we rely. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Righteous God, instill in all the leaders of nations a desire for justice and the will to serve the oppressed. We pray especially for those nations in which dictatorship threatens the population.

Guide our nation's governors in their difficult pathway between the threat of disease and the dangers of job and income loss and isolation. Bring our legislators into agreement about how to assist those in need. Give us patience in facing our current predicament. Lord in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

Compassionate God, visit all who are in great need, those who suffer from the coronavirus, those living in loneliness and fear, those without jobs, and those who mourn their dead. Uphold those whose futures have been taken away from them. We pray for health care workers and for the residents in care homes, prisons, and refugee camps and for the countless persons who carry heavy burdens on their back. We pray also for Merv, Emily, Dick, Angie, Shirley, Lynette, and Bruce. Lord in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

Benevolent God, give the world a vaccine. Lord in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

Lord God, You are our Heavenly Parent, and we pray that You would embrace all orphans. Support the agencies that attend to the world's orphans. Shield orphaned children from traffickers. Give to all nations wisdom concerning the refugees who are children. Watch over all children whose usual care-givers are absent. Form us into Your children who love all whom You have made. Lord in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

We give you thanks, O God, for the lives and contributions of all those who are graduating. Comfort those who are saddened by the changes to cherished rituals this year. Open up the future to all graduates and empower them to go forward, shining the light of Your love before them in all that they do. We pray especially for Dylan, Ethan and Caullin. Lord in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

Eternal God, Your kingdom is here now, and it has no end. We remember the saints who have gone before us, especially those who have died of Covid-19, and those who remember in our hearts. Unite us forever in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Lord in Your mercy,
C. hear our prayer.

Almighty God, You give us the joy of celebrating our Lord's resurrection. With bold confidence in Your love we place all for whom we pray into Your eternal care. Give us the joys of life in Your service, and bring us at last to the fullness of joy in Your presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C. Amen.

THE 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.

✠ SENDING ✠

BLESSING

P. The God of all grace, Who has called you to eternal glory in Christ, restore, support, strengthen, and ✠ bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus*

1 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus; his the scep - ter,
his the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! his the tri - umph, his the
vic - to - ry a - lone. Hark! The songs of peace - ful
Zi - on thun - der like a might - y flood: "Je - sus
out of ev - 'ry na - tion has re - deemed 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! Here 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.

DISMISSAL

P. Christ is Risen!

C. He is Risen indeed!

P. Go in peace. Share the good news.

C. Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia

Those who Serve:

Ministers: All the People of God

Presider: Pastor Ellen Munter

Organist: Terry Dybsetter

Reader: Tracy Wentz

Cover image: Reflection in water of the Holy Spirit dove (Sue Ann Jackson)

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Bethel email: bethellutheran@frontier.com

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Offering: During this period of suspended in-person worship services, Bethel and Hemnes continue to have recurring expenses. Please remember to give financially to support the ministry of our congregations. For Bethel, you may mail your offering to the church office or give online at <http://bit.ly/givebethel>

May 10, 2020

General: \$2,994.72 (\$349.50 received through E-Giving)

Savings: \$50.00 in memory of Beatrice Heise for Organ.

Monday May 18th is the regularly scheduled Church Council and Boards meeting. Watch for an upcoming announcement regarding this meeting.



Merv Anderson
Shirlee Gabbert

Emily Morton,
Lynette Christie

Angie Denelsbeck Anderson
Bruce Jeremiason

Our graduates: Dylan Bruns, Ethan Evjen
& Caullin Frank.

Acknowledgements

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“Alleluia! Sing to Jesus” Text and Music in the common domain.

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Prayers of Intercession by Gail Ramshaw and *Sundays and Seasons*, lightly edited by Pastor Munter.

Bethel would like to congratulate the following young men as they graduate from Canby High School.

**Dylan Bruns
Ethan Evjen
Caullin Frank.**



☐ God has more in store for you than you can even imagine. Ephesians 3:20



Rogationtide

The word “rogation” come from the Latin *rogare*, which means “to ask,” and the Rogation Days are four days set apart to bless the fields, and ask for God’s mercy on all of creation. April 25 (coincidentally the Feast of St. Mark) is called the Major Rogation; the three days preceding Ascension Thursday are called the Minor Rogations. On these days, the congregation used to march the boundaries of the parish, blessing every tree and stone, while chanting or reciting a Litany of Mercy, usually a Litany of the Saints. A few still do.

The Rogation Days were first instituted in the 5th Century by Mamertus, bishop of Vienne in France from 461 to 475. His time as bishop was marked by near-continuous disaster. In the space of a single year – around AD 470 – a fire destroyed the king’s palace, a pestilence killed the cattle, the populace was terrorized by attacks of hungry wolves, and there were earthquakes.

In response, Mamertus led his flock in three days of prayer and procession leading up to the feast of the Ascension. He is reported to have said. “We shall pray to God that He will turn away the plagues from us, and preserve us from all ill, from hail and drought, fire and pestilence, and from the fury of our enemies; to give us favorable seasons, that our land may be fertile, good weather and good health, and that we may have peace and tranquility, and obtain pardon for our sins.” The disasters ended. Other bishops in the region quickly adopted the same practice. In AD 511, the Fifth Council of Orleans made the three days of prayer mandatory in France. In the 9th Century, Pope Leo III extended the practice to the entire church. Over the centuries, it became the custom to also use the procession to “beat the bounds” – to mark and establish the boundaries of the parish – while also blessing the trees, stones and fields. Rogationtide is a time to be reminded of the obligations to be good stewards of God’s creation.

- Carl Fortunato

www.liturgies.net/Rogation/RogationArticle.htm

Prayers for Rogationtide

Monday – For Fruitful Seasons

Almighty God, Lord of heaven and earth. We pray that You may give and preserve to our use the harvests of the land and of the seas, and may prosper all who labor to gather them, that we, who constantly receive good things from Your hand may always give You thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Tuesday – For Commerce and Industry

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ in his earthly life shared our work and hallowed our labor. Be present with your people where they work; make those who carry on the industries and commerce of this land responsive to Your will; and give to us all a pride in what we do, and a just return for our labor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wednesday – For Stewardship of Creation

O merciful Creator, Your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature. Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of Your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer, 1977