

*Love
one another*

JOHN 13:34



Sunday, May 15, 2022 Fifth Sunday of Easter

Easter initiates a new day. It anticipates a new heaven and a new earth. The risen Christ is making all things new. In the mystery of holy baptism God has made new people of us. Today Jesus invites us to see everyone in a new light—through the lens of love.

GATHERING

RESURRECTION PROCLAMATION

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

(Please stand as you are able)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

Amen.

Let us confess into the light, the revealing and healing light of God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of grace and glory,

You have brought us through the night of sin into the light of Jesus' resurrection. Yet our lives are still shadowed by sin. Make us alive in Christ, O God. Make us new as you make all things new. Rescue us from evil and the gloom of sin, renew us in grace, and restore us to living in your holiness, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.

Rejoice with all creation around God's throne! The light of the risen Christ puts to flight all evil deeds, washes away sin, restores innocence to the fallen, casts out hate, brings peace, and humbles earthly pride. Jesus Christ loves you and + frees you from your sins by his blood. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever!
Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God,
you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

WORD

Reading: Acts 11:1-18

In defense of his earlier baptism of non-Jewish believers, Peter demonstrates to the members of the Jerusalem church that God's intention to love Gentiles as well as Jews is revealed in Jesus' testimony. In this way the mission to the Gentiles is officially authorized.

¹Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ²So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" ⁴Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵"I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' ⁹But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' ¹⁰This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹²The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' ¹⁵And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" ¹⁸When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: John 13:31-35

After washing the disciples' feet, predicting his betrayal, and then revealing his betrayer, Jesus speaks of his glorification on the cross. This deep complicated love of Jesus, even to death on the cross, will be the distinctive mark of Jesus' community.

³¹When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

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

(Please be seated)

GOSPEL MESSAGE

We Are Found

As Jesus in today's gospel prepares the disciples for his imminent departure, he tells them that they will look for him but won't be able to join him where he is going. It will not be long before the women are at the tomb in the early morning, only to find it empty.

We also look for Jesus, but perhaps we don't know that we are engaged in the search. We are constantly seeking purpose and answers, turning to self-help books, inspirational videos, exercise programs, and new ways of organizing our stuff. Billboards and magazine covers highlight our flaws while offering the next best solution to make us happy and well.

These opportunities can be compelling, and some of them will prove successful in managing some aspects of life. But these solutions don't turn up what we're really looking for: to be truly loved and known, secure and whole. We find this security only in the love of God. Yet, in this Easter season we are reminded that we do not need to seek Jesus; rather, Jesus seeks out and finds us. We cannot go where Jesus goes, leading the way through death to new life, but Jesus ultimately finds us wherever we are, even when we are most lost. The women found an empty tomb, but Jesus is not gone. The resurrected Jesus finds them!

In finding us, Jesus also directs our searching by giving us a commandment: "Love one another" (John 13:34). In seeking to love one another, we are reminded again and again that the great love of God has already found us.

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM: *Rite of Confirmation*

**Thanh Hien Hannah Hoang
Baptized: November 28, 2008**

This rite is intended for use with young adults who desire to affirm their baptism in the presence of the assembly to mark a significant milestone in their lifelong journey of nurture and formation in faith.

Those who are affirming baptism may gather at the font.

PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Dear friends, we give thanks to God for the gift of baptism and for Hannah, one with us in the body of Christ, who affirms her baptism this day as a sign of her participation in the life of this community of faith and its mission in the world.

Those affirming baptism are presented by representative of the congregation:

CongRep: I present Thanh Hien Hannah Hoang who desires to affirm her baptism.

CongRep: Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you for Hannah whom you have made your own by water and the word in baptism. You have called her to yourself, enlightened her with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished her in the community of faith. Uphold your servant as she affirms the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth through this holy sacrament. We ask this in the name of Christ.

Amen.

PROFESSION

Affirmation of baptism includes a public profession of faith, as the baptized echo the words of renunciation of evil and confession of faith that were first spoken at their baptism. Through questions and responses that further unfold the meaning of baptism, those affirming baptism commit themselves to continuing in the covenant of baptism with the help of God.

As you affirm your baptism, I ask you to reject sin, profess your faith in Christ, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Hannah: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Hannah: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Hannah: I renounce them.

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, Gods 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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism: to live among Gods faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

Hannah: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

People of God, do you promise to support Hannah and pray for her in her life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

BLESSING

The parents and sponsors of those affirming their baptism may join them at the font. Those affirming baptism may kneel. The presiding minister continues:

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, wash us from sin, and raise us to eternal life.

The presiding minister prays for the blessing of God upon those who are affirming their baptism, echoing the prayer for the Holy Spirit at baptism and asking for a strengthening of the spiritual gifts bestowed in baptism. The Pastor may lay hands upon the head of individual affirmers to accompany the blessing, and others who surround them may add a blessing.

Stir up in Hannah the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.
Amen.

CongRep: May this continue to be a place where you “WORSHIP together, BELONG to a loving community, GROW in faith, SERVE joyfully and SHARE the Good News!” today and throughout the years.

ACCLAMATION

CongRep: Let us give thanks for Hannah, who is affirming her baptism, as we carry out the life of this Christian community and its mission in the world.

As your sisters and brothers in the body of Christ, we rejoice with you as you affirm your baptism at your Confirmation. Together let us give praise to God and bear Gods creative and redeeming word to all the world.

BAPTISMAL REMEMBRANCE

When we were joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we were clothed with Gods mercy and forgiveness. Together let us remember our baptism.

Blessed are you, O God of grace.

From age to age you made water a sign of your presence among us. In the beginning your Spirit brooded over the waters and you created the world by your word, calling forth life in which you took delight. You led Israel safely through the Red Sea into the land of promise, and in the waters of the Jordan, you proclaimed Jesus your beloved one. By water and the Spirit you adopted us as your daughters and sons, making us heirs of the promise and servants of God. Through this water remind us of our baptism. Shower us with your Spirit, that your forgiveness, grace, and love may be renewed in our lives.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed on us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life + through the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The liturgy continues with the intercessory prayers.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Loving God, lead us to follow your Spirit, rather than our own prejudices or desires, as the church cares for one another. Open us to perceive your gifts in those we least expect. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Inspire us to praise you through the beauty and majesty of the natural world around. Urge us toward more deliberate care of the world you have made. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Humble the rulers of nations before your splendor. Direct them to the people who need their attention most, and turn them from the temptation to hoard wealth or power. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Hasten to dwell among those who are in pain or distress. As Christ enters our deepest suffering, remain with those experiencing despair and great need. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Place holy love at the center of all our relationships and communities. By your love heal us, convict us, and renew us. Bring an end to racism in our churches and communities. Let everyone know your goodness by the love we show one another. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Accept our thanksgiving for the people you surround us with, especially for those who celebrate their lives and birth this week:

Joyce Whittlesy

Kari Peleaux

enrich them with a sense of joy and grace for yet another year. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Save us from ourselves, from racism in all its hidden forms, from hollow words without actions, forgive us, renew us, call us to action God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those fighting cancer and other serious illnesses, grant strength and grace. We pray for doctors, nurses, technicians, researchers and all who work toward treatments and cures. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For police officers and firefighters, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For all those who are dealing with the COVID-19 coronavirus around the world: those who are infected, those caring for them, those trying to mitigate and manage the epidemic. Thankful for the vaccine, we ask your help in its distribution and continued production throughout the world. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the people of Ukraine, grant protection as you lead them from war to peace. Guide leaders with your wisdom and turn their minds and hearts to what is possible, renewed peace in the future. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Give us a place in the diverse company of your beloved saints. Teach us the value of each person's identity, and bless us with a shared identity as your children, kindred of Christ. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Share the peace ...

OFFERING

Thank you for your support of our ministry.

BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

may the Lord smile upon you and be gracious to you,

may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. + Amen.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE DAY

Psalm 148
Revelations 21:1-6

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOR

May 22, 2022

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Psalm 67

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy. (Ps.67:4)

Acts 16:9-15

Lydia and her household are baptized by Paul

Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

The Lamb is the light of the city of God

John 14:23-29

The Father will send the Holy Spirit

John 5:1-9 (alternate)

Jesus heals on the Sabbath

Upcoming Commemorations

Erik, King of Sweden, martyr, died 1160

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

Erik is considered the patron saint of Sweden. As king of that nation, he tried to bring peace in the region, and to spread Christianity in Scandinavia. He was also known for his attempts to make fair laws and to protect those who were poor or sick.

Helena, mother of Constantine, died around 330

Saturday, May 21, 2022

Influenced by her son to become Christian, Helena (or Helen) lived an exemplary life of faith. She is also remembered for traveling through Palestine building churches on the sites she believed to be associated with Christ's life.

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