

Liturgy

The Fifth Sunday of Easter
Year B

GATHERING

Alleluia! Christ is risen! The grave is empty!
Alleluia! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

O LORD, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

**Before the mountains were brought forth,
or You had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting You are God.**

You who seek the LORD, praise Him.

All you, His people, glorify Him and stand in awe.

**In the midst of the assembly we will praise You;
we will fulfill our vows before those who fear You.**

How blessed are those who dwell in Your house!

They are ever praising You.

**How blessed are those whose strength is in You,
in whose hearts are the highways to Zion!**

How blessed are those whom You choose and bring near to You,
to dwell in Your courts.

**We will abide in Your tabernacle forever;
trusting in the shelter of Your wings.**

For You, O God, have heard our vows;

You have given us the heritage of those who fear Your name.

— Scripture weaving from Psalms 90, 22, 84, 65, 61

Behold the Lord

Great and marvelous are Your works,
Oh Lord Almighty.
True and righteous are all Your ways,
King of the ages.
Who will not fear You, oh Lord,
And glorify Your Name?

Chorus

Behold the Lord; God is my salvation;
In Him I trust, and will not be afraid.
And I will give thanks,
And sing among the nations forever;
Behold the Lord, behold the Lord,
Behold the Lord.

So rejoice and be glad in this:
Our God is with us:
Messiah, Emmanuel,
Lion of Judah!
Lift up your voice and declare
The glory of our King.

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Lynn DeShazo Music. Paul Wilbur, Lynn DeShazo, Gary Sadler.

*LECTIONARY for the fifth Sunday of
Easter, Year B*

Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8

This fifth Sunday of Eastertide brings us to the midpoint of the fifty-day liturgical period that begins with Resurrection Sunday and culminates on the Day of Pentecost. This day in the Christian year is traditionally focused on the church's ministry—both the ministry of the Church externally, to the world, and our ministry within the Church, one to another.

In this season of Eastertide, as we continue to consider and ponder the significance of Christ's Resurrection for all of creation, this week our attention is drawn to the necessity of abiding in Him: What does it mean that we truly abide in Christ, and how does that abiding compel us to live out His love in the world? In the reading from John's gospel we find Jesus' pictorial teaching—at once both comforting and challenging—that He is the vine, and we the branches. Abiding in Him means that we will be pruned by the Father's wise and loving hand, and thereby will bear much fruit in our lives. He assures us that the pruning and fruit-bearing process is essential for those who are His disciplined followers (disciples), and that this brings glory to the Father. The passage from John's first epistle admonishes us that fruitful disciples are those who love others unconditionally, because "as He is, so are we in this world." And the Acts 8 narrative shows us an example of this abiding discipleship, fruitfulness, and love in the encounter of Philip with the Ethiopian court official on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza.

INVOCATION

Prayers of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for God's presence

Easter Doxology

Sing we to our God above,
Alleluia!
Praise eternal as His love,
Alleluia!
Praise Him, all you heavenly host,
Alleluia!
Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Text: Latin hymn, 14th century; transl. in *Lyra Davidica*, 1708,
Hymn tune: Robert Williams. Third verse of the hymn, *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*.
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PROFESSION OF FAITH

Leader: Beloved, let us love one another,
for love is from God;
and everyone who loves is born of God
and knows God.

**Whoever does not love does not know God,
for God is love.**

God's love was revealed among us in this way:
God sent His only begotten Son into the world
so that we might live through Him.
*In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us
and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

Leader: Beloved, since God loved us so much,
we also ought to love one another.

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another,
God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.
*By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us,
because He has given us of His Spirit.*

**And we have seen and do testify that the Father
has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.**

Leader: God abides in those
who confess that Jesus is the Son of God,
and they abide in God.

We have come to know and believe
the love that God has for us.
*God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God,
and God abides in them.*

Love has been perfected among us in this:
that we may have confidence on the day of judgment;
because as He is, so are we in this world.
*There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.
For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears
has not reached perfection in love.*

We love, because He first loved us.

*The profession of faith sets today's
epistle reading for a lead reader and
two groups within the congregation.
(Here it is especially effective to di-
vide the congregation antiphonally.)*

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

O LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle?

Who may dwell on Your holy hill?

**Those who walk with integrity, and work righteousness;
who speak truth in their hearts,
and honor those who fear the LORD.**

They shall receive a blessing from the LORD
and righteousness from the God of their salvation.

– from Psalms 15 and 24

Most merciful God, You have loved us with a love beyond our understanding,
and You have set us on paths of righteousness for Your name's sake.

Yet too often we have strayed from your way.

**We confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

[Silence]

**We have not loved You with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

[Silent confessions]

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in Your will,
and walk in Your ways,
to the glory of Your Name. Amen.**

Father Hear Our Prayer

Father, hear our prayer
That our lives may be
Consecrated only unto You.
Cleanse us with Your fire,
Fill us with Your pow'r,
That the world may glorify Your name.

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.

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ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Jesus said,

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away;
and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it
so that it may bear more fruit.

“*Abide in Me, as I abide in you.*

*As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine,
neither can you unless you abide in Me.*

“I am the vine; you are the branches.

If you abide in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit;
for apart from Me, you can do nothing.

“*My Father is glorified by this: that you bear much fruit,
and so prove to be My disciples.*”

– from John 15:1-8

The prayer of confession is adapted from Reformed Worship, a quarterly journal of resources for planning and leading worship. CRC Publications, June 1999. (Resources are declared to be in the public domain.) [URL: www.reformedworship.org/article/june-1999/true-confession-ideas-recovering-true-spirit-confession-worship]

The bold font, spoken corporately, is the simple, traditional prayer of confession and repentance from The Book of Common Prayer, Morning Prayer, rite two.

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and testimonies of blessing and praise

My Life Is An Offering

This life is an altar
Where I want to offer
My soul, and my mind and strength.
Cleansed by Your mercy
To live a life worthy
Of the One who called my name.

Chorus

Jesus, be glorified;
Jesus, be magnified.
Let me be a pleasing sacrifice.
Jesus, be glorified;
Jesus, be magnified.
Here at the altar,
My life is an offering.

How could I not love You?
You authored my rescue,
Raised me up from death to life.
Your Spirit is in me,
Revealing Your glory;
Oh, what joy as I give my life!

Bridge

I choose to lose my life, Lord, and find it in You.

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Joel Sczebel, Pat Sczebel.

THE WORD

Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again!

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heav'n.
Provide each day our daily needs;
Forgive our sins as we forgive others' wrongs;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, forever and ever;
And Thine is the power, forever and ever;
And Thine is the glory, now and forever,
Amen, amen, amen.

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Christ Be With Me (St. Patrick's Prayer)

Christ be with me,
Christ within me,
Christ behind me
And before me.
Christ beside me,
Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort
And restore.

Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ in heart
Of all who know me.
Christ in mouth
Of friend and stranger,
Christ in quiet
And in roar.

Chorus

Love, blessed Trinity
Of Three bound in unity
Who guide my journey.
I will arise with strength of heav'n,
Trusting in Your light
To guide my journey,
Shine before me, lead me home.

Pow'r to guide me,
Might to hold me,
Wisdom teach me,
Watching o'er me.
Ear to hear me,
Hand to guard me,
Love to conquer
Ev'ry fear.

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Emma Townend, Joseph Townend, Stuart Townend.

Music for The Lord's Prayer is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet and scored for voice and piano. It is also available in the music collection, Singing the Liturgy, Volume 1.

Link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/lords-prayer>

You can hear The Lord's Prayer in the Audio Media Studio.

Link:

https://clerestorynotes.com/live/content/music_library/lords-prayer-clip

SENDING FORTH
The Life of the Body

You Are the Vine

You are the vine,
We are the branches.
Keep us abiding in You.
You are the vine,
We are the branches.
Keep us abiding in You.

And we'll go in Your love;
And we'll go in Your name,
That the world will surely know
That You have power
To heal and to save.

You are the vine, we are the branches.
Keep us abiding in You.

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Benediction:

Almighty God,
whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world:
Grant that Your people, illumined by Your word and Table,
may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory.
Amen.

Now, beloved, we go forth into the world to love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in His promise that He abides in us and we abide in Him.
In faithfulness to His call to abide in His love, let us embrace the
privilege and charge He has given us: to love others as He has loved us.
And as we walk out our baptisms in the world, may He guide us closer
to Him and to one another, in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace,
confirming us in His ways, for His glory alone, forever.
Amen! Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

A thought about worship from the Ancient Fathers –

“Who can describe the blessed bond of the love of God? . . . Love unites us to God.
Love covers a multitude of sins. Love bears all things—is long-suffering in all things.
There is nothing cruel, nothing arrogant in love. Love allows no divisions; love gives
rise to no rebellions; love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God
been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Lord
taken us to Himself. On account of His love for us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His
blood for us by the will of God, His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls. You
see, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing love is and that it is impossible to ade-
quately declare its perfection. Who is fit to be found in it except those whom God has
graciously privileged? Let us pray, therefore, and implore of His mercy, that we may
live blameless in love, free from all human partialities for one above another.”

– *Clement of Rome*

Lectionary for next week: Acts 10:44-48
Psalm 98
1 John 5:1-6
John 15:9-17

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URL: <https://www.clerestorynotes.com>

This sung prayer of dismissal sends us into the world, to love and serve the Lord, with the image of John 15 resounding in our ears throughout the week to come.

As with last week, today's benediction is a variation of the collect for the second Sunday after the Epiphany from the Book of Common Prayer. This week, we add references to the readings from John's gospel and first epistle, and to Paul's admonition to unity in Ephesians 4:3.