



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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May 24 – Ascension Sunday

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship (based on Acts 1)

Why are we looking up to heaven?

Christ has come;

Christ has risen;

Christ will come again.

Why are we looking ahead to the future?

The Holy Spirit is among us now.

In our baptism, we have already died and risen with Christ.

Why are we afraid of death and dying?

God's love casts out our fear.

Why are we afraid to follow Jesus?

In Christ, we have the promise of new life now, eternal life to come.

*In Christ, we join our hearts to worship God,
who has prepared for us to enter the reign of God.*

Response

O Breath of Life (v. 1 & 3)

VU 202

Words: Elizabeth A.P. Head / Music: Mary Hammond

O Breath of life, come sweeping through us,
revive your church with life and power;

O Breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us
and fit your church to meet this hour.

O Breath of love, come breathe within us,
renewing thought and will and heart;
come, love of Christ, afresh to win us,
revive your church in every part.

Life & Work of the Church



Land Acknowledgement & Candle Lighting

Opening Hymn

Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise (v. 1, 2, 4)

VU 189

Words: Charles Wesley
Music: William Henry Monk.

- 1 Hail the day that sees him rise, hallelujah!
taken from our wondering eyes, hallelujah!
Christ, awhile to mortals given, hallelujah!
re-ascends his native heaven. Hallelujah!

- 2 There the glorious triumph waits; hallelujah!
lift your heads, eternal gates; hallelujah!
Christ has conquered death and sin; hallelujah!
take our God of Glory in. Hallelujah!

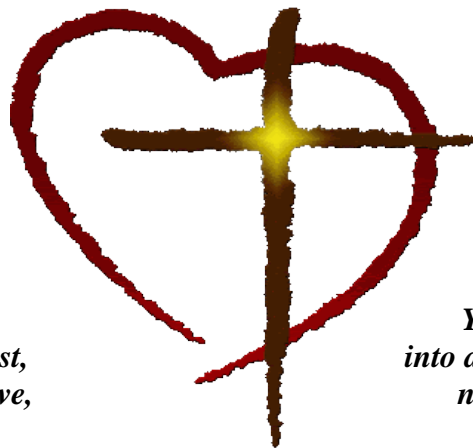
- 5 Still for us He intercedes, hallelujah!
His prevailing death he pleads, hallelujah!
Near himself prepares our place, hallelujah!
first-fruits of our human race. Hallelujah!

Opening Prayer**

*We love to think of you as a victorious conqueror, Jesus;
the one who claims power by force of strength,
and makes all others bow at his feet.*

*We love to feel that we're in your
on the winning side – powerful
and safe from what
because of your strong*

*But, then you speak about
together,
reconciliation,
sharing,
with yourself.
conversation, not a conquest,
into the power of love,*



*corner, Jesus;
by association
threatens us
presence.*

*gathering all things
of unity and
of love and
of filling all things
You invite us into a
into dialogue, not dominion,
not the love of power.*

*We praise you, Ascended One, for refusing to hoard your power and glory,
for refusing to remain aloof and removed from creation,
and for including the likes of us in your cosmic community. Amen*

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And Now for Something Completely Different



Hymn

God, We Praise You for the Morning (v. 1, 2, 4 & 5)

VU 415

Words: Jim Strathdee and Jean Strathdee

Music: Jim Strathdee ©1985 Desert Flower Music

- 1 God, we praise you for the morning;
hope springs forth with each new day,
new beginning, prayer, and promise,
joy in work and in play.
- 2 God, we praise you for creation,
mountains, seas, and prairie land.
Waking souls find joy and healing
in your bountiful hand.
- 4 God, we praise you for your Spirit,
Comforter and daily friend,
restless searcher, gentle teacher,
strength and courage you send.
- 5 God, we praise you for the Saviour,
come that we may know your ways.
In his loving, dying, rising,
Christ is God of our days.

Prayer of Illumination

Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.

May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.

Open our hearts as we embark on this journey with each other and with you. Amen

Gospel Reading

Luke 24: 44-53

New Revised Standard Version

⁴⁴ Then Jesus said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what Abba God promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³ and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

New Testament Reading

Acts 1: 1-11

New Revised Standard Version

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of Abba God. “This,” Jesus said, “is what you have heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Teacher, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that Abba God has set with authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, Jesus was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two figures in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, “People of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

The word of God for the People of God

*Thanks be to God**Sermon**The Energizer Bunny*

Hymn

Like a Mighty River Flowing (v. 1, 2, 4, 5)

VU 267

Words: Michael A. Perry © 1982, 1989 Hope Publishing Company.

Music: German carol, 14th century.

- 1 Like a mighty river flowing,
like a flower in beauty growing,
far beyond all human knowing
is the perfect peace of God.
- 2 Like the hills serene and even,
like the coursing clouds of heaven,
like the heart that's been forgiven
is the perfect peace of God.
- 4 Like the morning sun ascended,
like the scents of evening blended,
like a friendship never ended
is the perfect peace of God.
- 5 Like the azure ocean swelling,
like the jewel all-excelling,
far beyond our human telling
is the perfect peace of God

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering



Prayers of the People

*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,
the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.*



BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

It's a Song of Praise to the Maker (v. 1, 2, 4)

MV 30

Words: Ruth Duck © 1992 by GIA Publications, Inc.

Music: Ron Klusmeier © 1992 by Ron Klusmeier

- 1 It's a song of praise to the Maker,
the thrush sings high in the tree.
It's a song of praise to the Maker,
The gray whale sings in the sea,

And by the Spirit, you and I,
can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.

- 2 It's a call of life to the Giver
when waves and waterfalls roar.
It's a call of life to the Giver
when high tides break on the shore,

And by the Spirit, you and I,
can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.

- 4 It's the chorus of all creation;
it's sung by all living things.
It's the chorus of all creation;
a song the universe sings,

And by the Spirit, you and I,
can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

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Other Resources for Today

Opening Prayer - written by John van de Laar for Ascension Day, 2010, and posted on www.sacredise.com

Other Lectionary Readings for Today

Psalm 47 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

- ¹ Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with loud songs of joy.
- ² For God, the Most High, is awesome,
a great ruler over all the earth.
- ³ God subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet.
- ⁴ God chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom God loves. *Selah*
- ⁵ God has gone up with a shout,
with the sound of a trumpet.
- ⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our sovereign, sing praises.
- ⁷ For God is the ruler of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm.
- ⁸ God is sovereign over the nations;
God sits on the holy throne.
- ⁹ The royalty of the peoples gather
as the people of the God of Abraham.
- For the shields of the earth belong to God;
God is highly exalted.

Ephesians 1: 15-23 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁵ I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸ so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰ God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²² And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.