

**First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City
Sunday, May 24th, 2020
Seventh Sunday of Easter**



*"Ascension of Christ" -
Giacomo Cavedone 1640*

We Prepare Our Hearts and Minds: *"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me, and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me, and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one."* ~ John 17: 6-11 [NIV]

Ringing of the Church Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship: (responsive)

Shout for joy, sing songs of praise,

for God reigns over all the earth!

God has gone up with a shout!

Sound the trumpets and sing songs of praise! Amen.

Prelude

Hymn "Immortal, Invisible" #25

1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

2 Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

3 Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all praise we would render; O help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

Prayer of Confession (unison)

**Loving God,
we confess that we do not always bring honor and
glory to your name.
We are rebellious and weak;
we flee before your goodness.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us by the grace and
mercy of Christ,
that we may rise up again in peace to love and
serve your world. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon (responsive)

Sisters and brothers,
the Spirit of God is resting on you,
to restore, support, and strengthen you.
**Therefore, we are at peace in the One who forgives
and loves us; let us rise up and give God thanks. Thanks be to God.**

Gloria Patri (unison)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

Prayer for Illumination (unison)

**Spirit of Glory, Spirit of God,
bless us with a word of life this day
to restore, support, and strengthen us
as we seek to be one with you. Amen.**

Doxology (unison)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above
ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

1st Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 4: 12-14, 5: 6-11 [NIV]

12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

2nd Scripture Reading: Acts 1: 1-14 [NIV]

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Sermon: *"In the Meantime"*
Rev. Dan McKenty

Hymn "Let Us Break Bread Together" #323

1 Let us break bread together on our knees;
let us break bread together on our knees.

Refrain:

When I fall on my knees
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

2 Let us drink wine together on our knees;
let us drink wine together on our knees. [Refrain]

3 Let us praise God together on our knees;
let us praise God together on our knees. [Refrain]

Affirmation of Faith (unison)

**You are not only risen and alive, you are Lord.
This your ascension,
your ascendancy over the whole universe.
You stand over and above all that is best in life as its source.
You stand above all that is worst as the ultimate victor.
You stand above all powers and authorities as judge.
You stand above all failure and weakness and sin
as forgiveness and love.
You alone are worthy of total allegiance, total commitment.
You are Lord,
'My Lord and my God.'** Amen.

Sacrament of our Lord's Supper (responsive)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy
to give you thanks and praise,
eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe.

At your word the earth was made
and spun on its course among the planets.
Your hand formed us from the dust of the earth
and set us among all your creatures
to love and serve you.

When we were unfaithful to you
you kept faith with us,
your love remained steadfast.
When we were slaves in Egypt,
you broke the bonds of our oppression,
brought us through the sea to freedom,
and made covenant to be our God.
By a pillar of fire
you led us through the desert
to a land flowing with milk and honey,
and set before us the way of life.
You spoke of love and justice in the prophets,
and in the Word made flesh you lived among us,
manifesting your glory.
He died that we might live,
and is risen to raise us to new life.

Therefore, we praise you,
joining our voices with angels and archangels
and with all the faithful of every time and place,
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord,
whom you sent to save us.
He came with healing in his touch,
and was wounded for our sins.
He came with mercy in his voice,
and was mocked as one despised.
He came with peace in his heart,
and met with violence and death.
By your power he broke free from the prison of the tomb,
and at his command the gates of hell were opened.
The one who was dead now lives.
The one who humbled himself is raised to rule over all creation,
the Lamb upon the throne.

The one ascended on high is with us always, as he promised.
Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts,
we take this bread and this wine
from the gifts you have given us,
and celebrate with joy
the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ.
Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving
as a living and holy offering of ourselves,
that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Gracious God,
pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break
and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ
that we may be one with all who share this feast,
united in ministry in every place.
As this bread is Christ's body for us,
send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.
Nourished at this table, O God,
may we know Christ's redemptive love
and live a new life in him.
Help us who recognize our Lord in the breaking of bread
to see and serve him in all whose lives are broken.
Give us who are fed at his hand,
grace to share our bread with the hungry
and with the hungry of heart.
Keep us faithful in your service
until Christ comes in final victory,
and we shall feast with all your saints
in the joy of your eternal realm.

**Through Christ,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father,
with the Holy Spirit in the holy church,
now and forever. Amen.**

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer (responsive)

Redeeming God,
you call us to devote ourselves constantly to prayer
for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, let us offer our prayers this day
on behalf of your church and the world, saying,
fill us with your Spirit's power,

that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Rescuing God, parent of orphans and protector of widows,
you give the desolate a home to live in
and lead out the prisoners into prosperity.

Help us to order the patterns of our common life
to support the health of your human family
and the welfare of your world.

Fill us with your Spirit's power,

that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Steadfast God, you have given to your church
the inheritance of faith in Christ alone,
and bestowed your Spirit's love upon us to make us one in you.

Help us to grow in strength and courage
to witness to this hope:

that all may find your saving love eternally in Christ.

Fill us with your Spirit's power,

that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Life-giving God, you send rain in abundance
to relieve the parched crops and thirsty land,
and make clean the winds of heaven.

Help us to find sustainable solutions
as we seek to honor and care for the well-being of your creation.

Fill us with your Spirit's power,

that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Loving God, you heard the sufferings of your people, listened
to our cries,

and sent a Son into our world that was no stranger to our pain.

Help us to offer your healing and compassion
as we minister to others in the mercy of your Christ.

Fill us with your Spirit's power,

that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Resurrecting God, you draw near to those who are sick and dying, and you call them home to you. For those close to us who are sick or who are struggling, we pray for....

May we all know the joy of life in your kingdom and the joy of eternal shared with you.

All of these prayers and petitions we bind together in the strong name of the One who ascended to you to rule over your creation and who taught us to pray to you by saying.

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn "God Be with You" #602

1 God be with you till we meet again,
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you,
God be with you till we meet again.

2 God be with you till we meet again,
'Neath His wings protecting hide you,
Daily manna still divide you,
God be with you till we meet again.

Charge

Benediction

Postlude



ZOOM FELLOWSHIP AT 11:30AM SUNDAY

Where there's a will, there's a way. We've been testing using Zoom to come together online ... to see those faces and hear those voices we miss so much.

Zoom is an app that is easily downloaded onto your desktop computer, your laptop, your tablet, or your smartphone. Our Zoom Fellowship Session will start at 11:30 (after worship!) and we'll have it open for ~ 40 minutes.

If you don't have Zoom on your device yet, go ahead and download it. Use Code

784 5326 1737 with Password **FPCOC** to join Fellowship by 11:30.

It will be so good to see you.

www.zoom.us

Dearest members and friends of First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City,

As most of you know, Governor Hogan and the State of Maryland have cleared churches to reopen with certain restrictions. If you are like me, you can't wait to get together again and worship our Lord in our beautiful sanctuary! We are a caring and loving community of faith that enjoy each other and rely on each other. With the news of our ability to reopen, the Worship Committee has been diligent in considering the best and safest measures to adopt and has promulgated guidelines which the session has approved. In order to "gear up" with supplies and in order to make certain changes to the sanctuary, the session has authorized church services to begin **Sunday, June 7th**. The worship time will remain at 10:30 a.m. and Adult Bible Study will resume as well at 9:00 a.m. Below is a list of the safety guidelines to be practiced by church leaders, congregants and visitors alike:

- 1) Face masks will be worn inside the building and sanctuary. If you do not have a mask, there will be greeters at the back door and they will provide you with a mask.
- 2) Hand sanitizer will be available immediately inside the building and its use will be mandatory for all who enter.
- 3) The back door will be open and will remain open so as to reduce the need for surface contact.
- 4) Seating will be every other pew and, while couples and families may sit together, worshippers are to sit six feet apart. Ushers will be present to assist in seating.
- 5) Pews not to be used will be roped off or labeled.
- 6) Church bulletins will include scripture verses and hymn lyrics. At least for now, no singing will occur during the hymns, although we may hum, and Bibles and Hymnals are not to be used or touched.
- 7) For the present, there will be no choir.
- 8) Lord's Supper (communion) will not be celebrated until Phase Two of the state's reopening.
- 9) We will hold-off on having Fellowship after our worship service for the time-being.
- 10) The church and sanctuary will be cleaned regularly according to CDC guidelines.

It is anticipated and completely understandable that some may wish to wait longer before returning to church for worship. The pastor and staff are working on a plan to offer live-streaming of services so that those at home can enjoy the worship service with those who are in church. It is anticipated that this will become a continuing feature of our church's worship experience. We don't know how quickly live-streaming can be implemented as many churches are moving in this direction and much of the needed equipment is back-ordered but we will keep you updated. Until June 7th, services will be videotaped and available for viewing on Facebook and through our website.

We have all been through a lot during this pandemic and there are still miles to travel. I am thankful that we can begin to travel them together and we look forward to that blessed day when we can sing and hug and eat and drink while we celebrate with our Lord the wonderful gift of His church which he has given us. Please call the office with any questions or concerns you may have. May our Lord bless you and hold you close until we see each other on **June 7th**.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Dan



Prayer for Serenity

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
trusting that You will make all things right
if I surrender to Your will;
so that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.

Reinhold Niebuhr