

**Ante Communion Service: May 5, 2024**

**Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Celebrant:* Let us open our hearts and minds to the truth of our lives, and let us offer that truth to God.

*A moment of silence for self-reflection and confession.*

*People:* **Gracious God, source of all life, Lord of mercy and grace, hear our prayer.**

**You call us to a reconciled life, to a wholeness with each other, with you, and with your creation.**

**We come before you in love and trust, seeking healing of all that keeps us distant from you.**

**We pray that you will guide us in the footsteps of Christ, strengthen us, heal us, and that you will heal our world, so that we will be freed to serve and love and dream and be, as Christ calls us. Amen.**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us proclaim the Good News: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, reconciled, loved, and healed. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Let us pray together: **O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as surpass our understanding: Pour into our hearts such love towards you, that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

**First Reading**

**Acts 10:44-48**

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word.

The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God.

Then Peter said, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Then they invited him to stay for several days.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 98**

*Cantate Domino*

1 Sing to the Lord a new song, \*

**for he has done marvelous things.**

2 With his right hand and his holy arm \*

**has he won for himself the victory.**

3 The Lord has made known his victory; \*

**his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.**

4 He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, \*

**and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.**

5 Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; \*

**lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

6 Sing to the Lord with the harp, \*

**with the harp and the voice of song.**

7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn \*

**shout with joy before the King, the Lord.**

8 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, \*

**the lands and those who dwell therein.**

9 Let the rivers clap their hands, \*

**and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord, when he comes to judge the earth.**

10 In righteousness shall he judge the world \*

**and the peoples with equity.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.**

**Second Reading**

**1 John 5:1-6**

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God,  
and everyone who loves the parent loves the child.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments.

And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world.

And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith.

Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only

but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel

John 15:9-17

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## Sermon

### Apostles' Creed

*said by all*

**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 to the dead. 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.**

## Prayers of the People

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. *Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world;  
**For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For the peace and unity of the world;  
**That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.**

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;  
**And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.**

For the just and proper use of your creation;  
**That we may treat your creation with the love of the Creator.**

We honor and pray for our Indigenous neighbors.  
**That we may dwell together in respectful harmony.**

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;  
**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.  
*Silence.* Hear us, Lord; **For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*  
We will exalt you, O God our King; **And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. *Silence.*  
Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them. **May they rest in your peace eternally.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray together:  
**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, now and forever. Amen.**

We pray together for Christ's presence:  
**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.  
I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you.  
Amen.**

*Celebrant:* While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,  
*People:* **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.**  
*Celebrant:* Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion.  
*People:* **The love we share becomes bread for the world.**

**Blessing** May Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light to the world;  
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be in you, among you,  
and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**Dismissal** Go in peace and hope and joy to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!**