

CHRIST'S UNITED ✠ ST. JAMES ✠ FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCHES

Ashland/Pitman/Hegins

Sixth Sunday of Easter ✠ May 17, 2020 ✠ Rogationtide

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Greetings in the name of our crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ. This is the sixth Sunday of Easter, the beginning of Rogationtide.

- If you have any pastoral care needs, please call the pastors at the Lutheran parsonage at **570-652-1951**. Also, visit our church websites for more information.
- *Remember your offering. Now more than ever, your congregation depends on you for financial support. Mail in your offering or give on-line.*

Our Lord is risen and has sent an Advocate to be with us always.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are raised with him to new life.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water is poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning you created us in your image
and planted us in a well-watered garden.
In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched,
and you gave us water from the rock.
When we did not know the way,
you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.
At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side,
and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

We praise you for your salvation through water,
for the water in this font, and for all water everywhere.
Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.
Satisfy the thirsty, and give us the life only you can give.

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

HYMN ELW#681 “WE PLOW THE FIELDS”

1 We plow the fields and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by God's almighty hand,
who sends the snow in winter,
the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine,
and soft refreshing rain.

Refrain

All good gifts around us
are sent from heav'n above.
We thank you, Lord,
we thank you, Lord,
for all your love.

2 You only are the maker
of all things near and far.
You paint the wayside flower,
you light the evening star.
The winds and waves obey you,
by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children,
you give our daily bread. *Refrain*

3 We thank you, our creator,
for all things bright and good,
the seedtime and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food.
No gifts have we to offer
for all your love imparts,
but what you most would treasure—
our humble, thankful hearts. *Refrain*

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

For Sixth Sunday of Easter

Let us pray... Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

For Rogation Days

O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; though Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

THE DAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR: SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Jesus does not abandon his followers. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to abide with his disciples of every generation. As Pentecost draws near, we are reminded that the risen Christ dwells in us as the Spirit of truth. We receive this Spirit in baptism and

pray that in our gathering around the Lord's table the Spirit will transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.

ROGATIONTIDE

Rogation Days or Rogation tide is traditionally observed the three days before the Ascension of our Lord. This is the time when the newly planted fields and gardens are blessed. It is the time we pray for plenteous sun, warm days, and good rain, so that both land and sea will flourish and bring forth an abundant harvest to feed God's hungry people. We especially give thanks that God is harvesting you, bringing you to this place as we gather to hear God's Word.

FIRST READING: ACTS 17:22-31

In Athens, Paul faces the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to Greeks who know nothing of either Jewish or Christian tradition. He proclaims that the "unknown god" whom they worship is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will judge the world with justice through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead.

²²Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.'

²⁹Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

PSALM 6:8-20

⁸Bless our God, you peoples;

let the sound of praise be heard.

⁹**Our God has kept us among the living
and has not allowed our feet to slip.**

¹⁰For you, O God, have tested us;

you have tried us just as silver is tried.

¹¹**You brought us into the net;
you laid heavy burdens upon our backs.**

¹²You let people ride over our heads; we went through
fire and water,

but you brought us out into a place of refreshment.

¹³**I will enter your house with burnt offerings
and will pay you my vows—**

¹⁴those that I promised with my lips

and spoke with my mouth when I was in trouble.

¹⁵**I will offer you burnt offerings of fatlings with the
smoke of rams;**

I will give you oxen and goats.

¹⁶Come and listen, all you who believe,

and I will tell you what God has done for me.

¹⁷**I called out to God with my mouth,
and praised the Lord with my tongue.**

¹⁸If I had cherished evil in my heart,

the Lord would not have heard me;

¹⁹**but in truth God has heard me
and has attended to the sound of my prayer.**

²⁰Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer,

nor withheld unfailing love from me.

SECOND READING: 1 PETER 3:13-22

The author of 1 Peter encourages Christians to remain faithful even in the face of defamation and persecution. In baptism we are made clean to act in accordance with what is right.

¹³Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse

you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. ¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

EASTER VERSE & ALLELUIA

Alleluia. Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. *Alleluia.* (John 14:23)

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 14th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: JOHN 14:1-14

In final words to his disciples on the night of his arrest, Jesus encourages obedience to his commandments and speaks of the Spirit, who will be with them forever.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁵"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON *Pr. Mark E. Swanson*

HYMN ELW#879 “*FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH*”

1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies:

Refrain

Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.

2 For the wonder of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,
sun and moon and stars of light: *Refrain*

3 For the joy of ear and eye,
for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony
linking sense to sound and sight: *Refrain*

4 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above;
for all gentle thoughts and mild: *Refrain*

5 For each perfect gift of thine,
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;
for thyself, best gift divine,
to our world so freely giv'n: *Refrain*

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one LORD, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the LORD, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

SHARING OF THE PEACE *A sign of peace is shown by bowing.*

The peace of the LORD be with you always.

And also with you.

THE PRAYERS *Response: "Hear our prayer."*

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Almighty and Abiding God, you have revealed yourself to us in the form of your Son, Jesus Christ. Embolden your Church, as your followers, to reveal your love to everyone in our speaking and in our living. Especially be with our bishops and other Church leaders as they are called to make difficult decisions in this time of crisis.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Lord, you are the creator of heaven and earth. Renew the earth that you have called us to protect and use for your glory. Give us wisdom to care for the land, sea and air so that it may yield the fruits that nourish your people. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You call all people of the world your children. Judge the nations justly, show mercy to the oppressed, and speak truth to power through your prophets. Make our leaders into the image of Christ that you desire for all of us. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You come near to us when we are lost, and you hear our distress. In our loneliness, isolation, and distress, give us comfort and your peace. We pray for those who suffer in any way (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Your commands are good and merciful. Give us courage to take hold of our baptismal promises to work for justice, advocate for the voiceless, and free the oppressed and imprisoned in body, mind, or spirit. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Loving God, you remain with us always, and your kingdom has no end. We remember the saints who have gone before us (*especially*). Unite us forever in your final victory over death. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

BENEDICTION

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN ELW#767 "ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL"

<i>Refrain</i>	3	<i>The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun, the ripe fruits in the garden, God made them ev'ry one. Refrain</i>
1 All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.	4	<i>God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell how great is God Almighty, who has made all things well. Refrain</i>
2 Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings, God made their glowing colors, God made their tiny wings. <i>Refrain</i>		
2 The purple-headed mountains, the river running by, the sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky. <i>Refrain</i>		

The time between the sixth Sunday of Easter and Ascension Day is known as Rogationtide. *This time has traditionally been a period for blessing the fields as they are prepared and planted with new seed in hopes of a good harvest. The blessing below is designed for you to use at home. Gather with family and friends, have one person read the scripture passage, another may sprinkle water on plants when the name of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is spoken in the blessing. Finally, you may want to distribute seeds and allow children to plant them in your garden as a sign of hope and trust in the Lord who created life out of nothing.*

ROGATIONTIDE BLESSING

L: Let us together praise the Lord, from whom we have rain from the heavens and abundance from the earth. Blessed be God now and forever. **Amen.**

THE READING: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

L: All your works praise you, O Lord,

C: and your faithful servants bless you.

L: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You made the whole earth for your glory; all creation praises you. We lift our voices to join the songs of heaven and earth, of things seen and unseen. You stretched out the heavens like a curtain; you divided the day from the night; you appointed times and seasons for work and rest, for tearing down and building up.

Be with us now and bless the work of those who labor in the fields. Grant us faith to know your gracious purpose in all things, and continue your blessings to us through the bounty of your creation; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

L: May God the Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless the pastures and meadows, all growing grass and green fields. May the soil be wholesome and the crops good. May the weather be favorable and the workers of good heart. May God who gives breath and life to the sower, multiply the seed sown and increase its fruit. And may the God of life, who raised Jesus from the bonds of death, be with us and among us and around us now ✠ and forevermore. **Amen.**

L: Christ is risen, just as he promised.

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

LEADING WORSHIP

**PRESIDING
ORGANIST
VIDEOGRAPHER**

Pr. Laura Csellak and Pr. Mark Swanson
Mrs. Jamie Johnson
Mr. Gary Klinger

THIS WEEK ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR...

MONDAY, MAY 18: ERIK, KING OF SWEDEN, MARTYR, DIED 1160

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.

THURSDAY, MAY 21: HELENA, MOTHER OF CONSTANTINE, DIED C.330

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.

