

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 08, 2022

Mothers' Day

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

EvLW # 385 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!

1. Good Christian friends, rejoice and sing!
Now is the triumph of our king!
To all the world glad news we bring:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
2. The Lord of life is ris'n this day;
death's mighty stone is rolled away;
let all the world rejoice and say:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
3. Praise we in songs of victory
that love, that life, which cannot die,
and sing with hearts uplifted high:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
4. Your name we bless, O risen Lord,
and sing today with one accord,
the life laid down; the life restored:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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

Let us pray.

O God of peace, you brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. By the blood of your eternal covenant, make us complete in everything good that we may do your will, and work among us all that is well-pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 9:36-43

Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness and her work with clothing were well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.

Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

A LITANY FOR WOMEN

We celebrate and give thanks, each of us, for our mother. The woman who carried us in her womb, gave birth to us, brought us into life.

We lament, each of us, separation from our mother at different times, through conflict, distance of place, death. We lament, seek to forgive and be forgiven.

We celebrate and give thanks, each of us, for those who have been as mothers to us; our aunts and pseudo-aunts, big sisters, friends, mentors and teachers. The women who have nurtured, taught, encouraged, shaped us with love.

We lament, each of us, the women who have caused us pain, who have abandoned or neglected us, mistakenly or intentionally caused us harm. We lament the hurt we have caused to women, our friends, colleagues, neighbours, sisters, aunts and mothers. We lament, seek to forgive and be forgiven.

We celebrate and give thanks, together, for the women in our communities. That women and men are different invites us into partnership, invites us to share the burdens and the joys of life. For the many strengths of women, their gifts of peace-making, nurture, education, entrepreneurship, healing, wisdom, creativity, endurance, collaboration, physicality – and so much more, we are grateful.

We lament, together, that women are still discounted because they are women, in our culture and in others. That the difference between women and men is seen as threatening, a power struggle, a competition or a hierarchy, is not, we know, your dream for us. We lament, seek to forgive and be forgiven.

We celebrate, those of us who are mothers and grandmothers, the joy and privilege it is to collaborate with you in the creation of life. We give thanks for our children, their uniqueness, the delight we find in watching and helping them grow.

We lament, those of us who are not mothers and want to be, or who are mothers of children who have died. We lament and have no words for our grief.

We celebrate, we give thanks, for you, our mothering God, whose wings enfold us like those of a mother hen, who gives birth to all that lives, who loves fiercely, protectively, and with great delight. We celebrate what we know of you as like a mother.

We lament our turning from you and causing you pain, our rejection of your gifts of life and love in so many ways. We seek your forgiveness again and again.

Again and again, God welcomes us home, as a mother welcomes her children. Again and again, God celebrates us, God's children, and delights in watching and helping us grow. Come, now, under the wings of God; come, now, into the warmth of Love. We are forgiven. We are loved. Precious children of your Mothering God.

HYMN

EvLW # 735 Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth

1. Mothering God, you gave me birth in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of ev'ry breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun.
2. Mothering Christ, you took my form, offering me your food of light,
grain of life, and grape of love, your very body for my peace.
3. Mothering Spirit, nurt'ring one, in arms of patience hold me close,
so that in faith I root and grow until I flow'r, until I know.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

Gentle Shepherd, enable your church to respond to the voice of Jesus. Give us unflinching trust, unafraid to join in Jesus' work of renewing all things. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Feed your people at the table of creation. Prepare a safe place for those whose environments are dangerous or unhealthy, especially those making difficult journeys. Prosper your creation for the sake of every living thing. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Warm the hearts of all who celebrate and all who mourn on Mother's Day. Accompany those yearning to be mothers. Help us to heal from broken family relationships and open us to receive your nurturing love from all who serve mothering roles in our lives especially those we think of this day. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Inspire the words of prophets and saints who employ innovative imagery to stretch our understanding. Today we remember Julian of Norwich, renewer of the church, a Benedictine nun who died around 1416. She wrote about her visions declaring that love was the meaning of religious experience, provided by Christ, who is love, for the purpose of love. Send Christ to instruct us with motherly care. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Seek out those who weep while they await healing or consolation especially Deb, Lloyd, Josh, Jordon, Ferolyn, Elethia, Daryl, and Carol. Set people in their path who can provide the care they need and wipe away every tear from their eyes. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Enfold us in the great multitude of saints from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages. Wash us in your saving grace every day, guiding us to your waters of life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters. You restore my soul, O Lord, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

A STATEMENT OF FAITH

You Never Let Go (Matt and Beth Redman)

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, your perfect love is casting out fear and even when I'm caught in the middle of the storms of this life, I won't turn back. I know You are near.

And I will fear no evil for my God is with me and if my God is with me, whom then shall, I fear.

Oh no, You never let go through the calm and through the storm.

And I can see a light that is coming for the heart that holds on; a glorious light beyond all compare and there will be an end to these troubles; but until that day comes, we'll live to know You here on the earth.

**Oh no, You never let go in ev'ry high and ev'ry low.
Oh no, You never let go. Lord, You never let go of me.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

GOSPEL

John 10:22-30

Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN

EvLW # 764 *Have No Fear, Little Flock*

1. Have no fear, little flock; have no fear, little flock, for the Father has chosen to give you the kingdom;
have no fear, little flock!
2. Have good cheer, little flock; have good cheer, little flock,
for the Father will keep you in his love forever;
have good cheer, little flock!
3. Praise the Lord high above; praise the Lord high above,
for he stoops down to heal you, uplift and restore you;
praise the Lord high above!

4. Thankful hearts raise to God; thankful hearts raise to God,
for he stays close beside you, in all things works with you;
thankful hearts raise to God!

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory forever. Amen.

A PRAYER OF JULIAN OF NORWICH

Let us pray.

In you, Father almighty, we have our preservation and our bliss. In you, Christ, we have our restoring and are saving. You are our mother, brother, and saviour. In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit is marvellous and plenteous grace. You are our clothing; for love you wrap us and embrace us. You are our maker, our lover, our keeper. Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace. **Amen.**

READING

Revelation 7:9 -17

Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful to springs of the water of life. Christ is also the lamb who vanquishes sin and suffering.

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

SENDING HYMN

EvLW # 853 *When Morning Gilds the Skies*

1. When morning gilds the skies, my heart awaking cries:
may Jesus Christ be praised! When evening shadows fall,
this rings my curfew call: may Jesus Christ be praised!
2. When mirth for music longs, this is my song of songs:
may Jesus Christ be praised! God's holy house of prayer
has none that can compare with "Jesus Christ be praised!"
3. No lovelier antiphon in all high heav'n is known
than "Jesus Christ be praised!" There to the eternal Word
the eternal psalm is heard: oh, Jesus Christ be praised!
4. Let all of humankind in this their concord find:
may Jesus Christ be praised! Let all the earth around
ring joyous with the sound: may Jesus Christ be praised!
5. Sing, sun and stars of space, sing, all who see his face,
sing, "Jesus Christ be praised!" God's whole creation o'er,
today and evermore shall Jesus Christ be praised!

DISMISSAL

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon	May 09	Ezekiel 37:15-28	Revelation 15:1-4	Psalm 100
Tue	May 10	Ezekiel 45:1-9	Acts 9:32-35	Psalm 100
Wed	May 11	Jeremiah 50:17-20	John 10:31-42	Psalm 100
Thu	May 12	Ezekiel 2:8-3:11	Revelation 10:1-11	Psalm 148
Fri	May 13	Daniel 7:13-14	Revelation 11:15	Psalm 148
Sat	May 14	Daniel 7:27	Revelation 11:16-19	Psalm 148
Sun	May 15	Acts 11:1-18 John 13:31-35	Revelation 21:1-6	Psalm 148 (13)

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