

**Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 11, 2025 Liturgy**

We Gather In God's Presence

Land Acknowledgement:

Prelude: The Heavens Declare (Psalm XiX).
By Benedetto Marcello 1686-1739

Lighting the Christ Candle:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined (Isaiah 9:2).

Time for Reflection

Call to Worship

One: My soul cries out
ALL: **For evil to cease and for good to grow.**
One: My soul cries out
ALL: **For peace and justice.**
One: We are called to be the church,
ALL: **Not to bring burnt offerings
but to sacrifice ourselves
in defense of the vulnerable:
the widows, the orphans,
the poor and the sick,
the least, the lost, and the lonely.**
One: We gather to sing out in celebration,
ALL: **To remember God is with us,
and that His love endures forever.**

Hymn: "If You But Trust In God To Guide You" VU #286

1 If you but trust in God to guide you
and place your confidence in him,
you'll find him always there beside you
to give you hope and strength within;
for those who trust God's changeless love
build on the rock that will not move.

2 Only be still and wait his pleasure
in cheerful hope with heart content.
He fills your needs to fullest measure
with what discerning love has sent;
doubt not our inmost wants are known
to him who chose us for his own.

3 Sing, pray, and keep his ways unswerving,
offer your service faithfully,
and trust his word; though undeserving,
you'll find his promise true to be.
God never will forsake in need
the soul that trusts in him indeed.

Passing of the Peace:

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be
with you...

And also with you.

Please stand as we together recite **Our Creed** (VU 918)

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

Opening Prayer (Unison)

Gracious God, you have called us to be your own. We long to respond to your call: openly, fully, lovingly; yet we confess the heart that is too hardened to repent, the righteousness that knows no fault, the callousness that has ceased to care, the blindness that can see nothing but its own will.

There are many voices clamouring for our attention, yet, it is in your transformative Word that we find your truth. We are surrounded by many voices that demand our attention, yet, it is in you that we truly live and move and have our being.

Help us to hear your voice among the many. Help us ignore the voices that harden our hearts and deafen our ears to your voice. Heal us and forgive us. Grant us the peace and joy that comes from a life lived in following your way. This we pray in the name of the one who is “the way.” Amen

We Open Ourselves to Receive God’s Blessings

Ministry of Music: “God of Freedom, God of Justice” VU #700

God of freedom, God of justice,
you whose love is strong as death,
you who saw the dark of prison,
you who knew the price of faith --
 touch our world of sad oppression
 with your Spirit's healing breath.

Rid the earth of torture's terror,
you whose hands were nailed to wood;
hear the cries of pain and protest,
you who shed the tears and blood --
 move in us the power of pity
 restless for the common good.

Make in us a captive conscience
quick to hear, to act, to plead;
make us truly sisters, brothers
of whatever race or creed --
 teach us to be fully human,
 open to each other's needs.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 23

2nd Refrain

The God of Love my shepherd is; what can I want or need

God is my Shepherd

There is nothing I shall lack.

You, God make me lie down in green pastures,

You lead me beside still waters;

You revive my spirit,

You guide me in right pathways for your name's sake

Refrain: The God of Love my shepherd is; what can I want or need.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you are with me.

Your rod and your staff are my comfort.

You spread a table for me in the sight of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil; my cup is overflowing.

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

And I will dwell in God's house my whole life long.

Refrain: The God of Love my shepherd is; what can I want or need.

Scripture Reading: John 10:23-30

23 Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24 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.' 25 Jesus answered, 'I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; 26 but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. 30 The Father and I are one.'

Message: Your Voice Is Important To Us. Please Stay On The Line.

Hymn: "O Holy City, Seen of John" VU #709

1 O Holy City, seen of John,
Where Christ, the Lamb, does reign,
Within those four-square walls shall come
No night, nor need, nor pain,
And where the tears are wiped from eyes
That shall not weep again.

2 Hark, now from men whose lives are held
More cheap than merchandise,
From women struggling sore for bread,
From little children's cries,
There swells the sobbing human plaint
That bids thy walls arise.

3 O shame to us who rest content
While lust and greed for gain
In street and shop and tenement
Wring gold from human pain,
And bitter lips in blind despair
Cry, "Christ has died in vain."

4 Give us, O God, the strength to build
The City that has stood
Too long a dream, whose laws are love,
Whose ways, the common good,
And where the shining sun becomes
God's grace for human good.

5 Already in the mind of God
That City rises fair:
Lo, how its splendor challenges
The souls that greatly dare:
Yea, bids us seize the whole of life
And build its glory there.

We Respond to God's Grace

Announcements:

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your 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,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

Gracious God, you created a richly abundant world, with plenty for all. We offer our gifts not only in gratitude, but also in the hope of bringing about a fair and just distribution of your bountiful blessings.

Our tithes and offerings will now be received.

Offertory Hymn: "Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands" VU #537

Your work, O God, needs many hands
to help you everywhere,
and some there are who cannot serve
unless our gifts we share.

Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, you yield abundant fruit for all to share. As we present our gifts, fill us also with your passion to mend what is broken, to include those excluded, so all may flourish and dwell with you in peace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Commissioning and Benediction

Blessed are we,
**because we are able to gather to worship God,
and listen for the word God speaks to us today.**
Blessed are we,
because we know we sin and fall short of the glory of God.
Blessed are we,
because we know our need for God in our lives.
**We leave this time of worship knowing we are blessed,
Blessed by God, who created us for blessing.**

***Hymn: "O Day of Peace" VU #682**

1 O day of peace that dimly shines
through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
guide us to justice, truth, and love,

delivered from our selfish schemes.
May swords of hate fall from our hands,
our hearts from envy find release,
till by God's grace our warring world
shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

2 Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,
nor shall the fierce devour the small;
as beasts and cattle calmly graze,
a little child shall lead them all.
Then enemies shall learn to love,
all creatures find their true accord;
the hope of peace shall be fulfilled,
for all the earth shall know the Lord.

Postlude: Rigaudon

By Andre Campra 1660-1744