

May 2, 2021  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter**



Eastern Orthodox icon of Jesus Christ as the True Vine, 16th century

**We are filled with joy at your presence and hope you experience God's Spirit as you worship and meet with those around you. If you would like more information about RPC, please talk with any Session member or the Pastor.**

## ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Bold Letters -- Indicate congregational response

### GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Beloved, let us love one another.

**We love because God first loved us.**

This is our new commandment in Christ:

**As Jesus loves us, let us love one another.**

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

*Christ the Lord is Risen Today!*

#245

**1 "Christ the Lord is risen today!" Alleluia!**

**All creation, join to say: Alleluia!**

**Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!**

**Sing, O heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!**

**2 Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!**

**Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!**

**Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!**

**Christ has opened paradise. Alleluia!**

**3 Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!**

**Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!**

**Jesus died, our souls to save, Alleluia!**

**Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!**

**4 Hail the Lord of earth and heaven! Alleluia!**

**Praise to you by both be given, Alleluia!**

**Every knee to you shall bow, Alleluia!**

**Risen Christ, triumphant now. Alleluia!**

Opening Prayer

O God,

form the minds of your faithful people into a single will.

Make us love what you command

and desire what you promise,  
that, amid all the changes of this world,  
our hearts may be fixed where true joy is found;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **Call to Confession**

The Spirit of God helps us in our weakness, interceding with sighs too deep for words. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Almighty God,  
in raising Jesus from the grave,  
you shattered the power of sin and death.  
We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear,  
bound by the ways that lead to death.  
We overlook the poor and the hungry,  
and pass by those who mourn;  
we are deaf to the cries of the oppressed,  
and indifferent to calls for peace;  
we despise the weak,  
and abuse the earth you made.**

**Forgive us, God of mercy.  
Help us to trust your power  
to change our lives and make us new,  
that we may know the joy of life abundant  
given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord.**

*Silence is kept for personal confession*

### **Assurance of Pardon**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints.

**In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

**Amen.**

*Refrain:*

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

**THE WORD**

**A Time with the Children**

**Psalm 22:25-31**

Lay Leader: Amy Macomber

<sup>25</sup> From you comes my praise in the great congregation;  
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

<sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.  
May your hearts live forever!

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember  
and turn to the Lord;  
and all the families of the nations  
shall worship before him.

<sup>28</sup> For dominion belongs to the Lord,  
and he rules over the nations.

<sup>29</sup> To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;  
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,  
and I shall live for him.

<sup>30</sup> Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord,

<sup>31</sup> and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying that he has done it.

**Gospel**

**John 15:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup>He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You have already been cleansed by the word that I

have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup>I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

**Abiding**

**Unity Hymn**

***Abide with Me***

**#836**

**1 Abide with me: fast falls the eventide.**

**The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!**

**When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
help of the helpless, O abide with me.**

**2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;  
change and decay in all around I see.**

**O thou who changest not, abide with me.**

**3 I need thy presence every passing hour;  
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.**

**4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.**

**5 Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;  
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

**Together, We Confess Our Faith**

**The Apostle's Creed (Traditional)**

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.**

**RESPONDING**

**Invitation to Present Our Tithes and Offerings**

**Offertory**

**Doxology**

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

**#606**

**Prayer of Dedication**

Eternal God,  
we praise you that your glory has dawned on us,  
and brought us into this Day of Resurrection.  
We rejoice that the grave could not hold your Son,  
and that he has conquered death,  
risen to rule over all powers of this earth.  
We praise you that he summons us into new life,  
to follow him with joy and gladness.  
By your Spirit,  
lift us from doubt and despair,  
and set our feet in Christ's holy way,  
that our lives may be signs of his life,  
and all we have may show forth his love.  
Praise, glory, and thanksgiving to you,  
our God, forever and ever.

**Amen.**

1 Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy:  
bread is broken; the wine is poured;  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

*Refrain:*

Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again;  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again;  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

2 Christ is able to make us one;  
at the table he sets the tone,  
teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and in deed express. (*Refrain*)

3 Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share:  
God (Immanuel) everywhere! (*Refrain*)

**Invitation to The Lord's Table**

**Prayer of Great Thanksgiving**

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.  
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 unite us with the living Christ,  
and with all who are baptized in his name,  
that we may be one 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.  
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, with Christ, in Christ,  
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,  
with the Holy Spirit in the holy church,  
now and forever.

**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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead  
us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### **Breaking the Bread**

#### **Communion**

*Please partake of the communion elements at home as the participants in the  
sanctuary partake.*

#### **Prayer after Communion**

## **SENDING**

### **Opportunities for Service and Fellowship**

#### **Sending Hymn**

*Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me*

**#703**

**1 Jesus, thy boundless love to me  
no thought can reach, no tongue declare;  
O knit my thankful heart to thee,  
and reign without a rival there!  
Thine wholly, thine alone, I'd live;  
myself to thee entirely give.**

**2 O grant that nothing in my soul  
may dwell, but thy pure love alone;**

O may thy love possess me whole,  
my joy, my treasure, and my crown!  
All coldness from my heart remove;  
may every act, word, thought be love.

3 O Love, how gracious is thy way!  
All fear before thy presence flies;  
care, anguish, sorrow melt away  
where'er thy healing beams arise.  
O Jesus, nothing may I see,  
nothing desire, or seek, but thee.

### **Blessing and Charge**

May the steadfast love of the Lord be yours,  
this day and forever. Alleluia!

Christ is risen! Do not be afraid.  
Go and tell this good news to all.

**Thanks be to God, Amen.**

**Response**

**Be Still and Know That I Am God**

**#414**

**Be still and know that I am God.**

**Be still and know that I am God.**

**Postlude**