

A Liturgy of
AnteCommunion
online or at home

April 26, 2020
The Third Sunday of Easter



Trinity
Episcopal Church

207 West Main Street, Moorestown, NJ 08057
(856) 235-0811
trinity@trinitymoorestown.org

Prelude

Cantilena in G, Op. 71, No. 1
Arthur Foote

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Book of Common Prayer, page 355

Celebrant Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

O God, whose blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All sing or say together:

S-278; Willam Mathias

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Our worship begins today with a shout of praise and declaration of resurrection: Our “Alleluia!” comes from the Hebrew for “Praise God!”

The Book of Common Prayer calls for a “song of praise” to begin our worship. The traditional *Gloria* quotes the words the angels sang to announce the coming of Jesus, and then expands our praise of God and Jesus with the characteristics of majesty and salvation. The church has been singing some form of this hymn of praise for over sixteen centuries.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

2:14a, 36-41

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 116: 1-3, 10-17

Book of Common Prayer, page 759

- 1 I love the LORD, because he has heard
the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me
whenever I called upon him.
- 2 **The cords of death entangled me;
the grip of the grave took hold of me; *
I came to grief and sorrow.**
- 3 Then I called upon the Name of the LORD: *
"O LORD, I pray you, save my life."
- 10 **How shall I repay the LORD *
for all the good things he has done for me?**
- 11 I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.
- 12 **I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
in the presence of all his people.**
- 13 Precious in the sight of the LORD *
is the death of his servants.
- 14 **O LORD, I am your servant; *
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.**

In the season of Easter, the Episcopal Church traditionally reads stories of the earliest days of the church from the Acts of the Apostles as the first reading. This invitation to receive God's promises even while recognizing our involvement in Christ's death comes from Peter's speech to the crowd that gathered to hear the disciples speak in many languages on the day of Pentecost.

We read the psalm **responsively**, which means that the leader reads one verse and the congregation *responds* with the next.

Psalm 116 may have been designed to be read this way, alternating between describing attributes or actions of God, and the response of the faithful, (though the divisions between those two elements don't match our verse divisions in the English translation.)

15 I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.
**16 I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
in the presence of all his people**
17 In the courts of the LORD'S house, *
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

A reading from the First Letter of Peter

1:17-23

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Luke 24:13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the

The first letter of Peter was written to comfort and reassure a community of Christians whose faith in Jesus has separated them from their social community. This excerpt is meant to encourage the believers with the confidence that God has planned their trust and faith from before time; and that our response is to support one another in mutual love.

things that have taken place there in these days?’ He asked them, ‘What things?’ They replied, ‘The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.’ Then he said to them, ‘Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?’ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’ So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?’ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!’ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

This story, which apparently takes place in the afternoon and evening of the day of resurrection, is the first appearance of the risen Jesus in Luke’s narrative.

Here, Jesus appears to two disciples who were not in the inner circle, suggesting that God can choose to involve even those who were not closest to Jesus in the Easter miracle.

The Nicene Creed

Book of Common Prayer, page 358

As part of our response to the Word of God in our lives, we stand to proclaim the core story of our Christian faith together in **The Nicene Creed**, created in the late 4th century by the councils (gatherings of church leaders) in Nicea.

No matter what story of Jesus we are hearing in scripture, we remember and proclaim the whole outline of his life, death, and resurrection, and anticipate his coming again.

**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.**

Prayers of the People

In joy and hope let us pray to God who has given us the victory through the risen Christ.

That our risen Savior may fill us and all God's people with the joy of his glorious and life-giving resurrection, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That the risen Christ may bring peace to the earth, and wisdom and concord to all who lead the nations; that war, famine, and epidemic may cease, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That those isolated, afflicted, persecuted or living in fear may find renewal and strength in the good news of Easter, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That God may provide daily bread and abundant life for those who lack food, work or shelter, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That broken hearts may be made whole, and our communities renewed, in the victory of life over death through the risen Christ, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That the light of the risen Christ may comfort and strengthen the ill, the injured, the dying, and all those who care for the sick and the vulnerable, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That, according to Christ's promises, all who have died in the faith of the resurrection may be raised with him on the last day, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

That Christ may send the power of the Holy Spirit upon God's people, so that we may bear faithful witness to his resurrection day by day, we pray. Let the people say, **Amen.**

Almighty God, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant that, as his death has recalled us to life, so his continual presence in us may raise us to eternal joy; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

In the Easter season, the Confession is omitted in celebration of our freedom from the bondage of sin brought about through Christ's resurrection.

In response to hearing and reflecting on scripture, we turn to prayer together, asking God's care for our world, the church, for others and for ourselves.

The prayers we are using today are adapted from seasonal prayers used in The Church of England, and follow the pattern outlined on page 383 of *The Book of Common Prayer*, with attention to the church throughout the world, the nation and the world and those in authority, the needs of our local community, those who suffer or experience any trouble, and those who have died.

Exchange of Peace

The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Today, in the spirit of Christ's peace, please reach out to greet someone you might normally see in worship by telephone, internet, or text message.

When gathered in person, we would receive a collection of money for the support of the church at this point in a Sunday service.

If you are able to fulfill your annual pledge, please mail your regular pledge check to the office, use your bank's online payment system, or visit www.trinitymoorestown.org/donate to make your weekly gift or regular pledge offering while we are unable to gather in person.

At every service in the Episcopal Church, we pray **the Lord's Prayer**, which we learn in the gospels (Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:1-4) The prayer takes its name from the request of Jesus' disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Anthem

Deck Thyself, My Soul, With Gladness
George Frederic Handel

Instead of praying the Great Thanksgiving over bread and wine, in this time when we are physically separated, we join together in an act of spiritual communion, beginning with the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples as the basis of all prayer.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

During this time of worshipping together but physically distant, we depend on the long established teaching of the Church that if a person is prevented from physically receiving the Sacrament for reasons of extreme illness or disability, the desire for Christ's presence alone is enough for all the benefits of the Sacrament to be received. This is often referred to as "spiritual communion."

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life, until by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.

*(From Saint Augustine's Prayer Book, rev 2014.,
based on a prayer by St. Alphonsus de Liguori)*

Post communion prayer *Book of Common Prayer, page 365*

Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the victory, give you joy and peace in your faith; and the blessing of God Almighty, the holy and undivided Trinity, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

Because we cannot physically receive the bread and wine together today, we name our need for Christ's nourishing presence in our spirits in this prayer for spiritual communion.

We pray the usual **Post-Communion Prayer** thanking God for the blessings received in the spiritual food of this sacrament, even though we have not physically received the bread or wine, and asking that we be prepared by those spiritual riches to go into the world to share in God's ongoing work.

The priest offers God's blessing, in a form adapted for the Easter season.

Hymn 208, v 1, 2, 4, 5
Virtual Congregation

Victory

The dismissal sends us to take our worship into the fullness of our daily lives, living in the name of Christ. Our enthusiastic "Alleluia" in response is the final word of worship throughout the Easter season.

The Dismissal

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ,
Alleluia, alleluia!

People **Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia!**

Postlude

Prelude in G Major, BWV 568
J. S. Bach

+++++

Julie Bathke (with Michael Bathke), *online Lector*
Peter Knerr, *telephone Lector*
The Rev. Leslie G. Mazzacano, *Deacon*
The Rev. Emily A. Mellott, *Celebrant and Preacher*
Vernon Williams, *Organist and Cinematographer*