



# Sixth Sunday of Easter Rogation Sunday May 5, 2024

Whenever you see an asterisk (\*), you are invited to stand as you are able. You are invited to speak sans serif **Bolded type** with the congregation.

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

#### **PRELUDE**

# **GATHERING**

### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name if the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. A: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, in the presence of God and of one another.

P: Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have denied our need for daily new birth. We have scorned the means you provide to fertilize and cultivate our growth in grace. We have closed ourselves to pollination by others of your redeeming, particularly those whose fruits differ from ours. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, revive us, and open us to your gifts, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the  $\pm$  Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.** 

### \*ROGATION BLESSING

#### \*PRAYER FOR SEED

Creating God, you have given seed for the sower and bread to the people. Nourish, protect, and bless the seeds which your people have sown in hope. By your loving and bountiful giving, may they bring forth their fruit in due season, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **A: Amen.** 

#### \*PRAYER FOR SOIL

Giver of life, we give you thanks that in the richness of the soil, nature awakens your call to spring. We praise you for the smell of freshly tilled earth, the beauty of a cleanly cut furrow, and a well-plowed field. We ask that you help us to be good stewards of the land. In the name of the one who gives us new life, Jesus Christ our Lord, **A: Amen.** 

#### \*Prayer for Water & Rain

Sustaining God, we receive the fruits of the earth from you. We give you thanks for the smell of the earth after rain, for its welcome cooling, and its necessary hydration for the land. We ask that the rain come as often as it is needed so that crops may flourish and the coming harvest be indeed bountiful. **A: Amen.** 

Most gracious God, according to your wisdom the deep waters are opened up and clouds drop gentle moisture. We praise you for the return of planting and harvest seasons, for the fertility of the soil, for the harvesting of the crops, and for all other blessings that you in your generosity pour out on all people. Bless the endeavors of the farmer's market and of our congregation as we support it and prepare for its opening day. Nurture all who are involved so that our lives may show respect and care for your creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.** 

### WHAT ARE ROGATION DAYS?

Stewardship of creation is an ongoing ministry in the church. The creation, which God declared good, is entrusted to the care of humankind. Exercising that care is one dimension of daily Christian discipleship. Rogation Days are a way for the church to honor God for the gift of creation and to pray for the land, the gift of labor, and the needs of all people.

Rogation Days were traditionally celebrated during the fifty days of Easter on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension Day. The word, Rogation, has its roots in the Latin word "rogare" which means to ask or petition and it comes from the ancient introit for the Sunday preceding the Ascension. In some places, the celebrations of Rogation Days were quite elaborate and included processions from the church to and around fields while asking for God's blessing.

Although Rogation Days are agricultural celebrations, they are not solely for rural congregations. These days underscore the dependence of all people, urban and rural, on the fruitfulness of the earth and human labor.

# \*GATHERING HYMN "We Plow the Fields and Scatter"

(ELW 681)



Text: Matthias Claudius, 1740–1815; tr. Jane M. Campbell, 1817–1878, alt. Music: WIR PFLÜGEN, Johann A. P. Schulz, 1747–1800

### \*GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **A: And also with you.** 



### \*HYMN OF PRAISE



#### \*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sing we

P: The Lord be with you. A: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

al-le-lu-ia, prais-es to the Lord.

A: Amen

# **WORD**

Al-le-lu-ia.

### FIRST READING: GENESIS 35:9-15

In his youth, Jacob had cheated his brother and his father and, to escape their revenge, fled back to the home town his grandfather Abraham. He became wealthy and honest and, returning to Canaan, reconciled with his brother. Jacob's original name meant "supplanter," which he did to his older brother. But his new name meant "one who struggles with God," and it is this name which would be applied to his descendants through the centuries.

<sup>9</sup>God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and he blessed him. <sup>10</sup>God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall you be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he was called Israel. <sup>11</sup>God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall spring from you. <sup>12</sup>The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give

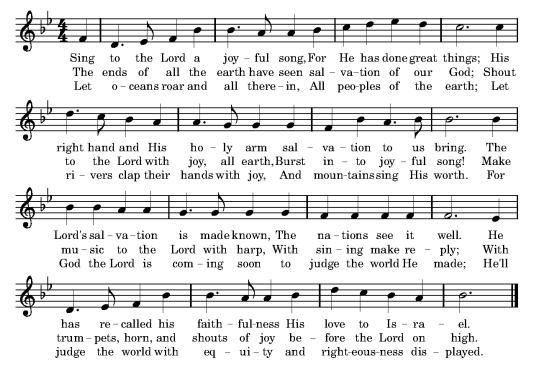
the land to your offspring after you." <sup>13</sup>Then God went up from him at the place where he had spoken with him. <sup>14</sup>Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out a drink offering on it, and poured oil on it. <sup>15</sup>So Jacob called the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

L: The word of the Lord. A: Thanks be to God.

#### **PSALM: 98**

(Sung to the tune All Saints New [LBW 318])

This psalm, like many, revels in the fact that God constantly calls new things into being. This is the psalm which Isaac Watts paraphrased as "Joy to the World," a shout of liberation which should not be limited to Christmas!



# **SECOND READING: 1 JOHN 5:1-6**

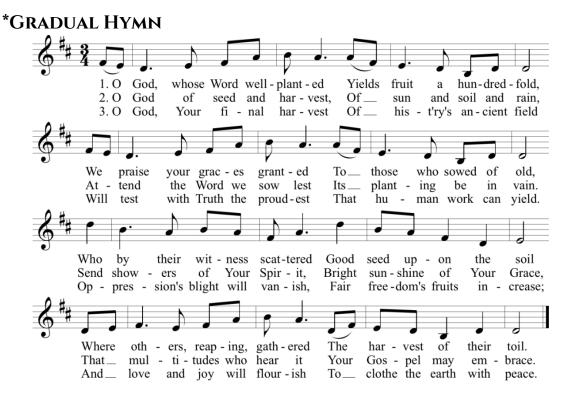
During the Easter season this year, we will be reading from John's letters to his community. A central part of John's message was the love Jesus's followers had for one another, and the unity which faith provides. This correspondence, however, comes from a time when his community was divided and splintering.

<sup>1</sup>Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup>for whatever is born of

God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

<sup>6</sup>This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.** 



# GOSPEL READING - JOHN 15:9-17

The reading for the Sixth Sunday of Easter is always from Jesus' last lecture, the night before he was betrayed, to his followers. He has just promised them that, even after his crucifixion and ascension, they would continue to draw life from him, as grape branches draw life from the vine.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the fifteenth chapter.

### A: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] <sup>9</sup>"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

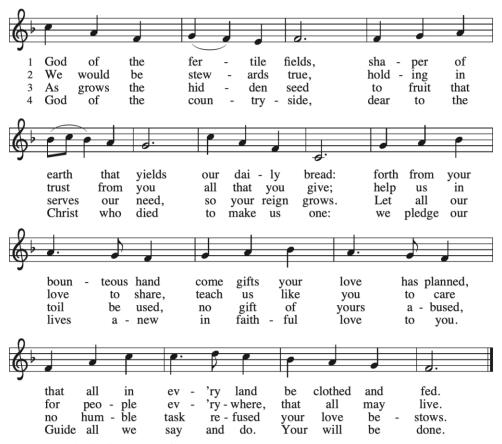
12"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup>I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

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

#### **SERMON**

# \*HYMN OF THE DAY: "God of the Fertile Fields"

(ACS 1063)



Text: Georgia Harkness, 1891–1974, alt.

Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716-1796

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# \*INVITATION TO BAPTISM

#### \*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,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

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,

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

who 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 INTERCESSION

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

# A brief silence.

L: Your Holy Spirit falls upon all who hear the word. Fill your church with the gifts of your Spirit and give understanding hearts to those who strengthen our commitments with our ecumenical and interreligious partners. God of grace,

### A: hear our prayer.

L: You speak and the face of the earth is renewed. On this Rogation Sunday we pray you revive your creation, that habitats and every kind of living thing might flourish. Protect endangered species and help us to care for all your creatures. God of grace,

A: hear our prayer.

L: Your world is divided and the nations rage. Grant wisdom and vision to world leaders, that they may seek justice, peace, and the good of all. Empower all who labor in service to others, especially agricultural workers. Strengthen international partnerships and cooperation. God of grace,

#### A: hear our prayer.

L: Your children are in need. Comfort all those who suffer, especially those afflicted by anxiety, depression, and mental illness. Fill all who have hunger of any kind. Help us to be conduits of your love in our care for one another. (*We pray especially for . . . .*) God of grace, **A: hear our prayer.** 

L: Your work is done in this place with our hands. Bless the ministries of this congregation especially the LEAD Journey, the Farmers Market (*ministries may be named*), that we may embody your love for the world. Inspire those who plan and lead worship, council members, committee members, and volunteers. God of grace,

### A: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Your blessed saints now rest in you. Give us thankful hearts for those who have gone before us, especially Grace Keller Wheeland. At the last, bring us all together around your heavenly banquet table. God of grace,

#### A: hear our prayer.

L: Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

A: Amen.

#### \*PEACE

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

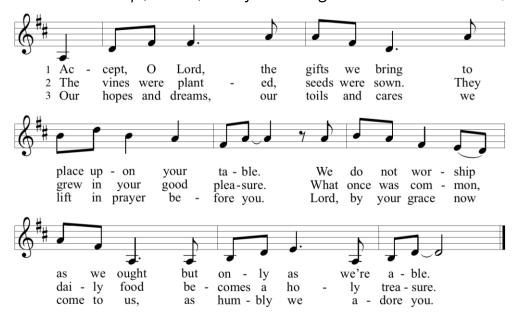
# **MEAL**

### **OFFERING**



Offerings can be made online at **stpaulpgm.org/give**, mailed to St. Paul Lutheran Church, PO Box 200, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, placed in the mail slot (outside door to Pastor Paul's office), or in the offering plate located in the lobby/narthex near the entrance of the sanctuary.

#### **MUSICAL OFFERING**



Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer

Music: BARB'RY ELLEN, Appalachian traditional

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### \*OFFERING PRAYER

L: Let us pray. Gracious God,

A: You bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor. Accept the first fruits of time and toil, field and orchard we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### \*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

\* DIALOGUE

P: The Lord be with you. A: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts. A: We lift them to the Lord.

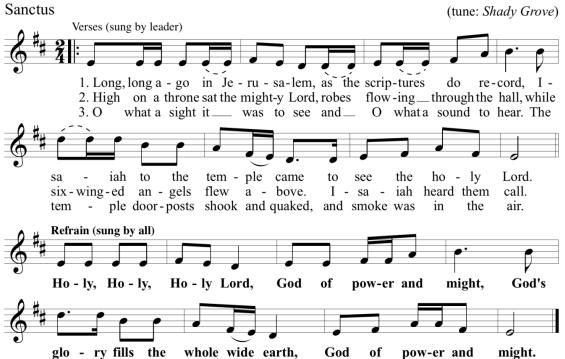
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.** 

#### \*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the Son you sent us the Living Bread from heaven. By the Spirit you plant your Word among us, filling the world with the promise of new life in your holy name. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in adoring song:

\*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (All are invited to sing the verses together)



#### \*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Blessed are you, O God.

At the springtime of the world, you planted light and life; you made Israel to be your vineyard, guarding and training it through wandering and exile, prosperity and faithfulness, to bear your Word for the nations.

After prophets and poets had proclaimed that Word,

you chose a flower of the garden to bear it as her fruit; you made your Word to be enfleshed as Jesus, your Son, who brought life to a weary world.

In the night in which he was handed over,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

We remember, therefore,

his prodigal planting of your Word by his teaching,

his abundant giving of your food and health by his miracles,

his gracious offering of your forgiveness by his welcome.

We proclaim the passage of his last Passover,

when for our sake he passed through death into life, and sealed with the Spirit our own place as his companions.

Send that Spirit upon this meal,

that again we may pass through death into eternal life.

By your Spirit, unite us with all whom you have called into your light,

and strengthen us for service in the light of your love, as the body of your Son, through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God,

with your Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now and forever.

#### A: Amen.

### \*LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus has 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.

#### \*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

L: Just as this broken bread was first scattered on the hills, then was brought together and became one, so let your Church be brought together from the ends of the earth

into your kingdom, for yours are the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever. **A: Amen.** 



# **COMMUNION**

P: The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. **A: Amen.** 



Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr.

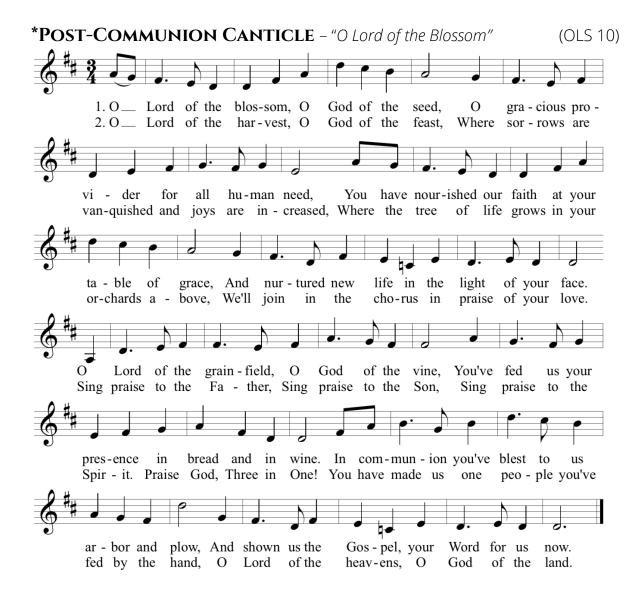
Music: Prospect, W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835

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#### \*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strength and keep you, body, mind, and soul, now and unto eternal life. **A: Amen** 



### \*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

L: Let us pray. Gracious God, we give thanks for your pruning, planting, and nurture. We rejoice that you have used the harvest of field and vineyard to renew and sustain us. Lead us as we go from this life-giving meal into lives of grateful service to you and your cherished creation; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. **A: Amen.** 

# **SENDING**

### \*SENDING OF COMMUNION

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

You may be seated.

### \*CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE

### \*BLESSING

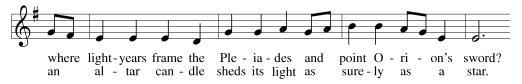
The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.** 

# **SENDING HYMN-** "And Have the Bright Immensities"

(LBW 391)



- 1 And have the bright im men si ties re ceived our ris en Lord,
- 2 The heav'n that hides him from our sight knows nei ther near nor far





Do flam-ing suns his foot-steps trace through cor - ri - dors sub-lime, And where his lov-ing peo-ple meet to share the gift di-vine,



the Lord of in - ter - stel - lar space and con - quer-or of time? there stands he with un - hur-rying feet; there heav'n-ly splen-dors shine.

Text: Howard C. Robbins, 1876–1952 Music: KINGSFOLD, English folk tune

#### \*DISMISSAL

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen. A: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad. A: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

### **POSTLUDE**



# **DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

Sunday, May 5

Acts 10:44-48

Psalm 98 (4)

1 John 5:1-6

John 15:9-17

Monday, May 6

Deuteronomy 7:1-11

1 Timothy 6:11-12

Psalm 93

Tuesday, May 7

Deuteronomy 11:1-17

1 Timothy 6:13-16

Psalm 93

Wednesday, May 8

Deuteronomy 11:18-21

Mark 16:19-20

Psalm 93

Thursday, May 9, Ascension Day

Acts 1:1-11

Psalm 47 (5) or Psalm 93 (2)

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:44-53

Friday, May 10

Exodus 24:15-18

Revelation 1:9-18

Psalm 47

Saturday, May 11

Deuteronomy 34:1-7

John 16:4-11

Psalm 47



#### **SERVING TODAY**

Worship Leader	Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister	Karen Magnuson
Musician	Jim Rearick
Sacristan	Ann Reede
Reader	Eleanor Bird

#### **ABOUT ST. PAUL**

#### <u>Purpose</u>

We are a beacon, boldly sharing the light of Jesus' grace and love.

#### MISSION

Guided by Jesus, we strengthen faith, deepen compassion, extend generosity, and serve community.

#### **CORE VALUES**

Faith • Compassion • Generosity • Community

#### **OUR BIBLE VERSES**

As Paul was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [lesus said,] 'Paul is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the nations.'– Acts 9:3,15

#### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

St. Paul is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock people, where we gather for worship this morning. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, Lenne Lenape, as well as all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it their home.

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