

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2025

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

SIXTH SUNDAY of EASTER

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP *(from Psalm 27)*

One: "Teach me your way, O Lord."
All: **"And lead me on a level path."**
One: "'Come,' my heart says, 'seek God's face!'"
All: **"Your face, Lord, do I seek."**
One: "The Lord is my light and my salvation."
All: **"I will sing and make melody to the Lord."**

***OPENING HYMN** "O Day of Radiant Gladness" [Tune 393] *(Verses 1, 2, & 4)*

1. O day of radiant gladness,
O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,
most beautiful, most bright;
this day the high and lowly,
through ages joined in tune,
sing "Holy, holy, holy"
to the great God triune.
2. This day at the creation
the light first had its birth;
this day for our salvation
Christ rose from depths of earth;
this day our Lord victorious
the Spirit sent from heaven,
and thus this day most glorious
a triple light was given.
4. That light our hope sustaining,
we walk the pilgrim way,
at length our rest attaining,
our endless Sabbath day.

(continued...)

**We sing to you our praises,
O Father, Spirit, Son;
the church its voice upraises
to you, blest Three in One.**

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Music: ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVOGELEIN, Memmingen ms.,
17th cent.; harm. George Ratcliffe Woodward, 1904. *Public Domain*

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Merciful God, you desire that the world might see your light shine through us.
Yet we confess we are often too blinded by the glittering temptations of this world.
We turn from your way,
 hurting the very ones we were called to serve, in our action and our inaction.
We grow frustrated with each other,
 seeking to silence anything besides our own desires.
We fail to see your righteousness
 and champion greed and discord in the name of power and popularity.
Forgive us.
Melt us and mold us into more faithful disciples,
 seeking your light,
 reflecting your mercy,
 and sharing your grace. Amen.**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from I John 1)*

One: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”
All: “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
One: Friends, believe the good news:
All: **In Jesus Christ, we are restored and forgiven and made ready to love and serve. Alleluia. Amen.**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.
All: **And also with you.**

(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Acts 16:16-34

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON “What the Darkness Reveals” by Pastor Bill Vincent

***HYMN** “O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go” GtG 833

1. **O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.**
2. **O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.**
3. **O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain
that morn shall tearless be.**
4. **O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.**

Words: George Matheson, 1881, alt.

Music: ST. MARGARET, Albert Lister Peace, 1884, alt.

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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from “*A Declaration of Faith*”)

(next page...)

**Jesus announced the coming of God's kingdom
and its hidden presence in the midst of the world's kingdoms.
He taught his disciples to seek God's kingdom first.
We believe Christ gives us and demands of us
lives in pilgrimage toward God's kingdom.
Like Christ we may enjoy on our journey
all that sustains life and makes it pleasant and beautiful.
No more than Christ are we spared
the darkness, ambiguity, and threat of life in the world.
We are in the world, but not of the world.
Our confidence and hope for ourselves and other people
do not rest in the powers and achievements of this world,
but in the coming and hidden presence of God's kingdom.
Christ calls each of us to a life appropriate to that kingdom:
to serve as he has served us;
to take up our cross,
risking the consequences of faithful discipleship;
to walk by faith, not by sight,
to hope for what we have not seen.**

“A Declaration of Faith” is Copyright 1977, 1991, the Office of the General Assembly,
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); adopted (1977) “as a contemporary statement of faith, a
reliable aid for Christian study, liturgy, and inspiration, with the clear understanding that”
it is not approved as a part of the *Book of Confessions*.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: God of mercy...
All: ...shine your light in us and through us.

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Contemporary)

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**We give you thanks and praise for your many gifts to us, O God.
What we bring before you this morning is only a token of your bounty to us.
Grant us conviction to give of our all,
even as you have given us all things,
even as you, in Christ, gave us your all.
Make our lives holy,
our hearts faithful,
that we might be a blessing to others,
for the sake of your name. Amen.**

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** “My Life Flows On” GtG 821
(How Can I Keep from Singing?)

**1. My life flows on in endless song,
above earth’s lamentation.
I hear the clear, though far-off hymn
that hails a new creation.**

Refrain:

**No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I’m clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?**

**2. Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing?**

Refrain:

**No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I’m clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?**

(continued...)

3. What though my joys and comforts die?
I know my Savior liveth.
What though the darkness gather round?
Songs in the night he giveth.

Refrain:

No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?

4. The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
a fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his!
How can I keep from singing?

Refrain:

No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?

Words and Music (HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING): Robert Lowry, 1869
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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.

POSTLUDE

The Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Pardon, Prayer for Illumination, and Prayers of the People
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