

Sunday, May 2, 2021

Fourth Sunday after Easter

We answer Christ's call by:

Worshiping God

Welcoming All

Caring for Human Dignity

Serving in the World

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

We must all have the spirit of martyrdom, though we may not all die martyrs.

~George Whitefield

PRELUDE

When Morning Gilds the Skies

Pat Singer

WELCOME & LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Communion Today During the Service

Join us this morning in celebrating the Lord's Supper. Get your elements ready, your bread and juice or wine and we will share in this meal of fellowship and healing.

In-Person Worship

On **Sunday, May 16th** we will gather for the first time since last summer outside and IN PERSON! Please bring your own lawn chairs, blankets, etc... and don't forget to dress weather appropriate. We will gather at 10:30 a.m. behind the CE building.

Please wear a mask, though we will be able to take them off during worship. We will sign everyone in and invite people to settle in groups/pods 6 feet apart. This service will also be livestreamed.

Help with Tech

As we look ahead towards meeting in person again we are always looking for volunteers to help us work with camera and audio so that we can continue to have an online presence.

Prepare A Meal for Those in Need

CIS has teamed up with Ramapo Community Chefs and is inviting anyone who is able to help prepare a meal for pickup that will be distributed to families who are experiencing food insecurity. You prepare a meal for 4-6 people, it gets picked up, and you have done something to help a family who needs it. Contact Kathy Lathrop lathropkathleen@gmail.com if you are interested. Also, include Betsy Bostwick (betzb@optonline.net) and Sue Ternquist (sternquist@gmail.com) on your email.

CHORAL INTROIT

Jubilate Deo

Joyful Noise Choir

CALL TO WORSHIP

Kris Ramdat

The Lord is our refuge.

We can find peace in God's abiding love.

When troubles assail us, we call upon the Lord.

When joys abound, we call upon the Lord.

We rejoice this day that each of our houses is God's house, one of many dwellings of the Holy Spirit.

We thank and praise God for our refuge and sanctuary.

OPENING PRAYER

SCRIPTURE

Kris Ramdat

Psalm 4

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my right!

You gave me room when I was in distress.

Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

2 How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?

How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?*Selah*

3 But know that the Lord has set apart the faithful for himself;

the Lord hears when I call to him.

4 When you are disturbed,^[a] do not sin;

ponder it on your beds, and be silent.*Selah*

5 Offer right sacrifices,

and put your trust in the Lord.

6 There are many who say, “O that we might see some good!

Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord!”

7 You have put gladness in my heart

more than when their grain and wine abound.

8 I will both lie down and sleep in peace;

for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Kris Ramdat

Lord, sometimes We are afraid to take a truthful look at ourselves,
yet you see us as we really are.

Open our eyes, Lord. that we might see your truth.

Even when we won't listen to you,

you hear us when we call your name.

Open our ears, Lord, that we might hear your voice.

We keep the light of your word hidden to ourselves,
though you gave it to share with the world.

Open our mouths, Lord, that our words might speak of your good news.

May we know and serve the One

who calls us to see, hear, and speak.

Open our hearts, Lord. Transform us and pull us forward on your discipleship path.

Let us silently confess our sins to God.

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Christ has brought us together: together in faith, together in hope, together in love. We have been forgiven, redeemed and gathered together as a community of faith to be sent out again: Let us go forth to be living testimonies of Christ's love!

SCRIPTURE

Acts 6:8-12, Acts 7:51-8:1

6⁸ Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. ¹⁰ But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit^[a] with which he spoke. ¹¹ Then they secretly instigated some men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." ¹² They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council.

7⁵¹ "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³ You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it."

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen.^[a] ⁵⁵ But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him;

and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.^[b] **8** ¹ And Saul approved of their killing him.

That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria.

MESSAGE	“The Blood of the Martyrs”	Rev. Abbie Huff
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ANTHEM	<i>Be Thou My Vision</i>	Germonds Church Choir
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CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER
(have your own elements ready to partake)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION	<i>Rejoice in the Lord</i>	Joyful Noise Choir
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POSTLUDE	<i>Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling</i>	Pat Singer
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