

May 16, 2021: 7th Sunday of Easter

The Session and members of First Presbyterian Church, Fargo extend a sincere welcome to you. We are grateful for your presence today! We welcome all persons regardless of race, nationality, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and to serve as an officer of the church.

We Gather in Christ

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy One, open us to the possibility that we are being chosen to be new disciples with new ministries in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PRELUDE

Arise, Your Light is Come!
Sally Harmon, organ

arr. Sedio

WELCOME & CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

CALL TO WORSHIP

Happy are those who do not ridicule and scoff
but who delight in God's teachings and meditate on them day and night.
They are like trees planted by streams of water.
They yield fruit in due season, and their leaves do not wither.
Let us worship God!

HYMN 744: *Arise, Your Light is Come!*

Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God,
which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captives' liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

CALL TO CONFESSION

The Lord watches over our ways.
Let us put our trust in God's grace and confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, though you call us to delight in your teachings, we can become cynical and full of doubt. Do not judge us, we pray, but heal us and restore us to you. Guard us and protect us from evil, and sanctify us in truth; in Jesus' name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

In Christ Jesus, God has promised to forgive us and reconcile us to God and each other. With joy, know your sins have been forgiven.

RESPONSE: *Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Give thanks to the ris - en Lord. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Give praise to His Name.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE: Penny Andrist

GIFT OF MUSIC

On Eagle's Wings
Jeff Olson, solo; Sally Harmon, piano

Joncas

The Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: Sue Van Osdel

May the reading of your Word sanctify us in the truth and bring us to perfect joy. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 (Whirl p. 434)

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred and twenty people) and said, 'Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus—for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.' So one of the men who have accompanied us throughout the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.' So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, 'Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.' And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

May God bless the reading and hearing of this portion of the holy Word.

SECOND READING: Psalm 1

Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
but their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law they meditate day and night.

They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

HYMN 722: *Lord, Speak to Me*

**Lord, speak to me that I may speak
in living echoes of your tone.**

**As you have sought, so let me seek
your erring children lost and lone.**

**O lead me, Lord, that I may lead
the wandering and the wavering feet.
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed
your hungering ones with manna sweet.**

**O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
the precious truths which you impart.
And wing my words that they may reach
the hidden depths of many a heart.**

**O fill me with your fullness, Lord,
until my very heart o'erflow
in kindling thought and glowing word,
your love to tell, your praise to show.**

**O use me, Lord, use even me,
just as you will, and when, and where
until your blessed face I see,
your rest, your joy, your glory share.**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: Taken from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One

of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments. We violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!" With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Responding to the Word

OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Bearing the Word into the World

HYMN 839: *Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!*

**Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine
Heir of salvation, purchase of God
Born of His spirit, washed in His blood.**

Refrain:

**This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long
This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long.**

**Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending, bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. Refrain**

**Perfect submission, all is at rest
I in my Savior, am happy and blessed
Watching and waiting, looking above
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love. Refrain**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Arise, Your Light is Come!

arr. Young