

## WORSHIP ON THE LORD'S DAY

The Third Sunday of Easter, April 26, 2020

Lyons-Muir Church & Ionia First United Methodist Church

### I. CENTERING OUR HEARTS & MINDS FOR WORSHIP

#### Meditation

*sung by Eric Bibb*

#### “I Want Jesus To Walk With Me”

I want Jesus to walk with me  
I want Jesus to walk with me  
All along my pilgrim's journey  
I want Jesus to walk with me.

Well... in my trials, Lord, walk with me  
In my trials, walk with me.  
When my head is bowed in sorrow,  
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

When I'm in trouble, walk with me.  
When my heart is almost breaking,  
I want Jesus to walk with me.

#### Call to Worship

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

I Corinthians 15: 57

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is,  
seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3: 1

Let us pray:

**O God, your blessed Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: Open our eyes by faith, that we may behold him in all his redeeming work and grow into his likeness day by day. Amen.**

#### A Song of Unity & Grace

#### “One Bread, One Body”

Arranged by Bobby Fisher

*Instrumental*

[Refrain] One bread, one body,  
One Lord of all  
One cup of blessing which we bless  
And we, though many, throughout the earth  
We are one body in this one Lord

Gentile or Jew, servant or free  
Woman or man, no more... [R]  
Many the gifts, many the works  
One in the Lord of all... [R]

## The Confession & Absolution of Our Sins

Receive these words from the scriptures:

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I John 1: 8-9

Author of all Being, from whom we receive our lives,  
the recollection of your great faithfulness in the resurrection of Jesus  
reminds us that we have often been unfaithful.  
Now we turn to you in hope and expectation,  
trusting in the promise of your grace:

*Observe a time of silent confession.*

Lord Jesus Christ... **friend of sinners and hope of the poor,**  
**we acknowledge that at different times, in different ways,**  
**we have ignored your call to faithfulness**  
**and broken the vows we affirm in Baptism:**

we have fed our minds with the spite of the world,  
rather than your Gospel of Peace;  
we have entered into judgement on others,  
when judgment belongs to you;  
we have worshipped other gods  
instead of you;  
we have neglected the health of our bodies  
for the sake of short-term pleasure;  
we have imagined that you do not notice  
when we ignore the neighbor, the stranger, and the enemy.

Have mercy upon us, Lamb of God; have mercy upon us.  
The remembrance of our sins is painful to us.  
We wish we had not said, and done, and felt  
those things which have grieved your heart,  
and we yearn to be made new again in your love.  
By your grace, lift the burden of our regret  
and give us the faith to worship you alone.  
And take away the profanity of our tribalism, Lord Christ,  
that we may walk with you as Easter People.  
This we pray to return your love,  
and for your Holy Name. Amen.

My sisters and brothers, beloved in Christ Jesus, there is no truer knowledge of salvation than the knowledge of our sins forgiven. All fall short of the glory of God, but we are justified by the blood of Christ and saved by His resurrection. Therefore, set aside all doubt, that you may enter into the joy of the LORD; for I say to you that your sins are forgiven: in the Holy Name of the Trinity, in whom we live and move and have our being. **Amen.**

May the Peace of Christ, that removes all fear, fill your whole life, as the waters fill the sea.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Greetings and peace from:  
The Ashers, Eric, Renee & Tristan  
The Trommaters, Bill & Pat  
The Bratt Carles, Jessica, Jonathan & Elliott  
Erica Davarn & Koopa  
Dawn Kemp*

*If you'd like to share the peace with your brothers and sisters in Christ,  
send pastor Jonathan a video at [jonathan.brattcarle@gmail.com](mailto:jonathan.brattcarle@gmail.com)*

## II. THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

O Lord, open our lips,  
**And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

**Creator of all that is, seen and unseen, you alone are God. Pour out your Holy Spirit, therefore, to break the heavenly mana of your Living Word for us; to show us the face of Christ and lead us, once again, into the story of your everlasting love. Amen.**

### **The Prophetic Word Revealed in Table Grace The Book of Genesis, 18: 1-15**

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground.

He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant."

So they said, "Do as you have said."

And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes."

Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?"

And he said, "There, in the tent."

Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him.

Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?"

The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son."

But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid.

He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh."

The Word of the Lord

**Turns sorrow into laughter!**

*Observe a moment of silence.*

### A Psalm of Deliverance, 34

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.  
My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.  
O magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

I sought the Lord, and he answered me,  
and delivered me from all my fears.  
Look to him, and be radiant;  
so your faces shall never be ashamed.  
This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord,  
and was saved from every trouble.

The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.  
O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.  
O fear the Lord, you his holy ones,  
for those who fear him have no want.  
The young lions suffer want and hunger,  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

Come, O children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.  
Which of you desires life,  
and covets many days to enjoy good?  
Keep your tongue from evil,  
and your lips from speaking deceit.  
Depart from evil, and do good;  
seek peace, and pursue it.

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,  
and his ears are open to their cry.  
The face of the Lord is against evildoers,  
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.  
When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,  
and rescues them from all their troubles.  
The Lord is near to the brokenhearted,  
and saves the crushed in spirit.

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the Lord rescues them from them all.  
He keeps all their bones;  
not one of them will be broken.  
Evil brings death to the wicked,  
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.  
The Lord redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

*Observe a moment of silence.*

**Eternal God, faithful and tender in compassion, you pour out hope for our lives through the victory of Love over the nothingness of Death. As we drink this Cup of Salvation – in prayer and praise, in silence and in song – renew your Image in our lives for the sake of Him who died that we might be free, Jesus Christ our Lord: who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God for ever and ever. Amen.**

**Ransomed from Despair for Love  
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 sincere love for each other, love one another fervently 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  
**Gives us strength to be faithful.**

*Observe a moment of silence.*

## Hymn of Adoration and Praise

## “Fairest Lord Jesus”

*sung by Sara Groves*

Fairest Lord Jesus, ruler of all nature  
O thou of God and Man the Son  
Thee will I cherish, thee will I honor  
Thou my soul’s glory, joy, and crown.

Fair is the sunshine, fairer still the moonlight,  
And all the twinkling stary host.  
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,  
Than all the angels heaven can boast.

Fair are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands  
Robed in the blooming garb of Spring.  
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer.  
You make the woeful heart to sing.

Text: Anonymous  
Tune: St. Elizabeth (Crusaders’ Hymn)

## The Holy Gospel, according to 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 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.

These are the words of eternal life.

**Here is the Bread of Heaven!**

*Observe a moment of silence.*

### **Reflecting on the Scriptures: “Table Grace”**

Though the preaching of the Resurrection at all times points us to the Gift of Christ’s Body and Blood on Maundy Thursday, today’s passage from Luke begs most to be followed by the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. The narrative outline of Luke’s story follows the ancient four-fold pattern of worship on the Lord’s Day, which still orients our orders of worship today:

- Cleopas and the other disciple gather in the presence of Christ,
- they lament and confess their grief,
- one comes to open and proclaim the Good News of the LORD’s Messiah,
- the Good News sets their hearts alight,
- and Jesus is revealed in the breaking of the bread.

The wealth of this narrative plotline in terms of our understanding of Christian worship cannot be overstated. Luke’s story highlights the unity of the Living Word proclaimed in the sermon and the Living Word made flesh in the Sacrament.

But for us today, the richness of this text, only serves to point out our current inability worship together, and what a desparate lack this creates in our lives. No matter how good this service is, or how relevant this sermon might be, we will not be able to experience the culmination of the Gospel in the experience of Jesus himself. This is a problem; for the recognition and experience of Jesus himself is the purpose of all Apostolic proclamation and praise. Of course there are online options for Holy Communion, some of which feel theologically sound and others which do not. But the truth of the matter is that the celebration of the Eucharist<sup>1</sup> is something the Church cannot do unless it gathers together in one place...at the same time... and gets less than 6 feet apart! In order

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<sup>1</sup> Eucharist literally means “thanksgiving.” So calling the Lord’s Supper, “the Eucharist” refers to the Great Thanksgiving prayer that forms the liturgy for the Sacrament. For more information email Pastor Jonathan.

to have Holy Communion, we have to *touch, and be touched*. As the old hymn goes: “Here would I touch and handle things unseen” (see below).

At first glance, this poses a grave problem for us. Holy Communion is at the very center of the life of the Church; and, for me personally, remains a huge part of my devotional life. As John records in the sixth chapter of his gospel, the body and blood of Christ are “True Food and True Drink,” such that to go without these means of grace starves the spirit of the human being and creates a sense of unfulfilled longing. My assumption is that, even if you would never use this kind of language to describe how our circumstances make you feel, you nevertheless are aware that something in our communal life as Christians is missing. Indeed, many of us feel the burden of this lack acutely and have no way to find relief.

But, like last week, what at first glance may seem a fruitless period in our spiritual lives actually hides the potential for a deeper understanding of the thing we miss. At second glance, our feelings of spiritual malnutrition beg the question of whether we’ve failed to notice the sustenance God IS providing. We can’t celebrate Holy Communion the way we’re used to doing. True. But does this mean Christ cannot be in communion with us? No.

If we’re trapped and separated, but God is not, we should anticipate that God will find other ways of imparting the same nourishment and grace that we receive when we come forward to the Table of the Lord. Why? Because God can and has promised to be with us, “even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). And this is not such a mysterious thing.

If you can’t eat and drink what you are used to eating and drinking, then you have to make a meal out of something else. If you can’t get eggs, you eat oatmeal for breakfast. If you can’t get coffee, you’ll have tea. If you can’t have lasagna, you make soup for dinner. Fill in the blanks from your own experience. But notice that this adaptive ability is something we’re good at as humans. For the entire history of our species, humans have survived by using our ingenuity to find sources of food and water. Our spiritual lives are no different. If we can’t have Holy Communion in a sanctuary with a pastor and some fancy words, that doesn’t mean we can’t be in Communion with Christ. It simply means we have to examine our assumptions and expectations about what Holy Communion really is: we have to imagine, and pray, and, most of all, trust that with various means God will make a way where we never knew one to exist.

Take the idea of a building, for instance. When you say, “I’m going to church,” do you think about a place or a gathering? I’ll bet most (if not all) of us think about a place... If you say, “I’m going to church,” I think, “How far away is it?” And even if I think about people, I think, “Who’s going to be *there*?” But the Church of Jesus Christ is a body of people, no matter whether they meet in barns, cathedrals, school gymnasiums... the back 9, the wood lot... or on laptops, phones, computers, iPads, and gadgets of all kinds! Are we not the Church right now? Is not the Spirit able to unite our hearts across time and space with the sense of being One Body, with one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism? In fact, we are the Church right now, Apostolic and Universal, because we never stop being the Church. Not ever!

Now... Let's apply this question about buildings and gatherings to Holy Communion. When a pastor (hopefully) leads the Church through Jesus' invitation,  
the confession of sin,  
the remembrance of God's acts of salvation,  
the invocation of the Spirit,  
the sharing of grace-filled Holy Things  
and the entrance into Christ's unfolding ministry...

...when the Eucharist occurs, it points out to anyone paying attention that we are deeply part of God's story. We bring fully to heart and mind what God *has done* in order to recognize what God *is doing now* and what God *will bring to pass in the Fullness of Time*. To put it another way, the Sacrament is given by Jesus to teach his followers what to do *when they are NO LONGER gathered together*. We learn at Christ's Table how to be in the world. So is Holy Communion something a pastor does in a church building with fancy words? Or is it a way of living ~ of being ~ in the world? The answer is: Both. But the second one is far more important than the first in the life of the disciple. The first is like a handbook of road signs. The second is like driving the car.

Take these fellows in Luke's story, for instance. Cleopas and his friend are not only in Holy Communion with Jesus "in the breaking of the bread," they're in Holy Communion with him the whole 7 mile trek! The revelation of Jesus at supper is nothing less, but also nothing more, than the moment they understand what it is they've been feeling all along with burning hearts and renewed hope. But here's the point: once they've recognized his face, and put words to what it was they were feeling as he walked with them, they'll enjoy a growing ability to have Holy Communion with Jesus in other circumstances. Bread is ordinary, you see. It's the foodstuff that every human culture has in some form. And when Jesus is revealed to them in the simple giving and receiving of their evening bread, it teaches Cleopas and his friend to look for the sacred in all the stuff of ordinary life. And a deepening understanding of the Sacrament teaches them to be in Holy Communion with the Living God through *all* the things God has made.

To draw on popular culture for a moment, we see a similar idea as Yoda instructs Luke Skywalker in the nature of the Force in the best Star Wars movie: *The Empire Strikes Back*. As Luke struggles to find out who he is and what he can do, Yoda points out that discovery and perception are not about trying or effort, so to speak, but about reorienting the mind to accept and participate in a greater reality. Luke can move rocks, sure; but when it comes to his X-wing Fighter sinking into the bog, he's at a loss.

"They're only different in your mind," Yoda prompts. And when Luke fails to recover his ship, collapsing into an exhausted heap of arms and legs, Yoda seizes the moment to reveal that it is his assumptions and expectations that are flawed and not he himself.

"Judge me by my size, do you?" Yoda asks. "And where you should not. For my ally is the Force; and a powerful ally it is.... Its energy surrounds us, and binds us. Luminous beings are we... You must *feel* the Force around you. Between you... me... the tree, the rock... everywhere. Yes! even between the land and the ship..."

In response to this, Luke tromps off in a huff, riddled with self-doubt. And then, as Luke breaks, Yoda enters the deep serenity of Divine Life and *moves* the ship. Luke staggers around his X-wing incredulous. "I can't believe it," he gasps. "That is why you fail," says Yoda.

So it is with Cleopas and his friend. They cannot believe that Jesus could rise up from the grave, so they can't see him for who he is. But, despite their broken hearts and thick heads, the Master is generous and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. And as they go down from Jerusalem to Emmaus, Jesus interprets all the prophets in the new light of the Resurrection, drawing his disciples out of their assumptions and preconceived notions into the greater reality of the Divine Life. When Jesus is revealed in the breaking of the bread, it is only the outward sign of what their hearts have known the whole time! So too, the Sacrament we do in the face to face gathering we call "church" is only the Sign of the Divine Reality that **God Is With Us**. Dear friends, that Divine Reality is true always and everywhere!

The same truth emerges with Abraham and Sarah as well. Three strangers pass by the place where Abraham is encamped with his household. A stranger himself in a foreign land, Abraham jumps at the chance to make some new friends. But there is something oddly captivating about these Three who show up at the flap of Abraham's tent... And the reader becomes aware of this in the way Abraham reacts to their presence.

Not only does he offer them water to wash and refresh themselves... He kills the fatted calf and puts out the cottage cheese and fresh milk. And as they eat, Abraham remains standing in attendance, while Sarah eavesdrops behind the wall of their tent. Somehow Abraham and Sarah both feel, keenly, that these are no ordinary travelers. There is something expectant in the arrival of these strangers, something in the lightness of their step and their tone of voice, that tells the heart long before the mind that Holy Communion is happening. And recognize that it is in the Table Grace -- in the breaking of the bread as it were -- that the Sign of Holy Communion is given and the prophetic Word is revealed.

In this case, however, the Sign itself is not the food, but what happens - miraculously - as it is enjoyed. When the Lord makes the promise of a son, Sarah laughs! Her astonishment overcomes all propriety and decorum, as the union of hope with promise breaks forth in the wordless music of her joy. Sarah's laugh comes as Table Grace, but it *becomes* the Sacrament of God's Divine Reality; for the son of whom the Lord speaks will be named "He laughs" ... Isaac! We are to understand that God enjoys Holy Communion just as much as we do and will make this possible in unique ways tailored to every person. For before Isaac is conceived in her womb, laughter is conceived in her heart where sorrow and disappointment had reigned with out rival. Holy Communion means all the moments of redemption in our lives when the Living God frees us for a new or renewed relationship.

Just like for Cleopas and his friend, and Abraham and Sarah hundreds of years before, for us, today, Holy Communion is much less a thing we do at church and much more a way of being the Church. The only thing that remains for us to do is what the Apostle Peter teaches his folks: to live in expectant reverence and fervent love, no matter our circumstances. Having received this word of truth, we are called to persevere in faithfulness. We are called to open ourselves to the potential of the Divine Reality in which you have been instructed, and which is everywhere evident in the words of our Liturgy:

*Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine:  
make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,  
that we might be for the world the body of Christ*

*redeemed by His blood...*

God having already answered this astounding invocation every time we dared to utter it, may we not be confident in the ongoing blessing of the final prayer in our Service of the Table?

*Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery  
in which you have given yourself to us.  
Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit  
to give ourselves for others,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

In other words, grant that we may remain in Holy Communion with you at all times, at all places, to the end that others might come to perceive and accept the Greater and Divine Reality of your Eternal Glory and Love. In other words, grant that your Prophetic and Life-Giving Word might be revealed whenever and however we break bread... whenever and however we acknowledge your Energy in the Creation... whenever and however we laugh, as our longing gives way to hope in the grace of your Promises.

Dear friends, I long for the time when we can gather at the Invitation of Jesus Christ, to sup where He sets a Table for all who will come. I long to be joined with Him and with you in the most precious Sacrament of His Body and Blood. But meanwhile, let us Commune with Him in all Holiness and live the Great Thanksgiving! This I shall do: as I delight in my wife and child... my blessed grandmother and my parents... the tree, the rock, the silly turkeys who haggle over seeds under our bird feeder, the pesky deer who eat my shrubs... and ice cream, and sleep, and all the joys of this world which He has given us!

Won't you too?

In the Name of the Holy One,  
Christ Jesus our Lord,  
May your joy be full!  
Amen.

### III. WE RESPOND TO THE LIVING WORD

#### The Offering

**“Jesus, the very thought of thee”**

*sung by Jonathan Bratt Carle*

Jesus, the very thought of thee  
With sweetness fills my breast;  
But sweeter far thy face to see  
And in thy presence rest.

But what to those who find  
As this nor tongue, nor pen can show  
The love of Jesus, what it is,  
None but his loved ones know.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,  
Nor memory find  
A sweeter sound than thy blest name,  
O Savior of us all!

Jesus, our only joy be thou,  
As thou our prize wilt be.  
Jesus, be thou our glory now,  
And thru eternity.

O hope of ev'ry contrite heart,  
O joy of all the meek,  
To those who fall, how kind thou art!  
How good to those who seek!

Text: attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)  
translated by Edward Caswall (1814-1878)  
Musical Setting: Dale Wood

*Please send in your offering each week (or month) through the mail.  
Contact the church if you need assistance with your offering.*

#### The Apostles Creed (standing, in body, mind, or spirit, as you are able)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy, catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.

## The Prayers of the People

May you experience the closeness of the Spirit as we pray:

O LORD, God Almighty, you hold the power of life and of death.  
Therefore, we thank you and praise your Name  
for bringing us to this new day,  
for the gifts of our souls and bodies,  
and for the spiritual nourishment of this time of worship.  
May your Living Word stay in our hearts  
and bring about the recovery of your Image  
as our sorrow turns to joy.

We pray for your people in every place:  
those who, through their unselfish love,  
show that your law is written on their hearts.  
May your people bring good news  
to all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit.  
Especially, bless your Church:  
give health and insight to our bishop, David,  
for you have placed him in authority over us  
to be our guide and shepherd;  
give to all those set apart as ministers of the Gospel  
a reverent and unswerving dedication to the righteousness of Christ;  
and anoint the fellowship of all the saints  
with the same mind that was also in the Lord Jesus,  
to uphold and encourage one another,  
keeping the vows made at our Baptism  
as we take up crosses for the life of the world.

Healer of our every ill, Spirit of Truth and Beauty,  
we intercede for those in every place who not well  
and those who labor to return them to health.  
Bless and uphold all orderlies and custodial staff...  
all kitchen and service staff...  
all whose labor goes unnoticed...  
bless the doctors and nurses with wisdom and discernment...  
bless the chaplains with true and fervent compassion for those who suffer...  
bless the administrators and clerical workers with perseverance...  
bless the families of the sick with courage...  
for you are the hope of each tomorrow.

Christ who reigns in holiness alone –  
Lord of lords, Sovereign over all rulers,  
Author of salvation,  
before whom all people shall give an account of their lives,  
before whom all knees shall bow –  
we intercede on behalf of the nations  
and all in authority.  
Break our hearts for those who starve.  
Rend our ignorance of those who have no home.  
Quell our noise for those with unheard voices.  
Especially we pray for Donald, our president;  
for Gretchen, our governor;  
and for the leaders of our communities:  
Grant that they may discharge their offices with grace,  
being faithful to your justice and truth,  
seeking the well-being and flourishing of every human person,  
and safe-guarding the natural world.

Finally, O God, Holy Trinity of Love and Light,  
we pray for ourselves:  
in praise and humility,  
we lay all the hopes and cares of our lives before you.  
Bless us with the fulfillment of our needs  
and lead us to the deep desires of our hearts.  
And hear us, most merciful God,  
as we lift the names of those  
who are in particular need of your love and care:

*Observe a time of silence.*

**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 sins,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from Evil:  
for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

## Hymn of Consummation

**“Here, O my Lord”**  
*sung by the Ripon Cathedral Choir*

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;  
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;  
Here would I grasp with firmer hands Thy grace;  
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the Bread of God;  
Here drink with Thee the Royal wine of Heaven;  
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,  
And taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

Text: Horatius Bonar (1808-1889)  
Musical Setting: Percy Whitlock (1903-1946)

## IV. BLESSING & DISMISSAL

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common and private prayers to you; and you have promised, through your well-beloved Son, that when two or three gather in your Name, you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and prayers of your servants, as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Go now from this gathering in the freedom of the Almighty God to meet with Christ wherever you may be: for he walks, and sits, and bikes, and cooks, and runs with you, even when you do not understand. And when your heart burns bright, and your hope springs like a phoenix from the ashes of despair, know that you are in Holy Communion with the Lover of your Soul.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Amen.**