



IT IS NOT FOR YOU TO KNOW  
**TIMES OR SEASONS**  
THAT THE  
**FATHER HAS FIXED**  
BY HIS  
**AUTHORITY.**

ACTS 1:7, ESV

**The Service for the Lord's Day**  
**Bethel Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**Ascension Sunday**  
**May 16, 2021 – 11:00 AM**

*Congregational responses indicated in bold.*

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship (*L = Leader, P = People*)

L: Happy are those who do not ridicule and scoff

**P: but who delight in God's teachings  
and meditate on them day and night.**

L: They are like trees planted by streams of water.

**P: They yield fruit in due season,  
and their leaves do not wither.**

Prayer of Invocation

We thank you, almighty God, for the life of Jesus among us,  
and that he reigns in power for us.

Strengthen our hope and bless the work of our hands,  
that we may live as his body in this world.

In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

\* Hymn      **"COME, CHRISTIANS, JOIN TO SING"**

MADRID

*Come, Chris-tians, join to sing:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*Loud praise to Christ our King:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*Let all, with heart and voice,  
be-fore his throne re-joice;*

*praise is his gra-cious choice:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*Come, lift your hearts on high:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*Let prais-es fill the sky:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*He is our guide and friend;*

*To us he'll con-de-scend;*

*his love shall nev-er end:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*Praise yet our Christ a-gain,*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*Life shall not end the strain:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

*On heav-en's bliss-ful shore*

*his good-ness we'll a-dore,*

*sing-ing for-ev-er-more:*

*Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!*

Call to Confession

God-lovers, let us repent of those things  
that have drawn us away from God and our neighbors,  
that we may receive the joy of forgiveness.

Prayer of Confession

**God, lover of humankind,**

**you have asked us to proclaim your name to all people.**

**We confess that we have held back from doing that,  
shy and self-conscious.**

**Forgive us, we pray, and empower us in Jesus' name.**

*...(silent and personal confession) Amen.*

Sung Response

**“LORD, HAVE MERCY”**

LAND OF REST

*Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy;*

*Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.*

*Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy;*

*Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.*

## Declaration of Forgiveness

The promise of our faith is that we are already forgiven  
and, in Christ's name, given the power to rise up  
and subdue all that separates us from God and each other.  
Receive the Holy Spirit and be empowered to be witnesses  
of God's resurrection power in Jesus Christ.

## Sung Response

“ALLELUIA!”

CELTIC ALLELUIA

*Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!*  
*Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!*

## Prayer for Illumination

Enlighten the eyes of our hearts, O God,  
and grant us a spirit of wisdom and revelation  
through the reading of this, your Word. Amen.

## Readings from Scripture

Wisdom Psalm 1 *(The Two Ways)*  
History Acts 1:1-11 *(The Promise of the Holy Spirit)*

Sermon “How Long Are We Going to Look Up”  
The Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff

## Affirmation of Faith

*Taken from The Brief Statement of Faith, 1991,  
The Book of Confessions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

**In life and 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 Jesus Christ,  
fully human, fully God.**

**Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:  
preaching good news to the poor  
and release to the captives,  
teaching by word and deed  
and blessing the children,  
healing the sick**

**and binding up the brokenhearted,  
eating with outcasts,  
forgiving sinners,  
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.  
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,  
Jesus was crucified,  
suffering the depths of human pain  
and giving his life for the sins of the world.  
God raised Jesus from the dead,  
vindicating his sinless life,  
breaking the power of sin and evil,  
delivering us from death to life eternal.**

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the whole world and everything in it,  
for there is much need and want,  
and we, the church,  
have been called to be Christ's body in our world today.

We pray for all the people of the world,  
especially those who live in want and need.

We pray for the nations of the world,  
especially their leaders,  
that they may see, understand, and honor  
the sovereignty of peace and compassion  
over their own self-interest.

We pray for the ill and the abused,  
and for all those who need protection and care.

We pray for the earth and its delicate yet life-giving ecosystem.  
By the same power through which you resurrected Christ,  
empower us to restore endangered species,  
polluted waters, and unclean air.

We pray for your church and its called and elected leaders.  
May we all grow in faith and love,  
and know with surety the inheritance and hope  
to which you have called us.

Holy, holy, holy God, your power and majesty fill the universe,  
far above all we see and do, measure and name.  
You reign with Christ and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever. Amen.

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 sins,  
as we forgive those who sin 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. Amen.**

Invitation to the Offering

Christ has called us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth.  
So let us give generously to fulfill that call.

Prayer of Dedication

Jesus has made God known to us.  
We already belong to God.  
And so we dedicate these gifts to God's service  
and to the glory of God's name. Amen.

Hymn     **"CALLED AS PARTNERS IN CHRIST'S SERVICE"**     BEECHER

*Called as part-ners in Christ's ser-vice,  
called to min-is-tries of grace,  
we re-pond with deep com-mit-ment  
fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of shar-ing,  
side by side and friend with friend,  
e-qual part-ners in our car-ing  
to ful-fil God's cho-sen end.*

*Christ's ex-am-ple, Christ's in-spir-ing,  
Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
let us fol-low, nev-er fal-tering,  
rec-on-cil-ing folk on earth.  
Men and wom-en, rich-er, poor-er,  
all God's peo-ple, young and old,  
blend-ing hu-man skills to-geth-er  
gra-cious gifts from God un-fold.*

*Thus new pat-terns for Christ's mis-sion,  
in a small or glob-al sense,  
help us bear each oth-er's bur-dens,  
break-ing down each wall or fence.  
Words of com-fort, words of vi-sion,  
words of chal-lenge, said with care,  
bring new power and strength for ac-tion,  
make us col-leagues, free and fair.*

*So God grant us for to-mor-row  
ways to or-der hu-man life  
that sur-round each per-son's sor-row  
with a calm that con-quers strife.  
Make us part-ners in our liv-ing,  
our com-pas-sion to in-crease,  
mes-sen-gers of faith thus giv-ing  
hope and con-fi-dence and peace.*

#### Benediction

Go forth knowing the hope to which God has called you,  
the glorious inheritance that you have received,  
and God's power that is at work for us through Jesus Christ  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

#### Sung Response

**“BE NOT AFRAID ”**

*Be not a-fraid; sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le-lu-ia!  
Be not a-fraid; sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al-le-lu-ia!  
(Repeat)*

#### Postlude

Minister: The Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Pianist: Judy Moyer

Hymn Leader: Dianne Griffith

Sound: Adam Badger

Video: Jake Horton

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“Come, Christians, Join to Sing”

Text: Christian Henry Bateman, 1843

Music: Spanish folk melody; arr. Benjamin Carr, 1824;  
harm. David Evans, 1927

Music Harm. © 1927 Oxford University Press

“Lord, Have Mercy”

Text: Trad. Liturgical text

Music: American folk melody; arr. Richard Proulx, 1984

Music Arr. © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

“Alleluia!”

Text: Trad. Liturgical text

Music: Fintan O’Carroll, 1981; harm. Christopher Walker, 1985

Music © 1985 Fintan O’Carroll and Christopher Walker

(Published by OCP)

“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”

Text: Jane Parker Huber, 1981

Music: John Zundel, 1870

Text © 1981 Jane Parker Huber

(admin. Westminster John Knox Press)

“Be Not Afraid”

Text: Taizé Community, 1998

Music: Jacques Berthier, 1998

Text and Music © 1998 Les Presses de Taizé

(admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

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