

Trinity-Grace United Church
ORDER OF SERVICE - FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
APRIL 28th, 2024

PRELUDE

WELCOME

INTROIT: "Bathe Me in Your Light" (MV 82)
(Soloist)

Bathe me in your light, O God of All, Creator;
let it shine upon my soul with healing and with grace.
Be to me a beacon bright through shadows of life's wounding,
showing me the way to live in faith, in your embrace.

Bathe me in your love, O Source of Awe and Wonder;
help me walk the sacred path of harmony and peace.
May I be attentive to the musings of your presence,
drinking from the well of hope that brings the heart release.

Bathe me in your grace, O One of Spirit's longing;
teach me of your gentle ways that fill the soul with strength.
Guide me on the pilgrimage that leads to truth and wholeness,
Fill me with your promise of a love that knows no length.

CANDLE LIGHTING

OPENING RESPONSES

One/All:

Whether we live near mountains or in the prairies—

We are one in Christ.

Whether our winters are balmy or our summers are cool—

We are one in Christ.

Whether we live near the Atlantic, Pacific, or Arctic Ocean

or somewhere in the middle -

We are one in Christ.

Whether we live in urban dwellings, nestled in the suburbs,
or surrounded by a rural landscape—

We are one in Christ.

In a spirit of unity, caring for each other and the whole of creation -

We are one in Christ.

Let us worship in unity and in faith.

GATHERING PRAYER

Leader:

God our Maker,

We praise you for all the wonders in your creation:

For the detailed perfection revealed in a baby's tiny fingers,

in green shoots and flowers rising to greet the spring,

in each rock face worn by wind and water,

witnessing to your ancient design

like wrinkles around an aging smile.

Such details lift our hearts to praise you.

So let the life, teaching and resurrection of

the Risen Christ lift and instruct our hearts this day,

that we may greet a new week

as an occasion to discover you in our midst,

making all things new in the springtime of your Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

HYMN: "In Loving Partnership" (VU 603)

1. In loving partnership we come
Seeking O God, your will to do;
Our prayers and actions now receive,
We freely offer them to you.
2. We are the hands and feet of Christ,

serving by grace each other's need.
We dare to risk and sacrifice
with truthful word and faithful deed.

3. Loving community we seek,
your hope and strength within us move.
The poor and rich, the strong and weak,
are brought together in your love.
4. In loving partnership, O God,
help us your future to proclaim.
Justice and peace be our desire,
we humbly pray in Jesus' name.

PRAYER FOR RELEASE AND RENEWAL

Leader:

Holy God, renewing presence through the ages and with us now:
We have tried this week to be the people you want us to be.
But sometimes we get thrown off course.
Confusion can reign inside us;
Anger, tension and envy can distort our vision;
We worry small things out of proportion,
And act out of fear rather than compassion.
When the noise around and within becomes too much,

All:

**Teach us the silence of humility,
The silence of wisdom,
The silence of love.
The silence that speaks without words,
The silence wherein we can hear the still, small voice
Calling us home...**

(Silence is held)

A WORD OF GRACE

Leader:

Friends, hear this assurance:

In life, and in death, we belong to God.

In sin and in saintliness, we belong to God.

You belong to God at all times, in all places:

the source of all that is loving and beautiful is with you.

Response: "Halle, Halle, Halle" (VU 958)

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

SHARING PEACE

One: May the peace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you!

We take a moment to greet each other and share a sign of peace.

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

One:

God of wisdom,

as we listen to your Word recorded by generations of your people,

fill us with understanding by the power of your Holy Spirit.

Reveal the mysteries of faith to us, so that we may grow in faithfulness,
following Jesus, your Living Word.

All: Amen.

READING

Acts 10: 1-48

¹Now a certain man in Caesarea by the name of Cornelius – a centurion from a military cohort called the Italic, ²A devout man and one who along with all his household revered God, donating many alms to the people and always supplicating God – ³Clearly saw in a vision, around about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him and saying to him, “Cornelius.” ⁴And, gazing at him and growing terrified, he said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and your almsgiving have risen up as a memorial offering before God. ⁵And now send men to Joppa and summon back a certain Simon, who is also called Peter; ⁶This man is lodged with a certain Simon, a tanner whose household is by the sea.”

⁷And as the angel who was speaking to him departed he called two of the household slaves and a devout soldier from among those in constant attendance on him, ⁸And, explaining everything to them, sent them to Joppa.

⁹And the next day, as they were journeying and approaching the city, Peter ascended around the sixth hour up to the roof to pray. ¹⁰And he became hungry, and wished to taste some food; and as they were preparing it an ecstasy came upon him, ¹¹And he beholds the sky opened, and an object descending, like a great sheet being let down to the ground by four corners, ¹²On which were all the quadrupeds and reptiles of the earth and birds of the sky.

¹³And a voice came to him: “Arise, Peter, sacrifice, and eat.”

¹⁴But Peter said, “Certainly not, Lord, for I have never eaten anything profane and impure.”

¹⁵And again, for a second time, there came a voice to him: “Do not deem profane what God has made pure.”

¹⁶And this happened three time, and at once the object was taken up into the sky.

¹⁷And, as Peter was wondering within himself what the vision he has seen might be, look: The men who had been sent by Cornelius, inquiring after the household of Simon, were standing at the gate, ¹⁸And calling out they asked, “Is Simon, also called Peter, perhaps lodged here?” ¹⁹And as Peter was pondering the vision the Spirit said, “See, two men are seeking you; ²⁰But rise and go down, and go with them, hesitating over nothing, for I have sent them.”

²¹And descending Peter said to the men, “See here, I am he whom you are seeking; what are you here for?” ²²And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, a just man and one who reveres God, and one in high repute with the whole nation of the Judeans, was enjoined by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to listen to words from you.” ²³So, calling them in, he gave them lodging. And the next day he arose and departed with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

²⁴And the next day he entered Caesarea; and Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relations and intimate friends. ²⁵And, as Peter was coming in, Cornelius came to meet him, fell at his feet, and prostrated himself. ²⁶But Peter raised him up, saying, “Stand up; I too am a man.” ²⁷And, conversing with him, he went in, and finds a gathering of many persons,

²⁸And said to them, “You understand how impermissible it is for a Judaeen man to associate with or approach a person of foreign extraction; God also showed me that I must not call any man profane or impure; ²⁹So in fact, on being summoned, I came without raising any objection. I ask therefore, for what reason did you summon me?”

³⁰And Cornelius said, “Four days ago, at this, the ninth hour, I was in my house praying, and see: A man was standing before me in shinning raiment, ³¹And he says, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your almsgivings have been remembered before God.

³²Send to Joppa, therefore, and call for Simon, who is also called Peter; this man is lodged by the sea in the household of Simon, a tanner. ³³So I sent you at once, and you have been so good as to come. So now here we all are in the presence of God, to listen to all the commands you have been given by the Lord.”

³⁴And, opening his mouth, Peter said, “In Truth, I perceive that God is not a respecter of person; ³⁵Rather, in every people, whoever reveres him and performs works of righteousness is accepted by him; ³⁶The word that he sent to the sons of Israel, proclaiming the good tidings of peace through Jesus the Anointed – this one is Lord of everyone...³⁷You know the story of what took place throughout the whole of Judaea, starting out from Galilee after the baptism that John announced;

³⁸Jesus, the man from Nazareth, how God anointed him with a Holy Spirit and the man from Nazareth, how God anointed him with a Holy Spirit and with power – who went about doing good and healing all those under the power of the Slanderer, because God was with him;

³⁹and we are witnesses of all the things that he did, both in the country of the Judaeans and in Jerusalem – whom in fact they killed, hanging him up upon a tree.

⁴⁰This one God raised up on the third day, and granted that he became manifest, ⁴¹Not to all the people, but to us, witnesses previously appointed by God, who ate and drank with him after he rose again from the dead; ⁴²And he commanded us to proclaim to the people and solemnly to testify that this is the one marked out by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³To this one all the prophets bear witness: Everyone having faith in him is to receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

⁴⁴While Peter was still uttering these words, the Spirit, the Holy One, fell upon all those listening to the discourse, ⁴⁵And the faithful among the circumcised, as many as had accompanied Peter, were astonished, because the gift of the Holy Spirit has been poured out even upon the gentiles; ⁴⁶For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God’s greatness. Then Peter spoke up: ⁴⁷“Can anyone forbid the water for baptizing these persons, who have also received the Spirit, the Holy One, just as we did?” ⁴⁸And he instructed them to be baptized in the name of Jesus the Anointed. Then they asked him to remain for a few days.

One: This is the record of our ancestors in faith.

All: May their witness reveal God’s word for us today.

EXPLORING THE WORD

- Message by Beth Malena

RESPONDING

HYMN: ““In Christ There Is No East or West” (VU 606)

During the hymn, the offering box is brought forward

- 1 In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great family of love
throughout the whole wide earth.
- 2 In him shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.
- 3 Join hands, then, people of the faith,
whate'er your race may be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.
- 4 In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christ-like souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Trinity-Grace is grateful for the many ways we are gifted and called to contribute to God's mission through this faith community.

Prayer of Dedication

All:

Holy One,

**Bless and multiply these and all the gifts we offer,
trusting in the transformative power of your Spirit
working in us and through the ministry of this church,
to bring new life to the world. Amen.**

CONNECTING IN COMMUNITY

We share announcements, insights, joys & concerns.

PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE AND CONCERN (The Prayers of the People)

Periods of silence will be left for you to offer your own prayers

THE PRAYER OF THE DISCIPLES (The Lord's Prayer)

All:

**Our loving God in whom is heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your 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.**

**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.**

HYMN: "We Have This Ministry"

(VU 510)

- 1 We have this ministry
and we are not discouraged;
it is by God's own power
that we may live and serve.
Openly we share God's word,
speaking truth as we believe,
praying that the shadowed world
may healing light receive.
We have this ministry, O God, receive our living.

- 2 O Christ, the tree of life,
our end and our beginning,
we grow to fullest flower
when rooted in your love.
Brothers, sisters, clergy, lay,
called to service by your grace,
different cultures, different gifts,
the young and old a place.
We have this ministry, O God, receive our giving.

- 3 The yoke of Christ is ours,
the whole world is our parish;
we daily take the cross,
the burden and the joy.
Bearing hurts of those we serve,
wounded, bruised and bowed with pain,
Holy Spirit, bread and wine,
we die and rise again.
We have this ministry, O God, receive our loving.

SENDING & BLESSING

SUNG RESPONSE: "Amen"

VU 974

All:

Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Amen!

Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Amen!

POSTLUDE

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