

Third Sunday of Easter

April 18th 2021

Welcome & Announcements

Ringing of the Bell

Prelude

Gathering Around the Word

Call to Worship

from Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1

One: When fear and doubts sneak through our doors,

All: God stands beside us, whispering peace.

One: When we toss and turn late at night,

All: God sits by our beds, singing lullabies of love.

One: When we stumble through the shadows of sin,

All: God illuminates the path of goodness and joy.

One: As we come into this space, may we remember:

All: We are God's children, cared for and loved.

Let us worship God!

Hymn 251

Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia! (vrs 1)

MFURAHINI HALELUYA

Call to Confession

from 1 John 3:2-3

It can be easy to trick ourselves into believing that our every thought is pure, our every act is just, our every choice is wise. But if we want to be God's children, to grow in hope and to walk in the light, we must admit our mistakes, so our hearts may be open to the healing mercy of God's love.

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

Good and holy God,

we confess that we sometimes lose faith.

We stop caring that things are wrong in this world.

We are okay with systemic sin

when it benefits us.

We believe that some things cannot change

and so we just give up trying.

Forgive us.

Call us back into right-living:

remembering your commandments;

working for justice;

sharing your loving-kindness;

loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Remind us that following your Way

is not just a ticket to heaven
but a transformation of our very selves.
Forgive us our sin, show us your love,
and lead us into your way.
In the name of Jesus we pray; Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Beloved of God, the truth of the resurrection is this: God, who has every right to judge and condemn us, chooses instead to shower us with grace, wiping clean our sinful hearts. May we live each day into that glorious assurance of forgiveness. Hear this good news, and believe it:

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

Response

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.*

Listening to the Word

Prayer for Illumination of God's Word

Holy God, by your Spirit reveal to us your radical, surprising love. Come to us through your holy word, and let us hear what you are saying. In the name of the Christ, **Amen.**

First Reading

Acts 3:12-19

Peter and John have just healed a man unable to walk

¹² Seeing this, Peter addressed the people: "You Israelites, why are you amazed at this? Why are you staring at us as if we made him walk by our own power or piety? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of our ancestors—has glorified his servant Jesus. This is the one you handed over and denied in Pilate's presence, even though he had already decided to release him. ¹⁴ You rejected the holy and righteous one, and asked that a murderer be released to you instead. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, the very one whom God raised from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ His name itself has made this man strong. That is, because of faith in Jesus' name, God has strengthened this man whom you see and know. The faith that comes through Jesus gave him complete health right before your eyes.

¹⁷ "Brothers and sisters, I know you acted in ignorance. So did your rulers. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he foretold through all the prophets: that his Christ would suffer. ¹⁹ Change your hearts and lives! Turn back to God so that your sins may be wiped away.

Psalm Reading

Psalm 4

Answer me when I cry out, my righteous God!

Set me free from my troubles!

Have mercy on me!
Listen to my prayer!
²How long, you people,
will my reputation be insulted?
How long will you continue
to love what is worthless
and go after lies?
³Know this: the LORD takes
personal care of the faithful.
The LORD will hear me
when I cry out to him.
⁴So be afraid, and don't sin!
Think hard about it in your bed
and weep over it!
⁵Bring righteous offerings,
and trust the LORD!
⁶Many people say,
"We can't find goodness anywhere.
The light of your face has left us, LORD!"
⁷But you have filled my heart with more joy
than when their wheat and wine are everywhere!
⁸I will lie down and fall asleep in peace
because you alone, LORD, let me live in safety.

Sharing Faith with the Younger Church

Anthem *Dance, Sing, Clap Your Hands! (recording)*

Epistle Reading 1 John 3:1-7

See what kind of love the Father has given to us in that we should be called God's children, and that is what we are! Because the world didn't recognize him, it doesn't recognize us.

²Dear friends, now we are God's children, and it hasn't yet appeared what we will be. We know that when he appears we will be like him because we'll see him as he is. ³And all who have this hope in him purify themselves even as he is pure. ⁴Every person who practices sin commits an act of rebellion, and sin is rebellion. ⁵You know that he appeared to take away sins, and there is no sin in him. ⁶Every person who remains in relationship to him does not sin. Any person who sins has not seen him or known him.

⁷Little children, make sure no one deceives you. The person who practices righteousness is righteous, in the same way that Jesus is righteous.

Sermon

Responding to the Word

Hymn 630 *Fairest Lord Jesus (vrs 1)*

CRUSADERS' HYMN

Affirmation of Faith

Church Creed

Sharing our Prayers

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Dedicating our Gifts

As Jesus gave himself fully for us and then appeared to the disciples bringing peace, so let us bring wholeness and healing to others through our tithes and gifts.

The Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Charge & Benediction

Blessing

HYMN 547

Go, My Children, with My Blessing (vrs 1)

AR HYDY NOS

Postlude