

*Growing Together through Faith, Love, and Fellowship.*

**Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**May 7, 2023**

*The asterisk (\*) indicates to please rise in body or spirit.*

## **Meditation before Worship**

*God of compassion, you are slow to anger and full of mercy, welcoming sinners who return to you with penitent hearts. Receive in your loving embrace all who come home to you. Seat them at your bountiful table of grace, that, with all your children, they may feast with delight on all that satisfies the hungry heart. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

## **Gathering Music**

### **The Gathering of God's People**

#### **Prelude - a time to prayerfully prepare oneself for worship**

“Christians, We Have Met to Worship”

arr. Douglas E. Wagner

#### **Welcome and Announcements**

#### **Minute for Mission**

Orphanage

Pastor Abou

#### **\*Call to Worship (from Psalm 32)**

Leader: Happy are those whose sin is forgiven, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

**People: Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to the God of deliverance.**

Leader: I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go, as you trust in the Lord.

**People: Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous; shout for joy, all you upright in heart.**

Leader: Let us worship God!

**\*Hymn**

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

#215

**The Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Call to Confession**

**\*Prayer of Confession** (*in unison*)

O God, like the Prodigal Son, we too have journeyed to far places and lived as if you had no say over our lives. We have wasted the inheritance that you entrusted to us and used other people as if they were things. Then we complain to you as if our dilemmas are your fault rather than a result of our own actions. Even though we are not worthy, we come home to you today with penitent hearts, seeking forgiveness and acceptance. May your amazing grace wash over us once again, transforming us into new and obedient sons and daughters. Hear our prayer, O Lord. Amen. (Silent prayer of confession.)

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Response Hymn**

“Glory to God”

#585

Glory to God, glory to God, glo-ry in the high-est! Glory to God,  
glory to God, glo-ry to Christ Je - sus! Glory to God, glory to God,  
glo - ry to the Spir - it! To God be glo-ry for-ev - er!  
Al-le-lu-ia, A-men! Al-le-lu-ia, A-men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men!

## Ministry of the Word

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Children's Sermon**

**First Scripture Reading**

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

**Choir Anthem**

“Christ Be With Me”

Kenneth Kosche, 1994

Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me.  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger.  
Christ in hearts of all that love me,  
Christ in face of friend and stranger.

**Second Scripture Reading**

Luke 15:11-17, 25-31

**Pastor:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

“Knowing the Father's Heart”

Rev. Abou Camara

## The Response to the Word

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**\*Invitation to Offering**

**\*Response**       “Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks” (refrain)       #240

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**The Sacrament of Holy Communion**

(We will be receiving communion by coming forward to one of the two stations on each side of the communion table. Please exit the pew to the center aisle and return to your pew from the outside aisles. An elder or deacon will be available to bring communion to those who wish to remain seated. Gluten-free bread can be found on the communion table.)

**\*Invitation to the Lord's Table**

**\*Hymn of Invitation**       “Come to the Table of Grace”       #507

**The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Pastor: May Abba our God be with you!

**People: And also with you!**

Pastor: Lift your hearts to the One who welcomes us home.

**People: We open them to our God, who runs to embrace us with grace.**

Pastor: Sing glad songs to the One who provides this feast.

**People: We join in singing to God, who throws a party for us in this place.**

Pastor: On those days you called ... with all the faithful, we sing to you:

**People: Holy, holy, holy, God who reconciles us to yourself.  
All creation is glad and rejoices.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who finds the lost and guides them home.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

Pastor: On this day ... reflect on that mystery we call faith:

**People: Christ died, to be our salvation; Christ is risen, to be our reconciliation; Christ will return, to lead us home.**

**Pastor: On this day ... God in Community, Holy in One. 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 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.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

## **Communion of the People**

## **Prayer after Communion**

**Loving Father, send us forth to be reconcilers of the broken and oppressed. Jesus, our Brother, send us to welcome everyone. Let us embrace the prodigals with joy and make a feast for all of God's people. May the Spirit send us with arms full of healing, as we go out to bring hope to all we meet. Amen.**

## **The Sending of God's People**

**\*Closing Hymn**      "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"      #649

**\*Charge and Blessing**

**\*Congregational Response**

"We Are the Church"

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: "I am the church! You are the church! We are the church to - geth-er!". The second staff contains the melody for the second line of lyrics: "All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes, we're the church to - gether!".

## **\*Postlude**

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

arr. J. Wayne Kerr

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**Pastors:** Désirée M. Youngblood  
Steve Watters  
Rev. Abou Camara

**Music Director:** Thomas Lloyd  
**Organist:** Carol Welk

**Liturgist:** Paul Oswalt

**Acolyte:** Devin Griggs, Darren Cox

Paul Oswalt is an Elder and Deacon and member of the Chancel Choir. He also facilitates the Flock of Ages adult Sunday School class. Originally from Centerburg, Ohio, he married into town and joined First Presbyterian Church of London in 1997. He has two daughters, Leila and Kyla, who live in Lewis Center. Paul participates in Madison County Arts Council summer productions and organizes the Music Men & Jen barbershop quartet. He works fulltime for the Madison County Auditor.