



# First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## EASTER SERIES: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

May 24, 2020

Sixth Sunday of Easter

**Prelude**

Prayer

**Welcome and Announcements**

**\*Greeting and Passing of the Peace**

*"The Peace of God be with you."*

*In Unison:* **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

*\* Let us rise in body or spirit.*

**Call to Worship**

Justin Lowndes, liturgist

In awe and wonder, we lift our eyes to the heavens.  
We raise our songs of joy to the Ruler of all time and space.  
**Sing praises to God. Shout with joy.**  
We gather to remember Jesus, who shared our humanity.  
**We rejoice in the hope to which Jesus has called us.**  
Empower us, Holy Spirit, to be witnesses in today's world.  
**We are here to filled with glory from on high.**

**\*Processional Hymn**

Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!

*Black Hymnal, No. 257*

HYFRYDOL

Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!

Eph. 1:15-23; Heb. 9:11-14

William C. Dix, 1867, alt.

1 Al - le - lu - ia! Gra - cious Je - sus! Yours the  
 2 Al - le - lu - ia! Not as or - phans are we  
 3 Al - le - lu - ia! Bread of an - gels, you on  
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! Christ e - ter - nal, noth - ing

scep - ter, yours the throne! Al - le - lu - ia! Yours the  
 left in sor - row now. Al - le - lu - ia! You are  
 earth our food, our stay. Al - le - lu - ia! Here the  
 can dis - rupt your reign; Al - le - lu - ia! Born of

tri - umph, yours the vic - to - ry a - lone!  
 near us; faith be - lieves, nor ques - tions how.  
 sin - ful flee to you from day to day.  
 Mar - y, heaven and earth are your do - main.

Hark! the songs of peace - ful Zi - on  
 Though the cloud from sight re - ceived you  
 In - ter - ces - sor, friend of sin - ners,  
 Hu - man life you ful - ly en - tered,

257 cont.



thun - der like a might - y flood; Je - sus, out of  
 when the for - ty days were o'er, shall our hearts for -  
 earth's Re - deem - er, plead for me, and the songs that  
 tend - ing those we count the least, serv - ing both as

ev - ery na - tion you've re - deemed us by your blood.  
 get your prom - ise, "I am with you ev - er - more."  
 sound in heav - en will re - peat your gra - cious plea.  
 Priest and Vic - tim in the eu - cha - ris - tic feast.

*William C. Dix, manager of a marine insurance company, was also a gifted writer who made a significant contribution to hymnody. This hymn was written to fill a need for communion hymns in Church of England hymnals.*

Tune: HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7.D.  
 Rowland H. Prichard, 1844  
 Arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

## \*Invocation

God Most High, we gather to honor and glorify you. Receive our invitation to dwell with us. Enfold us in your presence and fill us again with holy awe and mystery. We are yours and we claim you as our God. Amen

## \*Gloria

*Black Hymnal, No. 759*

Glorify to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

## Conversation with the Children

## Graduate Recognition

*see insert*

# Word in Music

Alleluia

Vivaldi

Claire, Lyn, and Stephen Bouma

# New Testament Lesson

Acts 1:6-14

For the Word of God in scripture,  
For the Word of God within us,  
For the Word of God among us,  
Thanks be to God.

# Sermon

Apocalypse, Now?

Rev. Katie Miller

# \* Hymn

God Moves in a Mysterious Way

Black Hymnal, No. 412

DUNDEE

## God Moves in a Mysterious Way

412

William Cowper, 1774, alt.

Ps. 77:19; Rom. 11:33-36

1 God moves in a mys - te - rious way great won - ders to per - form;  
2 Deep in un - fath - om - a - bic mines of nev - er - fail - ing skill  
3 O fear - ful saints, fresh cour - age take, the clouds you so much dread  
4 Judge not God's way through hu - man sense, but trust un - fail - ing grace:

God plants firm foot - steps in the sea and rides up - on the storm.  
God floods the earth with bright de - signs, guards with a sov - ereign will.  
Are big with mer - cy and shall break in bless - ings on your head.  
Be - hind a frown - ing prov - i - dence there shines a smil - ing face.

5 God's pur - pos - es will rip - en fast,  
un - fold - ing ev - ery hour;  
The bud may have a bit - ter taste,  
but sweet will be the flower.

6 Our un - be - lief is sure to err  
and scan God's work in vain;  
God is God's own in - ter - pret - er,  
whose truth shall be made plain.

## **\*Prayer of Confession**

Rev. Dr. Jim Harmon

Blessed One, you created human beings for your glory and pleasure. Forgive us for being self-absorbed and choosing to live solely for ourselves. Forgive us for ignoring the prompting of your Spirit, your purpose for our lives, and for placing our will above yours. Grant us courage to share in Christ's sufferings, to be his witnesses, and to carry your loving compassion to a hurting world. Amen.

## **\*Words of Assurance**

As the Body of Christ, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ's witnesses. Each of us has our own story of what Jesus' life means for us. Through our life-stories we can convey hope to the hopeless, joy to the downtrodden, and peace where there is turmoil. Therefore, let us "clothe ourselves in humility," sharing the Good News of Christ, that we "may all be one." In this God is well pleased.

## **Prayers**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**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.**

## **Offertory**

Ave Maria

*Bach-Gounod*

## **\*Hymn of Dedication**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

## **\*Offertory Prayer**

**Thank you, Holy God, for the abundant life we enjoy. For the relationships that nurture us. For the blessings that support us. May everything we give here today help to meet human needs. Extend our outreach beyond our vision. In these ways we offer praise to you. Amen.**

**\*Recessional Hymn**

For the Healing of the Nations

Black Hymnal, No. 576

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

JUSTICE AND PEACE

576 For the Healing of the Nations  
*Fred Kaur, 1965*

1 For the heal - ing of the na - tions, God, we pray with  
 2 Lead us for - ward in - to free - dom; from de - spair your  
 3 All that kills a - bun - dant liv - ing, let it from the  
 4 You, Cre - a - tor God, have writ - ten your great name on

one ac - cord; for a just and e - qual shar - ing  
 world re - lease; that, re - deemed from war and ha - tred,  
 earth be banned; pride of sta - tus, race, or school - ing,  
 hu - man - kind; for our grow - ing in your like - ness

of the things that earth af - fords; to a life of  
 all may come and go in peace. Show us how through  
 dog - mas that ob - scure your plan. In our com - mon  
 bring the life of Christ to mind, that by our re -

love in ac - tion help us rise and pledge our word.  
 care and good - ness fear will die and hope in - crease.  
 quest for jus - tice may we hal - low life's brief span.  
 sponse and ser - vice earth its des - ti - ny may find.

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**\*Benediction**

**Benediction Response**

*Bouma*

May you hear laughter in the wind. May you see hope in the light.  
 May you find courage in your faith. May you know joy in your God.

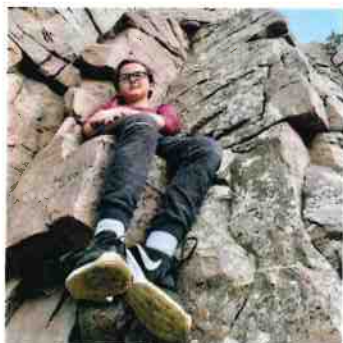
## Postlude

Sing Joyously!

### **Open & Affirming Statement**

In our ongoing quest for hearts that open, minds that understand, and lives that serve, we welcome into our fellowship, membership, leadership, and employment, all people, regardless of abilities, race, gender, sexual orientation, or any God-given characteristic.

**Hannah Miller** graduated from Omaha North High School. She will be attending UNO and plans to major in Social Work and minor in Journalism and Human Rights Studies



**Alex Miller** graduated from Lewis and Clark Middle School and will be attending Central High School. He is looking forward to being a part of Central's music program.

**Sebastian Cich** graduated from Russell Child Development Center Preschool at Creighton University, and is off to Kindergarten.



**Jarett Joseph Gustafson** graduated from Cornell College Sunday with a degree in Business.

**Kelly Beaman** completed the Transitional Certification Program (TCP) at the University of NE-Kearney, and he will be completing his student-teaching while employed, teaching K-8 music at two Catholic schools in the fall.

**Clara Westhoff** (granddaughter of Pete Peterson) graduated from Shawnee Mission East in Kansas City, and plans to attend cosmetology school in Kansas City.

**Aliyah Harmon** (granddaughter of Jim and Bonnie Harmon) graduated from Pascal High School in Fort Worth, TX, and plans to attend Trinity University in San Antonio, TX.

**Anthony Wiglusz** (grandson of Terry and Pam Beranek) graduated from Bellevue East.

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
on all of your accomplishments and  
best wishes for the future!



## Announcements

**May 24, 2020**

**Prayers:** *Emily Martinez*, whose grandmother died last week; the family of *Linda Livingston*, whose memorial service was held last week; *Laurent Quenaud* and family after his recent positive COVID test -0 he remained asymptomatic and his quarantine has ended; continued prayers for our most vulnerable members.

**Joys:** *Kamaal, Lizzie, and Kate Patterson*, celebrating the birth of *David Bennett Patterson* – proud grandparents are *Dave & Sara Sharpe*.

**Chancel flowers and decorations:** sponsored this month by friends and family of First Central.

**Happy Birthday this week:** to *Martin Richards, Chris Andersen, Karen Wheeler, Steve Jackson*, and *Greg Higginbotham*.

**Graduation Sunday:** *see insert*

**Fair Trade Coffee:** sponsors this month are *Jeannie Bates, John & Nancy Schalles*.

**FIRSTKids:** 1 p.m. on Zoom. Kids through sixth grade.

### Activities for the Coming Week, May 25 – May 31

*Lectionary Readings: Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21; John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39.*

**Monday:** Memorial Day. Office closed.

**Wednesday:** Bible study, 3 p.m. on Zoom  
Pre-K, K Sunbeams, 6 p.m., Zoom.  
FirstYouth, 8 p.m., Zoom

**Thursday:** Ministry Support, 7 p.m., Zoom

### Sunday, May 31

**Worship:** 10:30 a.m. on YouTube

**FIRSTKids:** 1 p.m. on Zoom. Kids through sixth grade.

**First Forum:** 3 p.m. on Zoom. *Biblical Israel*, led by *Deb Kirwan*.

**Retreat Update:** The All-Church Retreat is still on the calendar for **October 2-4, 2020**. The Retreat Team has until September 1<sup>st</sup> to make a final decision about cancellation/postponement to 2021. Expect to hear more from us in June.