SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Rogate Sunday

May 9, 2021
The Sixth Sunday of Easter: Rogate Sunday

The traditional introit chant for this Sixth Sunday of Easter began: *Vocem jucundatis annuntiate et auditor, alleluia!* – an echo of Christ’s great commission to his disciples: “With a voice of singing proclaim that all may hear, alleluia, even to the ends of the earth: the Lord has delivered his people.”

This day was sometimes called **Rogate Sunday**. In the early church the weekdays immediately prior to the festival of the Ascension were known as *Rogation Days*, days of petition for various needs, especially for God’s blessing upon newly planted crops. Our offertory canticle, *Let the Vineyards*, as well as the entrance hymn, evokes this imagery of new growth. This was celebrated by the worshiping community with a solemn procession to the newly plowed fields, “to the ends of the earth,” as it were, amid the chanting of litanies. Thereafter, the people returned to the church for a Eucharistic liturgy, to partake of a spiritual harvest: the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Our **Sequence/Hymn of the Day**, *Dear Christians, One and All Rejoice*, summarizes the great story of our salvation, the history of our own deliverance from slavery into freedom, from death to life. The hymn, by Martin Luther, begins by depicting humankind’s bondage to sin, from which “we cannot free ourselves.” Yet we rejoice and sing “with exultation” of our God’s loving response to our hopeless plight, for the Father in mercy has sent the Son, who in colossal warfare with death has won a glorious victory. Now Christ returns to the heavenly throne of his Father, but not without imparting the promise of his life-giving Spirit, so that we might not be left as orphans, but be truly restored as children of God. It is our joyful task, then, to “proclaim that all may hear, even to the ends of the earth,” this Good News: the Lord has indeed delivered his people.

The serene melody of our **Fraction** (‘breaking’) **Anthem** is commonly sung to the words, “Abide with me, fast falls the eventide” – the exclamation of the disciples to the resurrected Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Their eyes were not yet opened, but they came to recognize Christ in the breaking of the bread. In our Easter joy, this “fraction” anthem of faith and hope supplants the *Agnus Dei*, the song of our Lord’s passion and redemption.

The **Communion Hymn** [# 816] is a moving meditation on poetry by the English churchman, George Herbert. The music is by Ralph Vaughan Williams, who has also given us such marvelous hymns as *For All the Saints, Come Down, O Love Divine*, and *Hail Thee, Festival Day* [# 394].

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In support of our goal of being a caring, inclusive, Christ-centered community, we

- care for God’s creation
- promote the non-violence of Christ and care for those who suffer
- participate in the Spirit toward a global religious community
This Sunday’s image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John’s gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

Sinfonia in B flat, BWV 800
Sinfonia in G minor, BWV 797
Sinfonia in F major, BWV 794
Music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

WELCOME

Pastor William Yancey

Following the Welcome, the assembly rises for the Choral Introit.

CHORAL INTROIT

anthem: With a Voice of Singing
Music of Martin Shaw (1875-1958)

“With a voice of singing declare ye this and let it be heard, alleluia, even unto the ends of the earth: the Lord has delivered his people, Alleluia!”

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.
PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.
God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song

**FIRST READING**

While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.


While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The believers from among the Jewish people who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” So Peter ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Word of God, word of life.  
**Thanks be to God.**
Cantor  Sing to the Lord / a new song,  
for the Lord has done / marvelous things.

People  The right hand and the holy arm / of the Lord  
have se- / cured the victory.

Cantor  The Lord has made / known this victory  
and has openly shown righteousness in the sight / of the nations.

People  The Lord remembers mercy and faithfulness to the / house of Israel,  
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory / of our God.

Cantor  Shout with joy to the Lord, / all you lands;  
lift up your voice, re- / joice, and sing.

People  Sing to the Lord / with the harp,  
with the harp and the / voice of song.

Cantor  With trumpets and the sound / of the horn  
shout with joy / before the Lord.

People  Let the sea make a noise and all / that is in it,  
the lands and those who / dwell therein.

Cantor  Let the rivers / clap their hands,  
and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord,  
who is coming to / judge the earth.

All  In righteousness shall the Lord / judge the world  
and the peo- / ples with equity.
SECOND READING

1 John 5:1-6

God’s children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God’s commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.

A reading from the First Letter of John.

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey God’s commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey the commandments, which are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SEQUENCE HYMN

Dear Christians, One and All Rejoice

NUN FREUT EUCH

Words by Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version

Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

Part I. The loving purposes of God

1. In praise of God’s glorious redemption

(ALL) Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice,
with exultation springing,
and, with united heart and voice
and holy rapture singing,
proclaim the wonders God has done,
proclaim the vict’ry God has won,
how precious was our ransom!

2. Our human plight

(High voices) Fast bound in Satan’s chains I lay,
death brooded fiercely o’er me,
sin was my torment night and day;
in sin my mother bore me.
My own good works all came to naught,
free will against God’s judgment fought,
so firmly sin possessed me.
3. Divine grace and mercy

(Low voices) O God, you saw my deep distress before the world's foundation, and, with your mercy measureless, you planned for my salvation. You turned to me a father's heart; you did not choose the easy part, but gave your dearest treasure.

4. God sends the Son, our Redeemer

(ALL) You said to your beloved Son: “Tis time to have compassion. Then go, bright jewel of my crown, and bring to all salvation; from sin and sorrow set them free; slay bitter death for them that they may live with you forever.”

High voices = soprano/alto Low voices = tenor/bass

HOLY GOSPEL

John 15:9-17

On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said: “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my Father's love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor William Yancey
In the Hymn of the Day we proclaim the word of God in song. The assembly is invited to stand at the final phrase of the introduction.

**HYMN OF THE DAY**  *Dear Christians, One and All Rejoice*

**NUN FREUT EUCH**

Part II. Emmanuel: God with Us

5. *Christ’s Incarnation as the child of Mary*

*(ALL)*

The Son obeyed your gracious will,
was born of virgin mother;
and, your good pleasure to fulfill,
he came to be my brother.
His royal pow’r disguised he bore,
a servant’s form, like mine, he wore,
to lead the devil captive.

6. *Christ’s Passion and Resurrection*

*(High voices)*

To me he said: “Stay close to me,
I am your rock and castle.
Your ransom I myself will be;
for you I strive and wrestle.
The foe will shed my precious blood;
all this I suffer for your good;
my life o’er death will triumph.

7. *Christ’s Ascension in glory, and the descent of the Holy Spirit*

*(Low voices)*

“Now to my Father I depart,
from earth to heav’n ascending,
and, gracious wisdom to impart,
the Holy Spirit sending,
who will in trouble comfort you,
will teach you well, your faith renew,
and in all truth will guide you.
8. The Dominion of God

(ALL) “What I on earth have done and taught
guide all your life and teaching;
so shall the glorious reign of God
increase, the whole world reaching.
Let none the gospel gift impede;
I make you free; be free indeed!
This final word I leave you.”

High voices = soprano/alto Low voices = tenor/bass

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

After each portion of the prayers:

Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We rejoice with Catherine Sundararamen and Jason Heldenbrand at the baptism of their son, Bennet Anand Heldenbrand. May the Holy Spirit fill and guide his life.

We rejoice with Barb and Dan Harms on the occasion of their 51st wedding anniversary. We give thanks for the blessing of their life together and their witness of faith and devotion. May God continue to bind them together through their faith in Christ Jesus.

We mourn with David Reichert’s dear friend Merlin Wedepohl at the death of his wife, Claudia Wedepohl (5/6/21). May God’s peace and strength be with family and friends.

We pray for comfort and recovery for Dave Weissgerber, who sustained serious injuries in a pedestrian accident. Dave is a close friend of the Mager family.

We pray for baby Graham Hanneke, child of Drew and Amy Lee Hanneke, grandson of Sherman and Denise Lee, in thanksgiving for successful surgery and for continuing recovery.

We pray for Teena Orling, Jim Orling’s sister, Jane’s sister-in-law, as she contends with health issues. May God’s strength and guidance be with her.

We pray for God’s spirit of comfort, strength, and healing to be with Jody Kluender’s friend, Koz, suffering with a difficult disease.

We pray for healing for Patricia Delworth, friend of the Mager family, as she recovers from surgery.

We pray for God’s peace of heart and spirit to be with Jamison McCarty (SLU student) during these stressful times.

We pray for Teena Orling, Jim Orling’s sister, Jane’s sister-in-law, as she contends with health issues. May God’s strength and guidance be with her.

We pray for God’s spirit of comfort, strength, and healing to be with Jody Kluender’s friend, Koz, suffering with a difficult disease.

We pray for God’s eternal strength and comfort to be with Sharon Yorker, dear friend of Jane Gilchrist, as she mourns the death of her son, Don Yorker.

We pray for God’s strength and care to be with Rea Kleeman as she recovers from a broken hip.

We give thanks for the encouraging recovery from injuries of David Berger, and pray for his continued health and well-being. Mr. Berger is an accomplished musician and has been a guest singer at Bethel.
We pray for hope and strength for Mr. John Clayton, as he enters the terminal stage of cancer. John is a friend and advocate of the Saint Louis music community, and the long-time radio voice of the Saint Louis Classical Guitar Society.

We pray for God's strength and healing to be with Richelle Weisbrod, dear friend of Irv and Tullia Hamilton, during a time of serious illness.

We pray for God's strength and healing power to be with Mary Anne Gross, Paul and Cindy Gross' sister-in-law, as she is treated for an illness.

We pray for God's continued healing and strength for Roy Ledbetter's daughter, Anna, at the completion of her medical treatment.

We pray for hope and healing to be with Jan and Steve Schrader, who are both contending with illness and physical challenges. May God's care be with them. (Jan and Steve are sister and brother in law to Valerie and Pastor. They live in Minneapolis.)

We pray for Carmen-Helena Téllez, colleague and friend of Dr. Mager, as she continues to recover from cancer surgery.

We pray for God's spirit of healing to be with Janet and Heather (friends of Carroll and Ruth Dick) who are facing health problems.

We pray for God's strength to be with Judy Conoyer's friend, Karen, in a time of worry.

We pray for strength to be with Tullia Hamilton's cousin, Rasheed Lavour, during his illness. May God's care be with him.

We pray for God's strength to be with Evonne Simmons as she lives with chronic illness.

We pray for God's spirit of healing and hope to strengthen and unite the peoples of the world in care for one another in a time of pandemic.

We pray for Michael Rickher and all health care professionals who are giving their care during the pandemic. May God keep watch over them.

We pray for the safety and health of Debbie and Peter Kennedy's daughter, Marie Stovall, a respiratory therapist, as she cares for those ill with the COVID-19 virus. We ask for God's spirit of care and protection to be with Marie and all those who care for the ill.

We pray for God's strength and comfort in time of illness to be with Robin Evers, dear friend of Michael Orlando and Steve Slattery.

We pray God's watch and care over the children who have been separated from their families at the US border and detained. We pray for their families, their guards, and our policy-makers.

We give thanks for Ronald Thompson's (stepbrother of Kristin Soifer) recovery from the injury he sustained in a fall, and pray for him as he continues to face chronic illness.

We pray for healing and hope to be with Meredith Sallee (sister of Katy Koontz) during her treatment for cancer.

We pray for God's healing comfort and strength to be with John Baker (brother of Vicki Lottes) at a time of serious illness.

We pray for the well-being of Katie Hautamaki (friend of Linda Bristol) upon the discovery of a tumor.

We pray for Joe Whelan (stepson to Tim Gutknecht) who is dealing with a genetic condition.

We pray for the recovery of Candace and Evan Lee (dear friends of the Pelcak family).

We pray for Michael Moentmann who lives with chronic illness.

We continue our prayers for Marcie Dowell (friend of David Reichert) as she lives with a heart condition. May God's peace comfort her during this time.

We pray for Anne-Marie Bogdan (daughter of Marie Schroeder) as she lives with long-standing health conditions. May God's comfort and strength be with her and her family.

We pray for Stacy Skelton (friend of Gail Heyne Hafer) during her treatment for a recurrence of cancer.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
**THE PEACE**

Pastor William Yancey

**VOLUNTARY ANTHEM**motet: *Sing, Joyous Christians*

Music of Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)

*Sing, joyous Christians! Sing forth your alleluias!*

*Christ, our Redeemer from death is risen, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*Death and hell are conquered, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*Christ, have mercy, have mercy! Alleluia, Alleluia!*

**OFFERTORY**

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

*All are welcome at God’s table. Believing in the real presence of Christ in the holy meal, this church practices Eucharistic hospitality. We invite all persons to share in the Holy Eucharist. Children who do not commune are invited to come forward for the blessing. Grape juice is provided in the tray of individual cups for those who prefer this alternative. It is recognized by a deeper rose color. Intinction refers to the process of receiving the bread and dipping it into the wine. If you choose to commune by intinction, please use the chalice located next to the tray of individual cups, avoiding the two drinking chalices.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (SANCTUS)**

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow’r and might,*

*heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna. Hos -*

*san-na. Hos - san-na in the high-est. Blessed is he who*

*comes in the name of the Lord. Hos - san-na in the high - est.*
THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord’s passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.
Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.
With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.
Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.
With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.
THE LORD’s PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
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.
FRACTION ANTHEM

Come, Risen Lord, and Deign to Be Our Guest

EVENTIDE

1. Come, risen Lord, and deign to be our guest;
   nay, let us be thy guests; the feast is thine;
   thyself at thine own board make manifest
   in thy own Sacrament of Bread and Wine.

2. We meet, as in that upper room they met;
   thou at the table, blessing, yet dost stand:
   "This is my Body"; so thou givest yet:
   faith still receives the cup as from thy hand.

3. One body we, one Body who partake,
   one Church united in communion blest;
   one Name we bear, one Bread of life we break,
   with all thy saints on earth and saints at rest.

4. One with each other, Lord, for one in thee,
   who art one Savior and one living Head;
   then open thou our eyes, that we may see;
   be known to us in breaking of the Bread.
Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life

**THE CALL**

Music by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Words by George Herbert (1593-1633)

Come, my way, my truth, my life: such a way as gives us breath; such a truth as ends all strife; such a life as kills death.

Come, my light, my feast, my strength: such a light as shows a feast; such a feast as mends in length; such a strength as makes his guest.

Come, my joy, my love, my heart: such a joy as none can move; such a love as none can part; such a heart as joys in love.
1 This joyful Eastertide, away with sin and sorrow! My love, the Crucified, has sprung to life this morning.
2 My flesh in hope shall rest and for a season slumber till trump from east to west shall wake the dead in num-
3 Death’s flood has lost its chill since Jesus crossed the river. Lover of souls, from ill my passing soul deliver.

Refrain

Had Christ, who once was slain, not burst his three-day prison, our faith had been in vain. But now has Christ arisen, arisen, arisen, arisen, arisen.
**SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Brief announcements are made, especially those related to the assembly’s participation in God’s mission in the world. The assembly stands for the Blessing.*

**Blessing**

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.
RECESSIONAL

The Risen Christ

WOODLANDS

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia, alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

POSTLUDE

That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright

ERSCHEINEN IST DER HERRLICHE TAG
Chorale setting by Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)
TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERS

Celebrant & Preacher       Pastor William Yancey
First Lector               The Rev. Roy Ledbetter
Audio/Visual Engineers     Sherman Lee
                           Nathan Schroeder
                           Evelyn Meyer
Teller                     Susan Perney
Musicians                  Members of Bethel Chancel Choir
                           Dr. Stephen Mager, organist

The Rev. Dr. William L. Yancey, Pastor
Stephen Mager, DM, Organist and Music Director
The Rev. Tina Reyes, Lutheran Campus Ministry (LuMin), Pastor
Deb Grupe, Director of Child, Youth, and Family Ministry
Eric Townsley, Custodian, custodian@bethelstl.org
Sarah Brooks, Church Administrator, office@bethelstl.org
Office Hours Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (314) 863-3112

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation (a welcoming ministry to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities) and A Green Congregation (for being stewards of the earth)
In Covenant with Lutheran Campus Ministry (LuMin), lcmstl.org

Have a prayer request? Email it to prayers@bethelstl.org anytime.

Note that the information you send to this address will get shared with a number of people who will be praying for you as well as the Sunday Holy Communion bulletin.