



He was lifted up,  
and a cloud took him  
out of their sight.

**ACTS 1:9**

# Worship Celebration

*Ascension of the Lord Sunday*

May 16, 2021

8 AM + 11 AM

*The **Easter Season**, also known as the **Great Fifty Days**, begins at sunset on Easter Eve and continues through the Day of Pentecost (this year, on May 23). This is our most joyous and celebrative season and the core of the entire Christian year. Together, we focus on Christ's resurrection and ascension and the continual invitation and call from God to live as Easter people, sharing God's renewing love with the world.*

## ***Welcome to The United Methodist Church of Berea!***

As followers of Jesus Christ, who reveals a God whose love knows no boundaries, we are committed to welcoming and affirming every person as a beloved child of God. Every person—of every sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, age, economic status, health, ability, or any other identifying label—is welcome to participate fully in our ministries and life together as church. We hope The UMC of Berea will become a home for you, your family, and your friends as together, in our relationship with God, with each other, and with all creation, **we make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

**Join us in worship, this week and every week:**

**Sunday at 8 AM** in-person in the Sanctuary

**Sunday at 11AM** online ([www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos](https://www.facebook.com/umcberea/videos)) and in-person in the Sanctuary  
*(Face masks and physical distancing are required for all in-person worship.)*

**Monday—Friday at 9AM** (Morning Prayer) via Zoom (meeting id: 518 014 483; passcode: 170)

**Wednesday at 7PM** (Evening Prayer) in-person in the north lot (weather permitting).  
Bring your lawn chair. *(Face masks are recommended for all outdoor in-person worship.)*

*If you are worshipping with us from home, either by phone or online, in preparation for worship, you are encouraged to light a candle as a reminder of God's presence.*

## **We Gather as God's Children**

Prelude

*The Bells*

Nicolas LeBègue

Words of Welcome

Opening Prayer

*Mysterious God, on the day of Christ's ascension, you drew Jesus to your side, promising his companions your Spirit, power, mission, and purpose, calling his followers to trust in a future they could not yet see.*

*As we turn our attention to your presence now today, give us the same hope of Spirit, power, mission, and purpose, and call us to trust in a future we, too, are yet unable to see.*

*Guide us into your depths, that we may perceive the Spirit already at work in our lives—revealing your truth and empowering us to bear witness to resurrection.*

*On this day of new beginnings, call us afresh to your mission, in the name of the risen Christ, Amen.*

Hymn

*This Is a Day of New Beginnings* (vv. 1-4)

UMH 383

*This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember and move on, time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone.*

*For by the life and death of Jesus, God's mighty Spirit, now as then, can make for us a world of difference, as faith and hope are born again.*

*Then let us, with the Spirit's daring, step from the past and leave behind our disappointment, guilt, and grieving, seeking new paths, and sure to find.*

*Christ is alive, and goes before us to show and share what love can do.*

*This is a day of new beginnings; our God is making all things new.*

*This Is a Day of New Beginnings* / Brian Wren, Carlton R. Young / 1987 Hope Publishing Company  
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## **We Grow in God's Word**

Leader: With disciples of every time and place, let us listen for the word of God among us.

**People:** *Our ears and hearts are open.*

Children's Message

First Lesson—Acts 1.1-11 (CEB)

<sup>1</sup> Theophilus, the first scroll I wrote concerned everything Jesus did and taught from the beginning, <sup>2</sup> right up to the day when he was taken up into heaven. Before he was taken up, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus instructed the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup> After his suffering, he showed them that he was alive with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days, speaking to them about God's kingdom. <sup>4</sup> While they were eating together, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised. He said, "This is what you heard from me: <sup>5</sup> John baptized with water, but in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>6</sup> As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, "Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

<sup>9</sup>After Jesus said these things, as they were watching, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going away and as they were staring toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood next to them. <sup>11</sup>They said, "Galileans, why are you standing here, looking toward heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you saw him go into heaven."

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

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

### **Gospel Lesson—Luke 24.44-53 (CEB)**

<sup>44</sup>Jesus said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

<sup>45</sup>Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. <sup>46</sup>He said to them, "This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup>and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>Look, I'm sending to you what my Father promised, but you are to stay in the city until you have been furnished with heavenly power."

<sup>50</sup>He led them out as far as Bethany, where he lifted his hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup>As he blessed them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. <sup>52</sup>They worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem overwhelmed with joy. <sup>53</sup>And they were continuously in the temple praising God.

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

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

### **Sermon**

### **Hymn**

#### *The Story I'll Tell*

***The hour is dark and it's hard to see  
what you are doing here in the ruins and where this will lead.***

***Oh, but I know that down through the years  
I'll look on this moment and see your hand on it and know you were here.***

***I'll testify of the battles you've won, how you were my portion when there wasn't enough.  
I'll testify of the seas that we've crossed, the waters you parted, the waves that I've walked.***

***Oh, oh, oh. My God did not fail. Oh, oh, oh. It's the story I'll tell.***

***Oh, oh, oh. I know it is well. Oh, oh, oh. It's the story I'll tell.***

***Believing gets hard when options are few.***

***When I can't see what you're doing, I know that you're proving you're the God who comes through.***

***Oh, but I know that over the years***

***I'll look back on this moment and see your hand on it and know you were here.***

***I'll testify of the battles you've won, how you were my portion when there wasn't enough.  
I'll testify of the seas that we've crossed, the waters you parted, the waves that I've walked.***

***Oh, oh, oh. My God did not fail. Oh, oh, oh. It's the story I'll tell.***

***Oh, oh, oh. I know it is well. Oh, oh, oh. It's the story I'll tell.***

***All that is left is highest praises. So sing hallelujah to the Rock of Ages.***

***I'll testify of the battles you've won, how you were my portion when there wasn't enough.  
I'll sing the song of the seas that we've crossed, the waters you parted, the waves that I've walked.***

***Oh, oh, oh. My God did not fail. Oh, oh, oh. It's the story I'll tell.***

***Oh, oh, oh. I know it is well. Oh, oh, oh. It's the story I'll tell.***

## Prayers of the People

### The Lord's Prayer

### Opportunities for Ministry and Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings

*Some of us may be experiencing financial hardship or uncertainty during this season, but our generosity through the life of the church remains crucial as an expression of our discipleship and to ensuring that we can maintain our commitments to mission and ministry during this uncertain time. If you already give financially online ([www.umcb.org/donate](http://www.umcb.org/donate)) or by mailing a check to the church office, thank you! If you do not do so already, please consider giving through one of these methods now as we continue to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

### Doxology

UMH 94

*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!*

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### Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment

*O God, we bring our offerings to you—our gifts, our talents, ourselves—  
and we ask that you would bless us and use us  
to make known your beloved community in this world.  
In Jesus' name, in the Spirit's power, we pray. Amen.*

## We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

### Hymn

*At the Font We Start Our Journey*

TFWS 2114

*At the font we start our journey, in the Easter faith baptized;  
doubts and fears no longer blind us, by the light of Christ surprised.*

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Hope held out and realized.*

*At the pulpit we are fashioned by the Easter tale retold  
into witnesses and prophets, by the power of Christ made bold.*

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Faith proclaimed, yet still untold.*

*At the altar we are nourished with the Easter gift of bread;  
in our breaking it to pieces see the love of Christ outspread.*

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Life embraced, yet freely shed.*

*At the door we are commissioned, now the Easter victory's won,  
to restore a world divided to the peace of Christ as one.*

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Easter's work must still be done.*

## **Benediction**

Christ is risen!

***Christ is risen, indeed!***

And so, we are not simply dismissed when our worship together is ended.

The risen Christ sends us, renewed in our mission and purpose:

to welcome one another as Christ in our midst; to create spaces of justice and mercy for all;

to use the talents God has given us; to rejoice in the wonder of God's creation.

So, let us go from this time of worship today

in the power of the Spirit, to help and to heal in all that we do, for Christ is risen!

***Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia.***

## **Postlude**

*Toccata in A Minor*

Jan Pieter Sweelinck

***Our service of worship is ended.  
Our worship through service now begins.***

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### **Worship Participants**

#### **Pastors**

Rev. Nathan Howe

Rev. Carrie Antczak

#### **Music**

Dr. Barbara MacGregor, *Organ (11AM)*

Courtney Popp, *Choir Director*

Jeff Jaskolka, *Piano (8AM)*

#### **Liturgist**

Cindy McCowen

#### **Video Production**

Mark Williams

#### ***Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, May 16):***

Holy One, come into my heart this morning  
and give me a heart to perceive throughout this day  
all the ways that you reign.

Put your resurrecting power to work in my life  
and empower me to be a witness to Christ,  
that my life may be a song of thanksgiving to you.  
Amen.

#### ***Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, May 16):***

God, embrace me now at this end of this day.  
As in every day, there have been ups and downs,  
joys and disappointments.

I thank you for my faith that, above it all,  
you remain with me.

I put my trust in you as I give this day to you.  
Through Jesus Christ, who reigns, Amen.

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## Opportunities to Serve in Worship

As we continue living our new normal with regard to indoor, in-person worship opportunities for our whole congregation, you are invited to help us offer meaningful worship both online and in person in the Sanctuary by serving in the following ways:

- Serving as an usher, greeting worshipers as they enter the building and providing any needed information.
- Serving as a liturgist, reading scripture lessons.
- Serving on the "A/V team," learning from Mark Williams how to assist with the livestream worship service.

Please contact Pastor Nathan at **440-234-3525 x101** or [nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org) for more information and to express your interest.



## Tuesday Morning Walks

***Tuesdays, 7:30 AM, Meet in the Wallace Lake parking lot***

It's always a joy to get outside and get moving. It's also a great way to care for the bodies God has given us and to experience God's presence in creation.

All are welcome to join us on Tuesday mornings at 7:30 AM. We meet in the parking lot by Wallace Lake and head out on the all-purpose trail that runs beside Valley Parkway. Join us any week!



## Sunday Afternoon Hike

***Sunday, May 30, 4 PM, Rocky River Nature Center***

Enjoy the beauty of God's creation! All are welcome to join us for a hike on the trails near the Rocky River Nature Center on Sunday, May 30. We will begin our walk from the Nature Center at 4 PM.

If you plan to join us, please RSVP by the end of the day on ***Thursday, May 27*** to Pastor Nathan at **440-234-3525 x100** or [nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org).



## Peace with Justice Sunday

***May 30, 2021***

One of our denomination's six Special Sundays with offering, Peace with Justice Sunday is a faithful expression of shalom in the Bible. It calls the church to strengthen its capacity to advocate publicly in communities and nations throughout the world. The offering is administered by the General Board of Church and Society and benefits peace with justice ministries in the annual conferences and around the world. Half of our gifts stay with local ministries in this conference and half support the work of Church and Society globally.

For example, Global Peace with Justice grants include:

- an East Congo roundtable to discuss equitable educational justice—especially how to address the illiteracy that makes Pygmies vulnerable to deception and exploitation,
- "Letting Girls Be Girls" health education programming and services for young girls in the Rotifunk community of Sierra Leone, and
- an Economic Empowerment program for Gypsy women in Canon Nagar, India.

Learn more at [www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/peace-with-justice](http://www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/peace-with-justice) and please consider giving generously in support of Peace with Justice Sunday.



## **Read & Grow Book Discussion Group**

***May 17, 6:30-8 PM, Fellowship Hall***

Read and Grow Discussion Group will meet on Monday, May 17 from 6:30-8 PM at The United Methodist Church of Berea in the Fellowship Hall to plan our books for 2021-2022. We will practice social distancing and wear masks. You are welcome to attend and help with the planning.

Contact **Jan Harlamert** at **440-243-7126** or **[jwharlamert@gmail.com](mailto:jwharlamert@gmail.com)** if you have questions or need the door code.



## **Youth Work Mission**

***May 23, 5 PM***

Our youth are excited to be serving Nehemiah Mission June 21-25! There is still time to join us as either a youth, young adult, or adult chaperone. Stay tuned for fundraising opportunities you can support.

Contact **Pastor Carrie** at **[cantczak@umcb.org](mailto:cantczak@umcb.org)** or **440-234-3525 x 105** for more information.



## **Children's Ministry Looking for VBS Volunteers**

The Children's Ministry team is excited to host a completely outdoor Vacation Bible School in July. This year, we're going to where the kids are! VBS will be held Monday evenings in July at a local playground. This VBS alternative is just half an hour! Kids and parents or caregivers will enjoy a short Bible story, craft, and game, and be sent home with a snack. Volunteers are needed to help with each 10-minute activity. Can't help every Monday? No problem! You can sign up for one time or more!

If you think you'd like to help, and would feel comfortable doing so, please contact **Pastor Carrie** at **[cantczak@umcb.org](mailto:cantczak@umcb.org)** or **440-234-3525 x 105**.



## **Women's Bible Study**

***Thursdays, 6:30 pm, via Zoom***

Anyone is welcome to join. We are currently studying **You're Loved No Matter What** by Holley Gerth. *As women, we tend to think that if we could only get our act together, life would be perfect. But you're not supposed to be perfect. You're supposed to be human. And humans are messy, flawed, glorious, and deeply loved. It's time to start living fully instead of just trying not to fail.*

For more information, please contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at **440-409-5931** or **[marylynn482@gmail.com](mailto:marylynn482@gmail.com)**.



## **GriefShare Support Group - New Participants Welcome!**

***via Zoom***

GriefShare Programs are designed for help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member, friend or animal. It is a warm caring place, to be you and share a little of how you are feeling with others, in the same situation.

For more information, contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at **[marylynn482@gmail.com](mailto:marylynn482@gmail.com)** or **440-409-5931**.



## Loose Change Offering

As a congregation committed to mission, our loose change offering gives a “boost” to the missions and programs that are strengthening our church and communities near and far.

May’s Loose Change Offering will support **Berea Community Meal**. *In cooperation with St. Paul’s Lutheran and other Berea churches, they offer community members a free meal on the last Wednesday of each month.*

Each month, you can support by either mailing in an offering, or donating electronically at [www.umcb.org/donate](http://www.umcb.org/donate) using the “other” box and marking it “loose change offering”.



## Food Collection for Local Food Pantries

**Wednesdays, 4:00-7:00PM, In Front of the Red Doors on Seminary Street**

Collections of food for local food banks will continue with some changes. When you drop off your donation pull up to the red doors, flash your lights and beep your horn. A masked church member will come out to accept your donation.

If you are not planning already to make a trip to the grocery store, please feel free to participate with a monetary donation instead, either by mailing a check to the church office or online at [www.umcb.org/donate](http://www.umcb.org/donate). Please note "food pantry" on the description line. Thank you for supporting this effort.

## Information Regarding COVID-19 Vaccinations

As an expression of love for our neighbors and for the well-being of our entire community, each of us is encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine when we are eligible to do so. All Ohioans age 16 and over are eligible to receive one of the vaccines. Visit <https://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov/> or call 2-1-1 (United Way's 211 HelpLink) on weekdays between 8AM and 4PM to find information about where you can receive the vaccine once you are eligible.

If you have additional questions or can use assistance navigating this process, please do not hesitate to contact **Pastor Nathan** at [nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org) or **440-234-3525 x101**.

## Pastoral Care, Prayer Requests, and Care Leaders

Please reach out to **Pastor Nathan** ([nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org) or **440-234-3525 x101**) if you would like to schedule an individual time to talk or if you have a specific prayer request. Likewise, if you find yourself needing food or other supplies and unable to get them, please contact me, and we will do our best to care for you. While we are apart from one another physically, we remain connected through our common mission and through our mutual concern and care. As an expression of our connection, we now have a team of “care leaders” who are making phone calls throughout the course of the week to check in, be in conversation, and share prayer requests.

If you have not heard from a “care leader” yet and would like to connect this way, or if you would like to serve as a “care leader,” please contact **Pastor Nathan** at **440-234-3525 x101** or [nhowe@umcb.org](mailto:nhowe@umcb.org).

## Staff & Office Hours

For the protection of all, our staff continues to work from home whenever possible. If you contact the staff by email or phone message, please be assured they will respond as quickly as they are able. If your business requires a visit to the church building, please call in advance to ensure a staff member will be available.

**Please note:** *Beth will be on vacation from Wednesday, May 25 through Tuesday, June 1. During this time, all urgent voicemails left on the church office phone will be forwarded to other staff members. Urgent e-mails sent to [ebarner@umcb.org](mailto:ebarner@umcb.org) or [info@umcb.org](mailto:info@umcb.org) will be handled in this manner as well. Non-urgent messages will be answered once Beth returns to work (Wednesday, June 2).*