

LARGE PRINT

# Worship Celebration

Sixth Sunday in Easter

May 5, 2024 + 9 AM



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

## **Welcome**

**Prelude**

*Sweet, Sweet Spirit* (UMH 334)

Doris Akers

## **+ Opening Prayer**

*Loving God, help us to love others*

*As Christ has loved us.*

*Bring us into the spiritual joy*

*Of living our lives as your friend,*

*And teach us to abide in your love,*

*That we may show that love to the world. Amen.*

*Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word.*

*Copyright 2014.*

**+ Hymn**

*The Gift of Love*

UMH 408

## **Prayers of the People (Seeking & Offering Peace)**

### **Music of Meditation & Reflection**

*In the Garden* (UMH 314),

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel* (UMH 204)

**Guest Speaker** - Rev. Dr. Bill McFadden - *Spokesperson for the "Lift Her Up" Campaign and Africa University*

## **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.*

## **First Lesson — 1 John 5.1-6 (NRSVUE)**

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey

his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup>for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is it who conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

<sup>6</sup>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.

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

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

## **Second Lesson — John 15.9-17 (NRSVUE)**

<sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

<sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup>"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>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 him in my name. <sup>17</sup>I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

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

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

**Sermon - *Abiding Love***

Dr. Stephen J. Knisely

**Invitation to Give our Tithes and Offerings**

**The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

***And also with you.***

Lift up your hearts.

***We lift them up to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Blessed are you, our Alpha and our Omega,  
whose strong and loving arms encompass the universe,  
for with your eternal Word and Holy Spirit  
you are forever one God.

Through your Word you created all things and called them good,  
and in you we live and move and have our being.

When we fell into sin, you did not desert us.

You made covenant with your people Israel  
and spoke through prophets and teachers.

In Jesus Christ your Word became flesh and dwelt among us,  
full of grace and truth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

Holy are you, and blessed is Jesus Christ,  
who called you Abba, Father.

As a mother tenderly gathers her children,  
you embraced a people as your own  
and filled them with a longing for a peace that would last  
and for a justice that would never fail.

In Jesus' suffering and death  
you took upon yourself our sin and death  
and destroyed their power forever.

You raised from the dead this same Jesus,  
who now reigns with you in glory,  
and poured upon us your Holy Spirit,  
making us the people of your new covenant.

On the night before meeting with death, Jesus took bread,  
gave thanks to you, broke the bread,  
gave it to the disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over Jesus took the cup,  
gave thanks to you, gave it to the disciples, and said:  
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving  
as a holy and living sacrifice,  
in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

***Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.***

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts,

that in the breaking of this bread and the drinking of this wine  
we may know the presence of the living Christ  
and be renewed as the body of Christ for the world,  
redeemed by Christ's blood.

As the grain and grapes, once dispersed in the fields,  
are now united on this table in bread and wine,  
so may we and all your people be gathered  
from every time and place  
into the unity of your eternal household  
and feast at your table forever.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

*"An Alternative Great Thanksgiving for General Use", © 1972 The Methodist Publishing House;  
© 1980, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1992 UMPH. Used by permission.*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

### **Sharing the Bread & Cup**

**Hymn**                      *Jesus, Draw Me Close*                      TFWS 2159

**Hymn**                      *I Want a Principle Within*                      UMH 410

### **Prayer Following Communion**

***Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery  
in which you have given yourself to us.  
Grant that we may go into the world  
in the strength of your Spirit,  
to give ourselves for others,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

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

**+ Hymn**

*Christ Beside Me*

TFWS 2166

**+ Benediction**

**Postlude**

*How Great Thou Art (UMH 77)*

Stuart K. Hine

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

## ***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 United Methodist Church 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**

### **Morning Prayer**

Holy One, I begin today breathing in your love for me,  
for others, and for the world.

Keep me mindful of all the marvelous things  
You are doing around and within me today.

Help me to feel my friendship with Jesus  
And his confidence in me.

Maintain in my heart the image of myself as a tree,  
Bearing the fruit of Christ's love everywhere I go today. Amen.

### **Evening Prayer**

God, you are both judge and friend.

Even as I review my day,

I give it over to you.

I let go of the good, the bad, and the in-between,  
trusting in your care for me.

I am content this night to abide in your love.

I breathe in your joy and peace.

Whatever I need, I ask of you in Jesus' name. Amen