

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
May 16, 2021
WE PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

FOR YOUR MEDITATION

“To walk the spiritual path is to continually step out into the unknown.” Wallace Huey

We enter, never as strangers, but always as guests of God.

**If you come as a stranger, please know it is our intention you leave as a friend.
No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, we welcome you this
morning! May you experience God’s presence, and receive the blessing God has
prepared for you.**

THE PRELUDE

A WELCOME IN CHRISTIAN LOVE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Leader: From the comfort of our homes, from tricycle seats, from easy chairs
and the breakfast table:

People: **God gathers us in, willing to equip us with ways to proclaim the
gospel.**

Leader: At kitchen sinks, at laptops and blackboards, at nursing stations:

People: **Christ calls us to share in serving all creation.**

Leader: In communities gathered to pray, in families gathered to celebrate, in
friends gathered for fun, all around us.

People: **The Holy Spirit fills us with God’s joy.**

***HYMN OF PRAISE** (NCH - black) # 395 *“In Christ there is no East or West”*

1. In Christ there is no East or West, in Christ no South or North;
But one community of love through out the whole wide earth.

2. In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find;
God’s service is the golden cord close binding humankind.

3. In Christ is neither Jew or Greek, and neither slave nor free;
For men and women live in God, and all are kin to me.

4. In Christ now meet both East and West, in Christ meet South and North;
One joyous, true community throughout the whole wide earth.

PRAYER OF PRAISE AND INVOCATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

(unison)(we use "sins")

God of all people, we gather in Your name and You welcome us despite our faults and failings. It is so good to be recognized as loved by You. Here in this place, may we receive the power to fulfill all that You ask of us. You know the things that we carry, and You invite us to lay our burdens on You and so, our God, we offer to You our whole selves, with nothing held back, trusting in Your redeeming and transforming purpose for our lives. May our worship glorify Your name and may we be renewed to love and serve You in the world. Hear us as we pray together as Jesus taught us to pray, saying...

"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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"

***THE GLORIA PATRI**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S LIVING WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (Children are invited to come forward)

OLD TESTAMENT: Psalm 1 - Lay Reader Sue Milici

¹Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; ²but their delight is the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. ⁴The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. ⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

NEW TESTAMENT: Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26 Lay Reader Sue Milici

¹In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) ¹⁶and said, "Friends, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷For he numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry."

²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us. One of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.” ²³ So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas who was also known as Justus and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” ²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

SERMON “Becoming One

HYMN - (NCH - black) # 308 “*At the Font We Start Our Journey*”

1. At the font we start our journey, in the Easter
faith baptized doubts and fears no longer bind us,
by the light of Christ surprised. Alleluia, Alleluia!
Hope held out and realized.
2. At the pulpit we are fashioned by Easter
tale retold into witnesses and prophets,
by the power of Christ made bold. Alleluia Alleluia!
Faith proclaimed yet still untold.
3. At the altar we are nourished with Easter
gift of bread; in our breaking it to pieces
See the love of Christ out spread, Alleluia Alleluia!
Life embraced yet freely shed.
4. 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.

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

WE BRING GOD OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS
THE PASTORAL PRAYER AND SILENT PRAYER

OFFERTORY

“ *We covenant with God through our tithes and offerings*”

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (IN UNISON)

As we offer our gifts, remind us that they will be used to heal the brokenness of our world; feeding, clothing, sheltering, and bringing hope to those who despair. This we pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

HYMN - (NCH - black) # 311 “Renew Your Church”

1. Renew your church, its ministries restore: both to serve and adore. Make us again as salt through out the land, And as light from a stand. Mid somber shadows of the night, where greed and hatred spread their light. O send us forth with power endued. Help us, God, be renewed.

2. Teach us your word, reveal its truth divine: on our path let it shine. Tell of your works, your mighty acts of grace: from each page show your face. As you have sent your Christ to save, in love to triumph o’er the grave, O let our hearts with love be stirred. Help us God, know your word.

3. Teach us to pray, for you ever near; your still voice let us hear. Our souls are restless till they rest in you: this is life, full and true. Before your presence keep us still that we may find for us your will and seek your guidance every day. Teach us God, how to pray.

4. Teach us to love, with strength of heart and mind, each and all human kind! Break down old walls of prejudice and hate; Leave us not to our fate. As you have loved and Given your life to end hostility and strife. Your Grace we must be mindful of; Teach us God, how to love.

SENDING OUT

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE - NCH # 81 “God Be With You”**
God be with you till we meet again; By good counsel guide, uphold you, with a shepherd’s care enfold you: God be with you until we meet again
THE POSTLUDE

*The end of worship, the beginning of service.
Go forth and serve God gladly.*

* “We extend our spirits to God”

We Welcome all who worship with us this morning. If you are a visitor and have no church home, we hope you find a home here. If you are “passing through,” we offer you God’s blessings as you continue on your journey, and thank you for sharing with us.

WEEKLY PRAYER

God of all ages,
Guide us from the places of comfort,
to the discomfort of discipleship,
That we will serve Your people;
Weeding gardens, and offering food,
tutoring children, and offering support,
Listening to the stories of the ignored,
learning the language of our newest neighbors.
And in all these things,
bless us to discover the truth You share in every moment.
Amen.

LAY READER – Anyone wishing to share in the leadership of worship by reading the Scripture or bringing a children’s sermon, please sign-up on the appropriate list in the Parish Hall and speak with Dixie Silvestri.

TRUSTEE OF THE MONTH

May – Lou Scotti

Pastor Maryann’s day off will usually be on Friday. The office will be open Monday through Friday from 9:30AM -1:00PM. In case of pastoral emergency Pastor MaryAnn can be reached at her home number 860-633-5833.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

Both texts focus on the need for prayer; to remain connected to God to know more of God’s plan and purpose to be able to enact and move on that plan and purpose and to receive the fullest blessings.

In Psalm 1, the psalmist is forming the connection between how our following God's law impacts our well being, both communal and personal. Our harmonizing the two is what fosters spiritual wholeness, and from that wholeness, comes the blessings of greater insights. We need both, the laws and a spiritual life, and it is up to us to align them so that we reap the riches of what God offers. So...to "delight in the Law of the Lord", and to "meditate on it day and night" is what invites the promise of blessing.

Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26 Now, we do not typically choose our spiritual leaders with a flip of the coin, or name drawn from a hat...can you imagine if we did!? Nonetheless, here we have one of the first congregational meetings in history happening and the selection criteria comes down to the casting of lots. While it may sound overly simple and risky, the process is imbued with faith and prayer:

- Believing that prayer connected them to a deeper insight and power, they prayed for God's wisdom to guide them, and
- the person chosen would have to be someone who had been a witness to Jesus' life and ministry and to His resurrection.

These early believers, who are the founders of our church, understood that what had happened was the fulfillment of scriptural prophecies and so it was natural for them to live and act with a very clear sense of God's sovereignty; that the events of history need to be understood against a backdrop of the plan and purposes of an almighty God.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

***Sunday (16th) SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

10:00AM Morning Worship with Pastor MaryAnn Purtill

11:15AM Special Church Meeting

1:00 PM Walking Group

***Monday (17th)**

***Tuesday (18th)**

*** Wednesday (19th)**

10:00 AM Fair Workshop

7:00 PM Handbell Choir

***Thursday (20th)**

***Friday (21st)**

***Saturday (22nd)**

***Sunday (23rd) PENTECOST SUNDAY**

10:00AM Morning Worship with Pastor MaryAnn Purtill

11:15AM Virtual Zoom Coffee Hour

1:00 PM Walking Group

CHURCH TELEPHONE NUMBER: (860) 228-9306

e-mail: ccchurch@snet.net Website: columbiacongregationalchurch.org

Columbia Congregational Church

P.O. Box 177

Columbia, CT 06237