

**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church**

7th Sunday of Easter

May 16, 2021

At the *, please stand, if you are able.

Large Print Hymnals, Bibles, and Hearing Assist Devices are available upon request.

Gather for Worship

PRELUDE **“Elevation”** **Dubois**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxFI_C13HoA

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP **“Majesty”** **Choir**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaRwD2Y7C0s>

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Happy are those who do not ridicule and scoff

All: Happy are those who delight in God’s teachings

Leader: and who meditate on them day and night.

All: They are like trees planted by streams of water.

Leader: They yield fruit in due season

All: and their leaves do not wither.

Leader: Let us worship the Lord.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy One, open us to the possibility that we are being chosen to be new disciples with new ministries in Jesus’ Name. **Amen.**

*** OPENING HYMN** **“Come, Christians, Join and Sing”** **Blue Hymnal #150**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKSpdo-sq6w>

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, though you call us to delight in your teachings, we can become cynical and full of doubt. Do not judge us, we pray, but heal us and restore us to you. Guard us and protect us from evil, and sanctify us in truth; in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

In Christ Jesus, God has promised to forgive us and reconcile us to God and each other. With joy, let us share that peace with one another.

*** GLORIA PATRI**

Blue Hymnal #579

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUBxpypSblw>

*** SHARE THE PEACE OF CHRIST (From your seats, please)**

Leader: Peace be with you!

All: And also with you!

Leader: As God's forgiven people, share the peace of Christ with each other.

Hear the word of God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

May the reading of your Word sanctify us in the truth and bring us to perfect joy. Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 1:15-17,21-26

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1%3A15-17%2C21-26&version=NIV>

PSALTER READING

Psalm 1

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+1&version=NIV>

CHORAL ANTHEM

"Alleluia! Sing to Jesus"

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJDWFYIkBns>

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 John 5:9-13

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+5%3A9-13&version=NIV>

GOSPEL READING

John 17:6-19

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A6-19&version=NIV>

CHILDREN'S SERMON

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHD3DJlrjUE&list=PLh_ZCcaNyX7e8eYmXsncUdChkHzp9HI6f&index=1

SERMON

“God Is For Us”

Larry Sears

Prayer was an important part of Jesus' life when He walked the earth with His disciples. Several times in the scriptures we have descriptions of Jesus taking time to meet with God and pray. We don't have many descriptions of what He prayed for, but we know it was an important part of Jesus' arsenal of weapons. Since Jesus has returned to our Father, prayer is still an essential part of His ministry for us.

In today's Gospel lesson, we read part of the 17th chapter of the Book of John. This chapter is a high priestly prayer for mankind. He prays that His ministry would bring glory to God. He prays for the disciples. He continues by praying for “those that believe through the word of the disciples”. (You and I) He prays for our unity with God.

In the Old Testament, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year, every year, to offer a goat as atonement for the sins of the people. He had to offer a bull offering as atonement for himself and a ram for a burnt offering before he could go into the Holy of Holies to make the atonement for Israel. These men, the high priests who were the intercessors for Israel before God, were replaced when they became unable to do the work they were called to do, either because of old age, infirmities, or death.

But God...

The priesthood changed with the first Easter. With the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we now have a High Priest Who lives forever.

Listen to what Hebrews says:

¹⁵ All of this becomes clearer, when someone who is like Melchizedek is appointed to be a priest. ¹⁶ That person wasn't appointed because of his ancestors, but because his life can never end. ¹⁷ The Scriptures say about him, “You are a priest forever, just like Melchizedek.”

¹⁸ In this way a weak and useless command was put aside, ¹⁹ because the Law cannot make anything perfect. At the same time, we are given a much better hope, and it can bring us close to God.

²⁰⁻²¹ God himself made a promise when this priest was appointed. But he did not make a promise like this when the other priests were appointed. The promise he made is, "I, the Lord, promise that you will be a priest forever! And I will never change my mind!"

²² This means that Jesus guarantees us a better agreement with God. ²³ There have been a lot of other priests, and all of them have died. ²⁴ But Jesus will never die, and so he will be a priest forever! ²⁵ He is forever able to save^[c] the people he leads to God, **because he always lives to speak to God for them.**

²⁶ Jesus is the high priest we need. He is holy and innocent and faultless, and not at all like us sinners. Jesus is honored above all beings in heaven, ²⁷ and he is better than any other high priest. Jesus doesn't need to offer sacrifices each day for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. He offered a sacrifice once for all, when he gave himself. ²⁸ The Law appoints priests who have weaknesses. But God's promise, which came later than the Law, appoints his Son. And he is the perfect high priest forever. (Contemporary English Version)

The NIV version says: *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to **intercede** for them.*

So, we have Jesus interceding for us. Did you know the Spirit intercedes for us also? Romans 8:27 tells us, "And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit **intercedes** for God's people in accordance with the will of God." This simply means that God is watching out for us. The triune God is praying for us. Why do we need to pray then? As we intercede for others or for ourselves, we join in the conversation that God has started. Our prayers are actually a response to God's invitation to join Him in helping to take care of us and our neighbors. Our prayers help us to listen to the Lord and gain understanding of what He is doing for us or through us. It is just like a conversation one might have with a friend. We can talk to them about something, then we can ask questions, and get clarification on things we might not understand.

Sometimes we want to pray, but we don't know what to pray for. Take heart, the Lord listens to any prayer. If we start praying for something God will hear us. If we approach Him in humility and love, then His response will help us to clarify our thoughts and prayers. Remember Honi the Circle Maker? He prayed for rain and it sprinkled. He said that wasn't what he meant, he wanted it to rain more, and a deluge came. He modified his prayer to ask for a gentle rain that would water the plants, and give the people water, and that gentle rain began to fall. Start with a prayer, as God moves and we see what He is doing, we can modify the prayer until it becomes a prayer that matches God's will.

Jesus Christ is our righteousness. That is how the scriptures can say the prayers of a righteous person avail much. It is because when our prayers line up with God's will – with the prayers that Jesus and the Spirit are praying – then we know they will be answered.

Let me encourage you to pray. Join God in the conversation that He has already started with you. You will be amazed at what He shows you and what you learn.

To Him Who lives forever and intercedes for us in accordance with the will of God be all honor and glory. Amen

*** HYMN** **“This IS the Day the Lord Hath Made”** **Blue Hymnal #230**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0DTOB9gXvQ>

Respond in Love and Service

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH – The Apostles' Creed

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

God invites us to give the testimony of our hearts in practical offerings of talents and time. Therefore let us testify to God's love by bringing our gifts.

*** DOXOLOGY**

Blue Hymnal #592

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQUTvMtUhw4>

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Jesus has made God known to us. John 17: 6 We already belong to God. Jesus has made God known to us. John 17: 6 assures us that we already belong to God. And so we dedicate these gifts to God's service and to the glory of God's name. Amen.

*** HYMN FOR OUR NATION**

"Heal our Land"

Red Hymnal #800

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7fsUCjjidg>

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray for the world and ask that we may be given the grace to be faithful disciples of Jesus.

May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

Holy God, this world is peopled by those who delight in your teachings and those who scoff at your ways. Guide us to meditate on you day and night, that we may be an influence for good in the world.

May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

We pray for the people and the leaders of the world in all our diversity. Sanctify them in your truth, that there may be peace and harmony on earth.

May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

We pray for those who are sick or suffering that they may know your protection and care through our faithful service.

May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

We pray for your church, that by the marriage of your grace and our faith we may serve you and our neighbors.

May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

We pray for Earth itself, your marvelous creation. Inspire and help us to be the good stewards that you ask us to be, now and for the future.

May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

Make holy all for which we pray— the poor, the infirm, the church, the world— for holiness and wholeness come from you. Receive these prayers both spoken and unspoken, for we are yours. **Amen.**

Join me now in the prayer Jesus taught the disciples 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 debts, As we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever. **Amen.**

* **CLOSING HYMN** **“O Jesus, I Have Promised”** **Blue Hymnal #388**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rC-2Ss9tg7I>

* **BENEDICTION**

Living in the love of Christ, be open to God calling you into a new ministry. Jesus Christ has already given us into the arms of a loving God. Therefore go in the Spirit of peace.

The End of Today’s Worship Service – The Beginning of Service

Announcements

Welcome to worship with us this morning! We’re glad that you’re here! If you do not have a church home, we invite you to become a part of our compassionate church family... ask Fred or I, Larry, or an Elder about meaningful participation and membership!

Next Sunday Dr. Carlos Baladez will lead the service.