

WORSHIP ORDER - St. John's UCC
Sixth Sunday in Easter
May 5, 2024

PRELUDE

"Lotus Blossom"

Billy Strayhorn/Arranged by Alec Wyton

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor: May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ

be with you all.

People: *And also with you.*

Pastor: Let us rise and greet one another with words of peace and remain standing for our song of centering.

We greet one another with signs and words of peace.

*SONG OF CENTERING

"In the Bulb There is a Flower" vs. 1

Unison

1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;
 2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;
 3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;

in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!
 there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.

In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,

un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER:

L: Sing to the Lord a new song, a song of hope and rejoicing!

P: Praise God for wonderful acts of mercy and kindness!

L: God has remembered God's faithful ones.

P: God has poured blessing upon blessing upon us!

L: Praise the Lord, all the earth, shout your praise!

P: Rejoice, for God is truly with us. AMEN.

One: Let us pray....

Loving, creative God, we praise and bless you for your mighty acts of creation. As we gather here this day we hear your message of power and love through the witness of Jesus Christ as he prepared his disciples for his departure. He gave to them the words of encouragement about living in your love, and through that love being witnesses to the whole world of your peace and hope. Be with us this day, Lord. Open our hearts and minds to receive your word. AMEN.

SONG OF GATHERING

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You”

NCH#4

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore you, God of glo - ry, God of love;
 2 All your works with joy sur-round you, earth and heaven re - flect your rays,
 3 You are giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blessed,
 4 Mor-tals, join the might-y cho - rus which the morn-ing stars be - gan;

Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore you, open-ing to the sun a - bove.
 Stars and an - gels sing a - round you, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
 Well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!
 Bound-less love is reign - ing o'er us, re - con - cil - ing race and clan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the storms of doubt a - way;
 Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
 Lov-ing Spir - it, Fa - ther, Moth - er, all who love be - long to you;
 Ev - er sing - ing, move we for - ward, faith - ful in the midst of strife,

Giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, teach us what our praise should be.
 Teach us how to love each oth - er, by that love our joy re - new.
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us on - ward in the tri - umph song of life.

Hymn was adapted by Luther H. Johnson, U.S. Ambassador

Title: HYMN TO JOY 8787D

The Liturgist invites the congregation to be seated.

First Reading

Read by Liturgist

1 John 5:1-6

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 his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments 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.

Choir Anthem

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

Myron Casner

CHILDREN’S BLESSING - Rev. Nathan Dannison

Gospel Lesson

John 15:9-17

Jesus said to his disciples, “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 love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his 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 him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

Sermon: “No Longer Servants, but Friends”

Rev. Nathan Dannison

The Liturgist invites the congregation to rise in body or spirit and sing the next hymn

*SONG OF RESPONSE

“Where Charity and Love Prevail”

NCH#396

With freedom

1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found; Brought
 2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear true char - i - ty we learn; Let
 3 For - give we now each oth - er's faults as we our faults con - fess; And
 4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known, let all con - ten - tion cease; Be
 here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound.
 us with heart and mind and strength now love Christ in re - turn.
 let us love each oth - er well in Chris - tian ho - li - ness.
 Christ the glo - ry that we seek, be ours Christ's ho - ly peace.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Pastor*

Pastor: ...We pray to you, our mother, using the words he gave us,
 Saying together,

People: **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;
 and 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.**

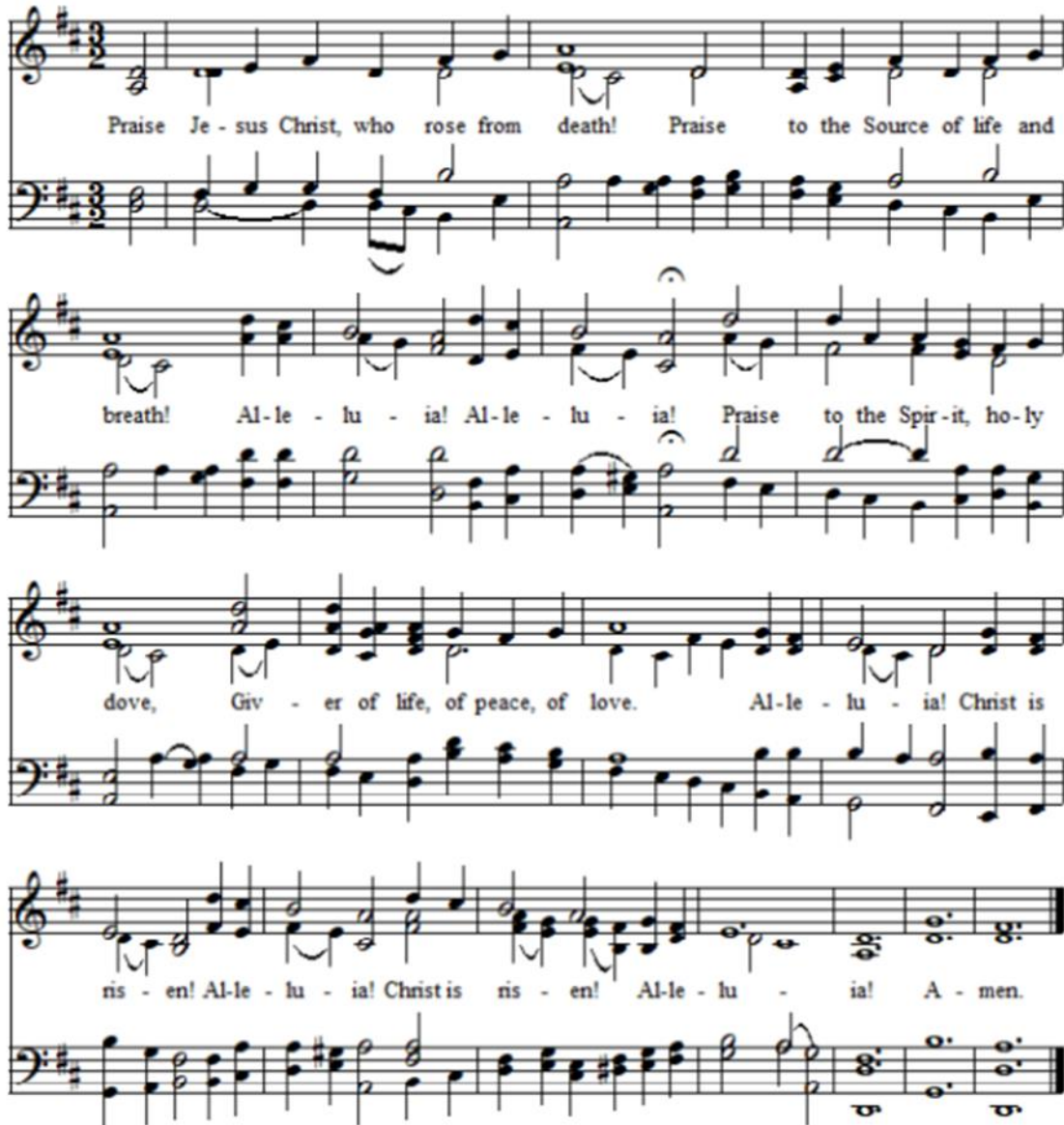
INVITATION TO THE OFFERING *Pastor*

Ushers will come forward to receive the offering.

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOR

OFFERTORY

Easter Doxology



Praise Je - sus Christ, who rose from death! Praise to the Source of life and
breath! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise to the Spir - it, ho - ly
dove, Giv - er of life, of peace, of love. Al - le - lu - ia! Christ is
ris - en! Al - le - lu - ia! Christ is ris - en! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men.

*CHARGE *Liturgist*

Liturgist: Go out into the world
and trust in the faithfulness of God.
Speak truth. Embody compassion.
Live simply. Love recklessly.

Transform the world through the power of hope.

People:

*We go in peace to love and serve God
in the name of Jesus Christ.*

*SONG OF PARTING

“Called As Partners in Christ’s Service”

NCH#495

1 Called as part-ners in Christ's ser-vice, called to min-is-tries of grace,
 2 Christ's ex - am - ple, Christ's in - spir-ing, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
 3 Thus new pat-terns for Christ's mis-sion, in a small or glob-al sense,
 4 So God grant us for to - mor-row ways to or - der hu - man life

We re-pond with deep com-mit-ment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
 Let us fol - low, nev - er fal-tering, rec - on - cil - ing folk on earth.
 Help us bear each oth - er's bur-dens, break-ing down each wall or fence.
 That sur-round each per - son's sor-row with a calm that con - quers strife.

May we learn the art of shar-ing, side by side and friend with friend,
 Men and wom-en, rich - er, poor-er, all God's peo - ple, young and old,
 Words of com-fort, words of vi - sion, words of chal-lenge, said with care,
 Make us part-ners in our liv-ing, our com - pas - sion to in - crease,

E - qual part - ners in our car-ing to ful - fill God's cho - sen end.
 Blend-ing hu - man skills to - geth-er gra-cious gifts from God un - fold.
 Bring new power and strength for ac-tion, make us col-leagues, free and fair.
 Mes - sen - gers of faith, thus giv-ing hope and con - fi - dence and peace.

*BENEDICTION *Pastor*

POSTLUDE:

“Prelude in Classic Style”

Gordon Young