



Bedford Presbyterian Church

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021 at 10 AM

Worship-at-a-Distance Format

GATHERING TOGETHER

Chimes

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor John Sawyer

PREPARING FOR THE WORD

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Elder Bethany Avery

In the wilderness, water brings life.

Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.

In the Word of God, the good news gives light.

Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.

In the bread and the wine, the body of our Savior nourishes everyone.

Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.

Here is the water of life, the word that feeds, the bread of heaven. Come, let us worship the One who nourishes us with grace.

Let us worship God, together.

Hymn # 231 (see below) "Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers"

SUO GAN

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

Elder Bethany Avery

God of mercy, we confess that we have not borne the fruit of the Spirit. We have not loved others as you have loved us. We have denied the promises of baptism and cut ourselves off from you. Forgive us, restore us, that we may abide in your love and live out your mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Friends, you have already been cleansed by the word that God has spoken to you. In baptism God claimed you and joined you to Christ. Believe the promise given to you: in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Amen.

Sung Response (Hymn # 587)

CELTIC ALLELUIA

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

Sacrament of Baptism

Thomas Maverick Griffith

Pastor John Sawyer

Prayer for Illumination

Elder Bethany Avery

Scripture Reading

1 John 4:7-21

Listen now for the Word of God. **Our ears are open. . .**

. . . The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"If, Then"

Pastor John Sawyer

(I Love, Therefore I Am. . .)

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Hymn # 494 (see below) "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts"
Verses 1-3

QUEBEC

Affirmation of Faith – from A Brief Statement of Faith (11.4) Deacon Karen Bagnardi
We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.

Call for the Offering

Deacon Karen Bagnardi

Offertory

"Be Thou My Vision"
Cheryl Barlow, handbell soloist

*At this time, you are invited to offer your tithes and offerings,
by writing a check and putting it in an envelope to the church,
or through our church's online giving website
(<https://bedfordpresbyterian.org/giving/one-time-gifts-pledges/>),
or by scanning this QR code and making a donation.*



*Your giving has a direct impact on the ministry and mission
of Bedford Presbyterian Church!
Thank you!*

Song of Response (Hymn # 609)

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!***

Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

Through our offerings, O God, give your loving Spirit to a world in need of comfort. Make our many gifts one offering for the world, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Invitation to the Table**

Pastor John Sawyer

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give our thanks and praise.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

At this time in the service, you are invited to use any bread that you have along with any beverage (preferably grape-based) to participate in the Lord's Supper. As Presbyterians, we believe that the Holy Spirit connects us to one another and to the Table at God's heavenly feast no matter where we are.

Prayers After Communion and The Lord's Prayer

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 and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

Hymn # 366 (see below) "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

HYFRYDOL

Charge and Benediction and Peace

Pastor John Sawyer

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And with you.

Closing Song

NORTHUMBRIA MORNING BLESSING

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you.

May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.

May he bring you home, rejoicing, at the wonders he has shown you.

May he bring you home, rejoicing, once again into our doors.

Postlude



Liturgists and Leaders in today's worship service –

The Reverend John Sawyer, Pastor

Elder Jill Pennington, Guest Pianist

Elder Bethany Avery, Liturgist

Deacon Karen Bagnardi, Liturgist

Cheryl Barlow, Special Musician

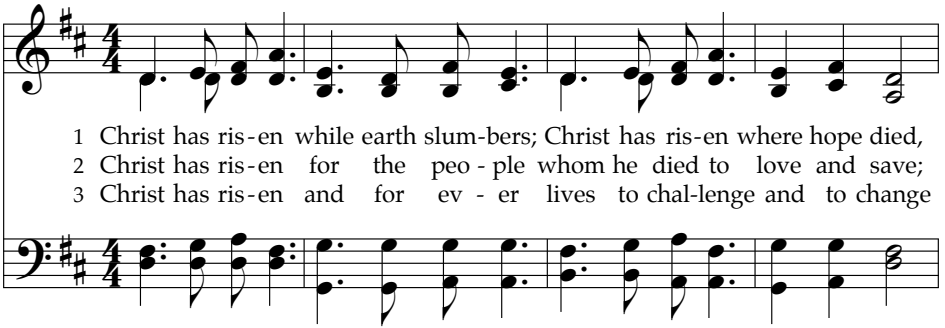
Marc Murai, Elder Mike Chen, and Kirk Wilson Technical Assistance

Members of our IT and Communications Committee and Covid-19 Task Force

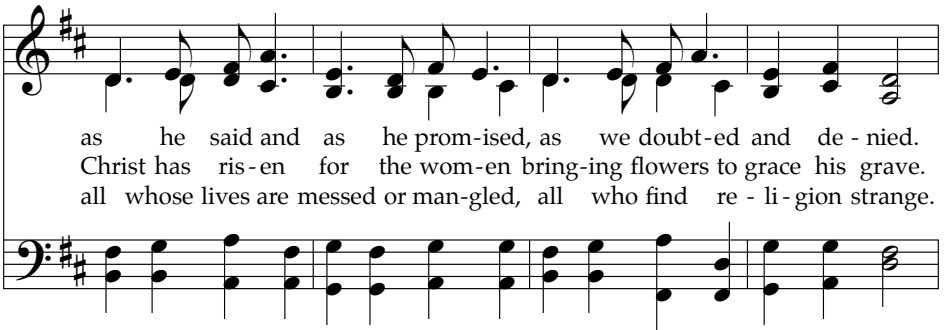
Barbara Flocco, Music Director and Coordinator of Guest Musicians

Information on ways to access audio and video versions of today's service can be found at www.bedfordpresbyterian.org.

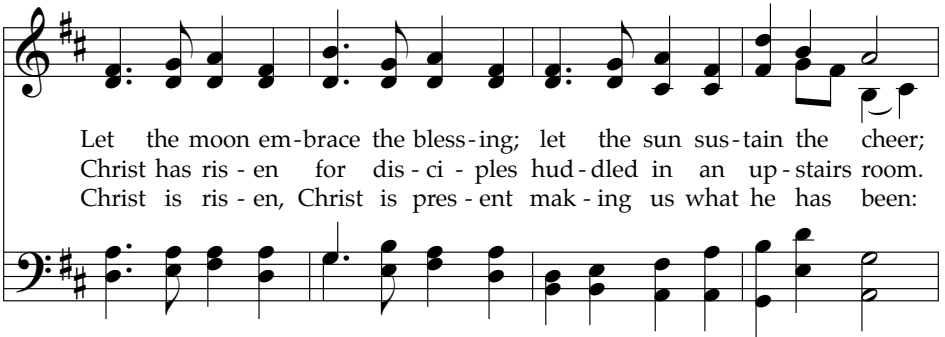
Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers 231



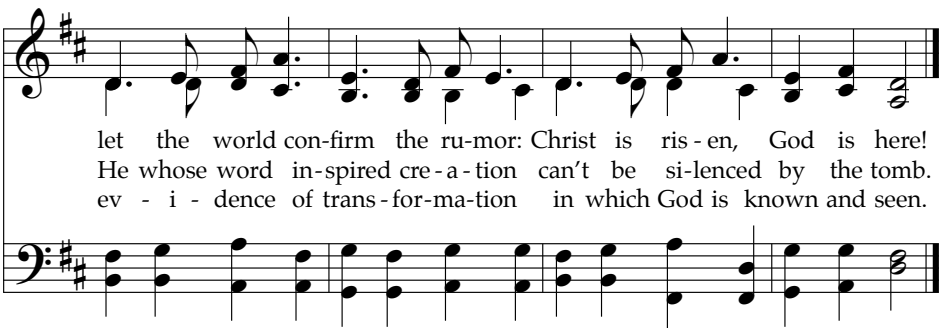
1 Christ has ris-en while earth slum-bers; Christ has ris-en where hope died,
 2 Christ has ris-en for the peo - ple whom he died to love and save;
 3 Christ has ris-en and for ev - er lives to chal-enge and to change



as he said and as he prom-ised, as we doubt-ed and de - nied.
 Christ has ris-en for the wom-en bring-ing flowers to grace his grave.
 all whose lives are messed or man-gled, all who find re - li - gion strange.



Let the moon em-brace the bless-ing; let the sun sus-tain the cheer;
 Christ has ris - en for dis - ci - ples hud-dled in an up - stairs room.
 Christ is ris - en, Christ is pres - ent mak - ing us what he has been:



let the world con-firm the ru-mor: Christ is ris-en, God is here!
 He whose word in-spired cre-a-tion can't be si-lenced by the tomb.
 ev - i - dence of trans-for-mation in which God is known and seen.

Beginning with rather conventional Easter imagery, this text moves into unexpected territory by declaring that Christ's Resurrection is for "all whose lives are messed or mangled, all who find religion strange." The name of this traditional Welsh melody simply means "lullaby."

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts 494

1 Je - sus, thou joy of lov - ing hearts, thou fount of
 2 Thy truth un - changed hath ev - er stood; thou sav - est
 3 We taste thee, O thou liv - ing bread, and long to
 4 Our rest - less spir - its yearn for thee, wher - e'er our
 5 O Je - sus, ev - er with us stay; make all our

life, thou light of all, from the best bliss that
 those that on thee call; to them that seek thee
 feast up - on thee still; we drink of thee, the
 change - ful lot is cast, glad when thy gra - cious
 mo - ments calm and bright. O chase the night of

earth im - parts we turn, un - filled, to heed thy call.
 thou art good, to them that find thee, all in all.
 foun - tain - head, and thirst our souls from thee to fill.
 smile we see, blest when our faith can hold thee fast.
 sin a - way; shed o'er the world thy ho - ly light.

This 19th-century American translation of stanzas from a longer Latin poem is so well shaped that it sounds like an original meditation on Christian experience centered on the Lord's Supper. The North American tune name seems not to have originated with the English composer.

366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to
 2 Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

earth come down, fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing; all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion;
 find the prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee: changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

This text and this tune occur in almost all English-language hymnals (though not always together). The transforming power of love motivates the unending praise of the life to come, and this fine Welsh tune (whose name means "delightful") gives us a foretaste of endless song.

CHRIST'S RETURN AND JUDGMENT

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion; en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.