



Seventh Sunday of Easter – May 24, 2020

(Remember to get something to use as the bread & juice for communion before you begin the service.)

Passing of the Peace of Christ

(L) “The peace of Christ be with you.” (P) “**And also with you.**”

(Text or email some friends to share the Peace of Christ with them.)

Connecting Song, “Standing on the Promises”, #552 (vs. 1-2)

Responsive Call to Worship

Leader: Friends, here in our homes, let us devote ourselves to prayer, as the early disciples before us did. Let us prepare ourselves to receive the Spirit of the Risen Christ.

People: May our worship this day bring glory to God. May our voices praise the name of Jesus!

L: Though we are tempted to remain trapped in longing for what was, let us not neglect to follow Jesus into what is becoming.

P: May God protect us as we dare to witness to the hope we know in Christ, in a world filled with cynicism, fear and mistrust. May we be bold in declaring God’s love to all.

L: As we worship this day, may we humbly seek to ask fruitful questions and find healing in God’s response.

P: Let us worship with courageous, thankful hearts!

Opening Prayer – Jerry Bailey

Father, as we come to you in worship, we feel and know you are with each person and family and all in the wider community.

Sequestered to deal with the virus and health issues, facing serious economic problems, and adjusting our lives to major lifestyle changes, we know you are with us in all that we do.

Guide us, Father, in this time of worship to see the beauty of all of the places and spaces and of the creations that surround us.

Hear us, Father, as we read and sing and listen to your word.

Show us your way.

In the name of Jesus the Christ, we are always in your presence.

Amen

Children's Moment – Deborah Wilson



This is probably the most famous illusion of all time. Almost everyone has seen it! What do you see when you first look at it? Do you see an old lady, or do you see a young woman?

Well, they're both there! Take a moment to try to see the one you didn't see at first.

Now...do you think that there's a "right" way to see this picture?

Have you ever said, or heard somebody say, "It depends on how you look at it...?"

That's probably not true for everything. If someone says, "2 plus 2 is 4," and somebody else says, "2 plus 2 is 5," you probably wouldn't say, "Well, I guess that's a matter of opinion."

But there are times when there are more than one way to look at something. Pastor Rebecca spent Lent talking about different religions—their similarities and differences. I don't know about you, but it really made me stop and think! Sometimes we've been taught something one way, or have looked at something for so long that we can't imagine anyone looking at it differently. This doesn't mean we have to agree with everybody's opinions about everything, but maybe the world would be a better place if we at least took the time to listen!

Dear Lord, help me to realize that not everybody sees the world the same way, and it's at least as important to listen as to speak. In your holy name, Amen.

Prayers of the People

(L) God, in your mercy, (P) **hear our prayer.** OR

(L) God, with joyful hearts, (P) **we give you thanks!**

(Personal prayer concerns redacted to protect privacy.)

For all those remembering loved ones and others whose lives were lost in military service, on this Memorial Day weekend.

All our essential workers – health care workers, teachers, grocery store & restaurant workers, first responders, bank workers, postal carriers & delivery workers, government employees & elected officials, and so many others on the front lines of this crisis. Everyone feeling anxious about the COVID-19 crisis, and especially those directly impacted health-wise and/or facing income loss and job instability. All those struggling with the emotional effects of isolation.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Pastoral Prayer – Pastor Rebecca

Gracious, Eternal God, we come to you in prayer, asking that you will make us one, as you and Christ are one. Help us to know your will, and follow your Christ. Grant that your Word might come alive in our lives, that we might be witnesses to your love in every corner of the world. We pray this day for all those who are struggling, those who are sick or mourning the loss of loved ones, those who have lost their jobs and livelihoods, those caring for their families in strange new circumstances, those feeling isolated and forgotten. We pray for our leaders, that their decisions might be shaped by your compassion and wisdom. We pray for the children and elderly in our communities. We lift up our health care workers, that you might give them rest, hope, and protection. We pray for those, all around the world, whose circumstances are so hard – refugees, asylum seekers, those living through war or drought or persecution. Grant that we might truly witness to the hope we know in Jesus, even as your Holy Spirit overtakes our hearts and fills us with your love. We pray it all in the name of the Risen Christ, Amen.

First Reading – John 17:1-11.

Second Reading – Acts 1:6-14.

Sermon – “Be My Witnesses”.

If you are interested in joining Vista La Mesa Christian Church, by transfer of membership or by making your first confession that Jesus is the Christ and accepting him as Lord and Savior, please contact Pastor Rebecca by phone or email.

Hymn of Response, “Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”, #233.

Invitation to the Offering – Tim Cliffe

(You can give online at www.vlmcc.org/ministries/stewardship or mail in your gifts to VLMCC, 4210 Massachusetts Ave, La Mesa, CA 91941. Thank you!)

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!***

Prayer of Dedication – Julie Germain

Holy and Creator God,

Receive these tokens of our praise and re-create our hearts in love that we may serve you with our whole being. Use these gifts to further your Kin-dom among us here on earth. Transform them into outpourings of peace and justice to reconcile all peoples to one another and you. We ask this in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

Invitation to Communion and Words of Institution – Pastor Rebecca

There is that meal that we refer to as “The Last Supper” even though in some ways it was more like “The First Supper.” But I’m curious if there was another Last Supper. Did they have a going-away party when it was time for Risen Jesus to ascend into heaven? Did he give any hint, at dinner the night before, that tomorrow would be the day? It seems like the disciples, once again, didn’t really have much of a clue about what was going on, so maybe not. But surely, each time they had broken bread with him – in those weeks since he’d taught them what it meant, and then they’d recognized him “in the breaking of the bread” – surely, what he’d said at the first Last Supper was ringing in their minds. Surely, they were beginning to realize this meal would be their best hope for keeping his memory present with them.

For we remember that on the night he was to be betrayed, Jesus gathered with his disciples for the Passover meal. And at supper, he took the bread, and he blessed it, and he broke it. And he gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, broken for you. Eat of it, all of you, and remember me.” And in a similar way he took the cup, and having given thanks, he poured it out for them, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you, and remember me.” And so we share in the bread of new life and drink from the cup of God’s mercy, proclaiming our Risen Lord. Let us pray...

Prayer for the Bread and the Cup, with the Lord’s Prayer – Bob Neely

Be still our soul: for God is on our side; bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.

Trust in our God, our savior and our guide, who through all changes faithful will remain.

Dear God, grant that this bread and this cup will help us bear the cross faithfully.

Hear us now as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us, 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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Communion Hymn, "One Bread, One Body", #393 (vs. 1-2).

[Share in communion with the elements you prepared.]

Hymn of Going Forth, "I Am the Light of the World!" #469 (vs. E, 2-4).

Here are the words to verse E (instead of verse 1):

*When the stone from the tomb is rolled away,
When the angels have told us not to fear,
When the crying and sorrow have turned to Allelus,
The work of Easter is begun:*

Benediction

***Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.***

***When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain,
but we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again.***

AMEN!