

**Service of Morning Prayer preceding Annual Meeting
Easter 7 –May 21, 2023**

Hymn 494 – Crown him with many crowns – stanzas 1-3

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own;
awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

Crown him the Son of God before the worlds began,
and ye, who tread where he hath trod, crown him the Son of man;
who every grief hath known that wrings the human breast,
and takes and bears them for his own, that all in him may rest.

Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save;
his glories now we sing who died, and rose on high,
who died, eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

BCP - Page 39 – Easter Greeting

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
The Lord has risen indeed. Alleluia!

BCP – Pages 41 – Invitation to Confession

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his Holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us kneel or sit in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

BCP – Pages 41-42 – Confession and Absolution

*Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,
we have we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts,
we have offended against thy holy laws,
we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.*

*But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent,
according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord;
And grant, O most merciful father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly,
righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.*

The almighty and merciful Lord, grant us absolution and remission of all our sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

BCP – Page 42 - Gloria

O Lord, open thou our lips.
And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*

BCP – Pages 44-45 – Venite

O come, let us sing unto the Lord;
 let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
 and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.
For the Lord is a great god,
 and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are all the corners of the earth,
 and the strength of the hills is his also.
The sea is his and he made it,
 and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship and fall down
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is the Lord our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
O worship; the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,
and with righteousness to judge the world and the peoples with his truth.

Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36

First Reading – Acts 1:6-14

Second Reading – I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

Hymn 691 – My faith looks up to thee

My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine!
Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day be wholly thine.

May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;
As thou hast died for me, O may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide;
bid darkness turn to day; wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.

Gospel – John 17:11-11

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

BCP – page 53 - 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.*

BCP – page 54 – the Lord’s Prayer

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Let us pray.

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

BCP – page 55 – Suffrages A

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;
And grant us thy salvation.
Endue thy ministers with righteousness;
And make thy chosen people joyful.
Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
For only in thee can we live in safety.
Lord, keep this nation under thy care;
And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let thy way be known upon earth;
Thy saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us clean hearts, O God;
And sustain us with thy Holy Spirit.

Collect for 7th Sunday of Easter

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

BCP Collect for Sundays

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

BCP – pages 58-59 - The General Thanksgiving

*Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we thine unworthy servants
do give thee most humble and hearty thanks
for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men.*

*We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for thine inestimable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ,
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.*

*And, we beseech thee,
give us that due sense of all thy mercies,
that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful;
and that we show forth thy praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up our selves to thy service,
and by walking before thee
in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost,
be all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.**

Announcements

Hymn 717 - America – portions of stanzas 1 and 3

*My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;
Long my our land be bright with freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might, great God, our King.*

BCP – page 59 – Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee, and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Amen.

BCP – page 59 – The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Hymn 690 – Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty; hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through;
strong deliverer, strong deliverer, be thou still my strength and shield,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side;
songs of praises, songs of praises, I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

Annual Meeting

Dismissal

Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Lessons for 7th Sunday of Easter – May 21, 2023

Collect: O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: do not leave us comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

First Reading: Acts 1:6-14

When the apostles had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you to heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven. Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter and John, and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

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

Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36

Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered;

Let those who hate him flee before him.

Let them vanish like smoke when the wind drives it away;

As the wax melts at the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God;
let them also be merry and joyful.

Sing to God, sing praises to his Name; exalt him who rides upon the heavens;
Yahweh is his Name, rejoice before him!

Father of orphans, defender of widows,
God in his holy habitation!

God gives the solitary a home and brings forth prisoners into freedom;
but the rebels shall live in dry places.

O God, when you went forth before our people,
when you marched through the wilderness,

The earth shook, and the skies poured down rain, at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

You sent a gracious rain, O God, upon your inheritance;
you refreshed the land when it was weary.

Your people found their home in it;
in your goodness, O God, you have made provision for the poor.

Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;
sing praises to the Lord.

He rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens;
he sends forth his voice, his mighty voice.

Ascribe power to God;
his majesty is over Israel; his strength is in the skies.

How wonderful is God in his holy places!
the God of Israel giving strength and power to his people! Blessed be God!

Second Reading: I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around,

looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering, and after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

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

The Gospel: John 17:1-11

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

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

Remarks offered by The Rev. Charles Rowins on Sunday, May 21, 2023, the Day of the Annual Meeting of St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland. 7

In the calendar used by the whole Church, today is the Sunday after Ascension Day. Jesus has done his earthly work, including death and new life, and now returns to the Father.

In the calendar used by this congregation, today is Annual Meeting Day. And our focus is perhaps less on what Jesus has done on our behalf, and more on what we have done and are doing and will do on behalf of Jesus.

Not that we lose sight of what Jesus has done on our behalf. After all, we wouldn't be here without Jesus. But, that as a way of saying thank you to Jesus, we focus on our efforts, on-Island and off-Island, to make the world a better place.

Jesus made the world a better place for you and me. Now it is our turn to help. And not just our turn, but our privilege and joy. And, yes, our responsibility. From today's Gospel: "And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

You and I are messengers, and Jesus has expectations. "Love God and love neighbor" being the summary expectation. And so we do our best, Sunday by Sunday, week by week, year by year. We try. And, if I might say so, we do pretty well. Not just as a congregation, but as individuals.

What you all do in your daily lives, personal and professional, is making a positive difference for your families, your neighbors, the larger community, and the world. But these efforts have their own requirement. They are not automatic. They need to be nourished and shared and replenished.

Nourishment. That's the job of this place. Food for thought and food for action. As God nourishes us, we nourish others, including one another. And, we have a good time doing so.

Under-pinning this whole effort is the conviction that when Jesus returned to the Father – the Ascension – there would quickly follow the Gift of the Holy Spirit. So, get ready. Next week we will observe Pentecost. You think you're Spirit-filled this week. Wait 'til next week.

In the meantime, there is work to acknowledge, work to assess, and work to do. It's called the Annual Meeting. The nuts and bolts of this worshipping community. What a privilege to be part of this effort.

May God continue to be with us, with those we love, with those who need help, and those who can provide help. And, of course, as we help, God will be with us, as always. What great company: the Risen Christ and this wonderful, helpful community of St. Christopher by-the-Sea. *Amen.*