

Gilead Presbyterian Church
May 16, 2021; 7th Sunday of Easter, Year B
Observing Ascension Day

Convinced of God's Grace, we affirm that there can be no exclusiveness in the body of Christ. We welcome all regardless of race, ethnic heritage, national origin, age, ability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic standing; and we encourage the full participation of all in the life of our congregation.

WELCOME

OPENING MUSIC "Jesus, Lover of My Soul"
tunes: "Martyn" by Simeon Marsh and "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" by J.S. Bach
Mary Temple, organ arr.by Sharon Elery Rogers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SCRIPTURE from Psalms 47

Leader: Shout for joy; sing songs of praise,

People: for God reigns over all the earth!

Leader: God has gone up with a shout!

People: Sound the trumpets and sing songs of praise!

BLUE HYMNAL #144 "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!"

1. Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! His the scepter, His the throne!

Alleluia! His the triumph, His the victory alone!

Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion Thunder like a mighty flood;

Jesus out of every nation Hath redeemed us by His blood.

2. Alleluia! Not as orphans Are we left in sorrow now.

Alleluia! He is near us; Faith believes nor questions how.

Though the cloud from sight received Him, When the forty days were o'er,

Shall our hearts forget His promise, "I am with you evermore"?

OPENING PRAYER

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Glorious God, by your power is Christ raised from death to rule this world in love.

We confess that we have not believed in him, but fall into doubt and fear.

Gladness has no home in our hearts, and gratitude is slight. Our eyes do not look to heaven, but only earth. Forgive our dread of dying, our hopelessness, and set us free for joy in the victory of Jesus Christ, who was dead but lives, who reigns in heaven and will put down every power to hurt or destroy, when your promised kingdom comes. SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

God In Between by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Illustrated by Sally Sweetland

SCRIPTURE READINGS

⁴⁴ Jesus said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my God in Heaven promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." ⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³ and they were continually in the temple blessing God. *Luke 24:44-53*

¹ In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the reign of God. ⁴ While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what God had promised. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the sovereignty of Israel?" ⁷ He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the authority of God has set. ⁸ 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." ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two messengers in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, "You Galileans, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will return, in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." *Acts 1:1-11*

SERMON

"Halfway Down, Halfway Up"

Rev. Martin McGeachy

MEDITATION

"Lift High the Cross"
Duane Stroud-Boutté, piano

by Sydney Hugo Nicholson

