

The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two The Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 28, 2024 10:30 a.m.

Whoever you are, and wherever you find yourself on the journey of faith, we welcome you and invite your full participation in today's worship.

As a courtesy to others, please silence electronic devices.

For the link to the webpage with the announcements and bulletins, use this QR code:

This service is being streamed live and if you don't wish to be seen on camera, please ask an usher for appropriate seating.

Services are regularly streamed and recorded and you can find them:

http://www.stpaulcathedral.org/watch

If you're interested in more information about the cathedral's ministries, we would like to hear from you: http://stpaulcathedral.org/im-new/



St. Paul's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on unceded Kumeyaay land. We value the knowledge, culture, and worldview of Indigenous people. We commit to the vital work of educating ourselves, increasing community awareness, and promoting reconciliation with our Indigenous neighbors. As we examine actions and practices that perpetuate harm against Indigenous communities, we pledge to work toward a meaningful and respectful relationship as we follow their example in honoring this sacred land. - Approved by the Cathedral Chapter, May 2023

Kneelers are available in the back of the church: please bring one to your seat if you wish to kneel during the service.

Organ Voluntary

Prélude

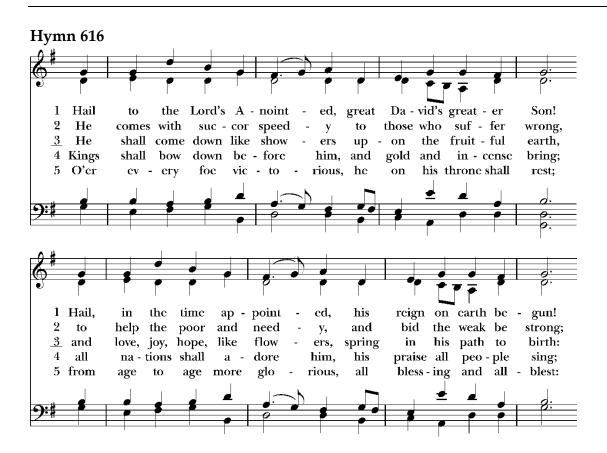
Thèodore Dubois (1837-1924)

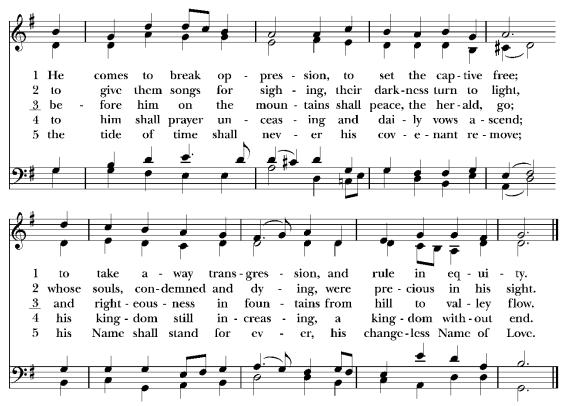
Welcome and announcements.

§ Please stand as you are able for the tolling of the bell.

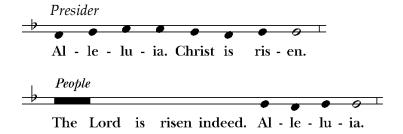
The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

BCP 355





Words: James Montgomery (1771-1854); para. of Psalm 72. Music: Es flog ein kleins Waldvögelein, German folk song; adapt. and harm. A Student's Hymnal, 1923, after Henry Walford Davies (1869-1941).



Music: Ambrosian chant; adapt. Mason Martens (1933-1991). Copyright © 1971 Mason Martens.

Presider

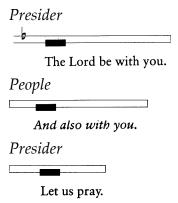
Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

from *Missa Brevis in G* Josef Gabriel Rheinberger (1839–1901)

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus. Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect of the Day



Presider

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

§ Please be seated.

The Lessons

The First Lesson is read, the Reader first saying A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Acts 8:26-40

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

After each Lesson the Reader may say
The Word of the Lord.

Answer Thanks be to God.

Psalm 22:24-30

Deus, Deus meus (choir)

24 My praise is of him in the great assembly; *

I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.

25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied,

and those who seek the Lord shall praise him: *

"May your heart live for ever!"

- 26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, * and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
- 27 For kingship belongs to the Lord; * he rules over the nations.
- 28 To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; * all who go down to the dust fall before him.
- 29 My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall serve him; * they shall be known as the Lord's for ever.
- 30 They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn * the saving deeds that he has done.

The Second Lesson is read, the Reader first saying

A Reading from the First Letter of John.

1 John 4:7-21

Chant: William Boyce

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and

hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

The Reader may say

The Word of the Lord.

Answer Thanks be to God.

§ Please stand as able when the Presider stands.

Alleluia Verse (Cantor, then all repeat)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Open our minds, O Lord, to understand the / Scriptures; * make our hearts burn / within us when you speak.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia,

The Holy Gospel John 15:1-8

The Deacon reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

The Gospel of the Lord.

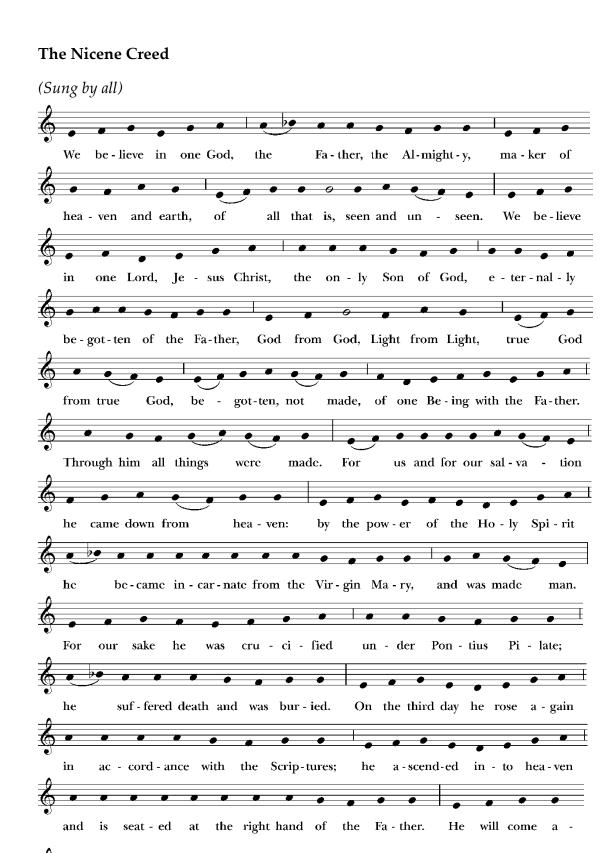
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

§ Please be seated at the introduction of the sermon.

The Sermon

The Rev. Canon Allisyn Thomas

§ After a moment of silence, please stand as able for the Nicene Creed.



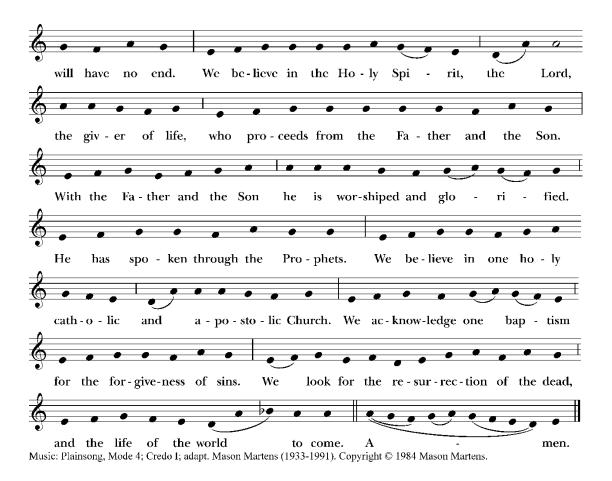
8

judge the liv-ing and the dead, and his king-dom

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to



The Prayers of the People

Form I, BCP 383

The Deacon bids the prayers

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy."

Leader

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

People Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this city, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel on land, on water, or in the air or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, especially...

The Intercessor offers prayers on behalf of the congregation and bids their prayers

let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For refugees and the unsheltered, for the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, especially...

The Intercessor offers prayers on behalf of the congregation and bids their prayers

let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Defend us, deliver us, and in your compassion protect us, O Lord, by your grace.

Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of the blessed Virgin Mary, blessed Paul, and of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

To you, O Lord our God.

Silence

The Presider adds a concluding Collect.

Hasten, O Father, the coming of your kingdom; and grant that we your servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

The Peace

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

§ The People offer each other a sign of the Peace.

Please be seated.

The Offertory

You may give online now by using your phone's camera to scan the quick response code:



or text stpaulcathedral to 73256 using your cell phone. Thank you!

The Holy Communion

At the Offertory, anthem

*Jesus bleibet meine Freude (from Cantata 147)*Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Jesus bleibet meine Freude, Meines Herzens Trost und Saft. Jesus wehret allem Liede, Er ist meines Lebens Kraft, Meiner augen lust und Sonne, Meiner Seele schatz und wonne; Darum lass ich Jesum nicht Aus dem Herzen und Gesicht.

Jesus remains my joy, my heart's comfort and sap. Jesus curbs all sorrow, he is my life's strength, my eye's delight and sun, my soul's treasure and bliss; therefore I will not let Jesus from my heart and sight.

§ Please stand as able for the following hymn.

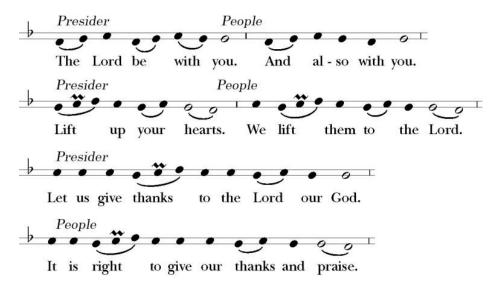
Hymn 576



Words: Latin; tr. James Quinn (b. 1919), alt. Copyright © 1969, James Quinn, SJ, printed by permission of Geoffery Chapman, a division of Cassell Ltd. Music: *Mandatum*, Richard Proulx (b. 1937). G.I.A. Publications, Inc.

The Great Thanksgiving Eucharistic Prayer B

BCP 367

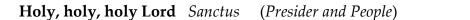


The Presider continues

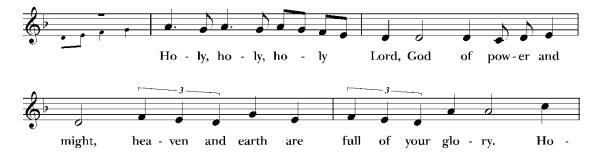
It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

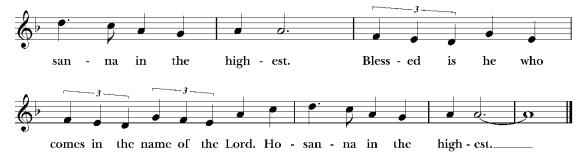
But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



S 129





Music: Robert Powell (b. 1932). Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

The Presider continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

Presider and People

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

The Presider continues

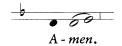
And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being ℜ sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and

bring us to that heavenly country where, with the blessed Virgin Mary, blessed Paul, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

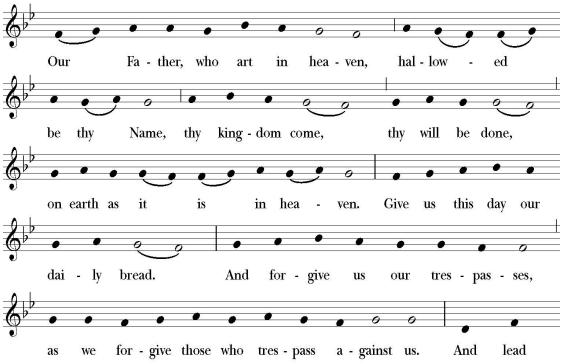
By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

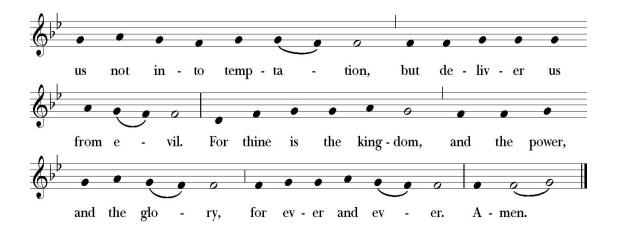
Presider and People



And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

The Lord's Prayer (Presider and People)

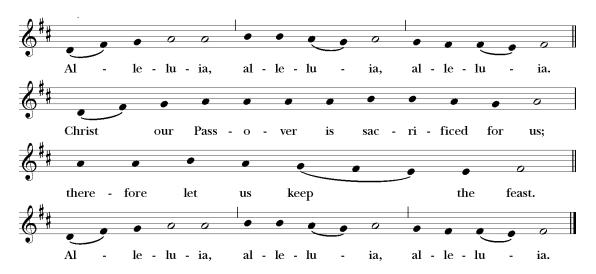




The Fraction: The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence follows as the Bread is broken.

Fraction Anthem: Christ our Passover



Title: The Holy Eucharist, Fraction Anthem: Christ our Passover

Music: From New Plainsong; David Hurd (b. 1950)

The Invitation

This is the table, not of the church but of Jesus Christ. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you who have little; you who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time or ever before; you who have tried to follow and you who have failed; come, not because the Church invites you; it is Christ, and he invites you to meet him here.

- The Iona Community Worship Book

S 154

Presider The Gifts of God for the People of God.

After the Invitation has been given, please be seated until you are ushered to the communion stations at the altar. Please take your purse or valuables with you.

At Communion time we will offer the Host with the option to have it partially intincted (dipped) by the Eucharistic Minister into the wine and placed in the communicant's hand. For the time being we will not offer the option of drinking from the Common Cup. You may choose to receive only the dry Host or to receive a blessing instead of the sacrament.

As you come forward, please use one of these three gestures to indicate your preference:

- ❖ To receive the host with wine, extend both your hands, palm up.
- ❖ To receive only the host, extend one hand, palm up.
- ❖ To receive a blessing, cross your hands at your shoulders

If you need to receive a gluten-free wafer, please go to the station at the extreme left.

+ Laying on of hands for healing – for your own needs or for the needs of another person - is available during Communion at the healing station at the south wall near the pulpit.

At the Communion, Agnus Dei (choir) Missa Brevis in G

Rheinberger

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: grant us thy peace.

Anthem

Love bade me welcome

David Hurd (b. 1950)

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back, guiltie of dust and sinne. But quickey'd Love observing me grow slack from my first entrance in, drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning, if I lacked anything.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here: Love said, You shall be he. I, the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah, my deare, I cannot look on thee. Love took my hand and smiling did reply, Who made the eyes but I?

Truth, Lord but I have marr'd them: let my shame go where it doth deserve. And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame? My deare, then I will serve. You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat: so I did sit and eat.

Text: George Herbert (1593-1633)

§ After a moment of silence, please stand as you are able for the following prayer

The Postcommunion Prayer

Presider Let us pray.

All Eternal God, heavenly Father,

you have graciously accepted us as living members

of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,

and you have fed us with spiritual food

in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.

Send us now into the world in peace,

and grant us strength and courage

to love and serve you

with gladness and singleness of heart;

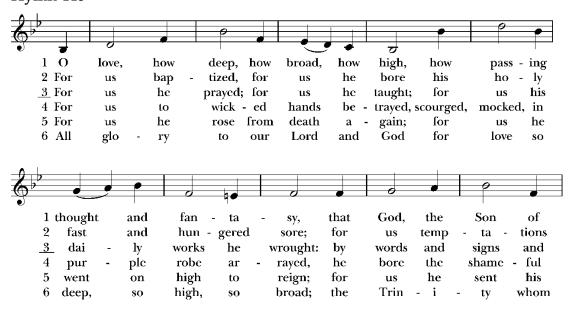
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

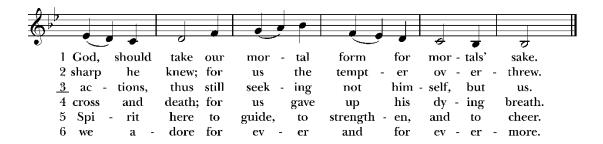
The Deacon may send forth the Lay Eucharistic Minister(s)

The Presider may bless the people.

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God Almighty, ♣ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**







Words: Latin, 15th cent.; tr. Benjamin Webb (1819-1885), alt. Music: Deus tuorum militum, from Antiphoner, 1753; adapt. The English Hymnal, 1906, alt.; harm. after Basil Harwood (1859-1949).

The Dismissal

The Deacon dismisses them with these words

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Organ Voluntary

*Prelude, Fugue and Ciaconne in C, BuxWV 137*Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

§ The clergy, altar party, and people depart.

If you choose not to remain for the Organ Voluntary, please leave quietly out of respect for those who would like to stay and pray for a while.

Thank you.

Everyone is invited to coffee hour in the Great Hall, where you can enjoy Jan Philips' art show <u>Human/Nature: The Incredible Oneness of Things</u> (see article on page 22).

Ministers of the Liturgy

Presider & Dean: The Very Rev. Penny Bridges

Preacher: The Rev. Canon Allisyn Thomas

Deacon: The Ven. Cindy Campos

Assisting: The Rev. Canon Richard Hogue, Jr

Healing: The Rev. Cn. Richard Lief Readers: Julia Gorman, Ellen Hargus

Intercessor: Paul Teyssier

Head Verger: Cn. Lisa Churchill

Altar Servers: Jim McCabe, Bart Smoot, Cherie Dean

Vergers: Cn. Lisa Churchill, Don Mitchell

Thurifer: Stacey Klaman

Altar Guild: Cn Konnie Dadmun, Ellen Hargus, Marty Olson, Mary Rathbun, Mary

Tranbarger

ASL Interpreter: Cherie Dean Head Usher: Cn. Lucinda Parsons

Ushers: Robert Reed, Rosie Bird, Gene Killian, Julia Gorman, Angel Ibarra, Wanda

Porrata

Director of Music: Cn. Martin Green Assistant Organist: Gabriel Arregui

Choir: The Cathedral Choir Cathedral audio: Marshall Moore

Audio/Visual Technicians: Marshall Moore, Mike Thornburgh, Jim Wright, Kelsey Young,

Paul Young

In the unlikely event of an emergency requiring us to evacuate the cathedral please follow the directions of the ushers and vergers, and remain as quiet and calm as possible. Please locate an exit nearest you.

The exit doors are:

- o South porch doors at Nutmeg Street and Fifth Avenue
- o North porch doors to Fifth Avenue Courtyard
- o South transept east and west doors to Nutmeg Street
- o Northeast hallway door to Fifth Avenue breezeway
- West chapel (to the left of chapel altar) stairs leading down to landing.

The Music Center Campaign

"Strengthening community, connecting neighbors, and broadening outreach through music."

The \$2.5M Music Center Campaign will create a single space that centralizes all components of our music program—currently dispersed across four different levels throughout campus and without a dedicated rehearsal space—and broaden our community outreach abilities, just as the Guild Room and other spaces on campus do now, but with a special emphasis on the music and arts component of our mission and ministry. It is through faith and our collective generosity as a congregation, and as a community, that we will bring our vision of the Music Center to life. We invite you to make your contribution today and help create something truly remarkable.

For more information and to make your contribution to The Music Center Campaign visit the Campaign Website.

stpaulcathedral.org/music-center

Roberta Price, Campaign Assistant <u>mgcadmin@stpaulcathedral.org</u> 619.298.7261 ext 228







"Human/Nature: The Incredible Oneness of Things" is the title of Jan Philips' art show featured in the Great Hall of St. Paul's Cathedral from April 21 to May 19. St. Paul's, in conjunction with Simpler Living (our Creation Care Ministry) honors earth month with this exhibit. There will be a closing reception on May 19, at 12 pm in the Great Hall.

Exhibit hours:

Monday – Friday, 10 am - 4 pm (by appointment) Sunday, 8 am - 2 pm / 4:30 - 6:30 pm

To schedule an appointment please email Kathleen Burgess (**burgessk@stpaulcathedral.org**), Director of Administration Operations, attention "Human/Nature Exhibit tour".

From the artist:

I became a photographer the same year I became a social activist—1975. My activism was a reponse to the homophobia I experienced in my church, family, and college classroom; the sexism I experienced in the workplace and society; and the growing number of nuclear weapons being amassed around the world that made me fearful and anxious. I was a lesbian/feminist/peace activist with a specific agenda: to use my photographs to promote awareness and provoke action for justice and peace.

I created a slideshow of peacemakers and rallies in the U.S. and Canada and made a peace pilgrimage around the world showing *Focus on Peace* to audiences from Nagasaki to Newcastle. I created an exhibition of photos from my childhood to adulthood called *Born Gay*, with captions that articulated the conflicts I dealt with from kindergarten to the convent. Behind everything was an awareness that a "picture is worth a thousand words."

These photographs here surfaced like hidden treasures, coming together in pairs on my tabletop as I sorted through images from the past to the present. They spoke to me—not in any literal way, not about anything explainable or cerebral—but in a mystical and mysterious way. They spoke of oneness, connectedness, sacred ties between Earth and her creatures.

In each frame are two images, but they evoke a third thing: a feeling, an awakening, a moment of awe—or whatever it is you feel as you stand before each one. My hope is that your feeling as a sacred Earthling is amplified. That you see more clearly your own Divinity and awaken to the reality that you and are the Light of the World.

Jan Phillips, April 2024



pouring tea.

RECOGNIZING CULTURAL GIFTS AS GIFTS

by Rachel Ambasing

As a 2nd-generation American of Igorot-Filipino and Chinese ancestry, there are a few cultural traditions I grew up practicing that I know are unfamiliar to most American households. One of these cherished practices has to do with

Growing up, my family would visit my maternal grandfather once a month for dim sum in Los Angeles' Chinatown. At the start of every meal, as soon as the servers set down the customary tea pot and cups, my mother would pour us each a cup of tea, starting with my grandfather. Then, my mother would effortlessly monitor our cups and pour as necessary to keep our cups consistently full for the rest of the meal (it's poor form to let a cup become empty), even while keeping up the conversation in between bites of siu mai and chicken feet.

In Chinese culture, it's customary for the youngest in the family to pour tea for their elders as a sign of respect. As I am the younger sibling in my family, that role became mine to perform once I was old enough to responsibly lift a teapot. To my chagrin, the task of keeping everyone's tea cups full while also trying to eat was not as effortless as my mother made it seem. Everyone sipped at different speeds, or I would be asked a question just as someone else took a big gulp of tea. It turns out, it's hard to keep an eye on what everyone else at the table needs while also trying to be conversational and feed yourself (while using chopsticks, at that).

Early on, I had to be prompted more than once to attend to a neglected, empty cup. Eventually, though, I developed an acute sense for noticing who had taken how many sips of tea, and an ease of scanning the table through my peripheral vision for half-empty cups. Excluding the many times I'd accidentally spill tea on the table cloth or on a plate of steamed BBQ pork buns, the practice of keeping my family's cups full became seamless — albeit, still not as graceful as my mother.

Last week, I was reminded of this tea-pouring custom when I traveled to Portland to attend a retreat for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Leaders in The Episcopal Church. Almost 50 AAPI leaders from diverse ethnic backgrounds, experiences and ministry contexts gathered in community, including three others from our diocese: Phal Chourp from St. David's, Mae Chao from Holy Cross & St. Brigid's, and Jen Jow from St. Paul's Cathedral. We cultivated community and fostered relationships through worship, shared meals, storytelling and facilitated learning, and exploring the sites and delights of downtown Portland. Our time together was woven around a central thread: "What are the gifts we bring, not in spite of, but BECAUSE we are Asian Pacific Islander Americans?"

The chance to reflect on this question with my fellow AAPI siblings-in-Christ was a gift in itself. Although I was lucky enough to grow up in a community full of people from a similar background as myself and my family, as a leader in the Episcopal Church, spaces to reflect on my leadership skills in light of my cultural background are few and far between. Spaces to speak candidly about the tensions between my cultural background and those of our predominant culture with people navigating those same tensions are even fewer still.

Before we began to consider our gifts, we were given the important chance to lament. For me, the lament came from the times I felt I had to assimilate away from some of my cultural gifts, or shave off parts of myself in order to

fit into some notion of leadership or giftedness for a culture I was not born into, and for an identity God did not create me to embody.

When it came time to name the gifts of being an Asian American or Pacific Islander, some came to me easily. The gift of strength came from my Igorot ancestors – warriors who resisted Spanish colonization. The gift of adaptability (my top Clifton strength) came from my parents and family members who chose to evolve in order for future generations to survive and thrive.

The last evening of the retreat, we gathered at a Chinese restaurant, Kung Pow, for our final meal together. After my table ordered and were served a pot of jasmine tea, I found myself naturally scanning the table for half-full cups, and taking mental notes of who around me had sipped their tea and might need refilling. I ended up laughing with a friend – also of Chinese heritage and familiar with tea-pouring responsibilities – at our shared inability to not pay attention to how full or empty our table mates' cups were. I ended dinner wishing that this practice that was now so instinctual and embedded in my body, could be put to use at other times, beyond sitting at a table in a Chinese restaurant.

The next day, as I sat in an airport waiting for my flight back home, I remembered a group conversation that I facilitated within the last year, and a nice note I received afterwards from a participant. She complimented me on my sensitivity to group dynamics and tending to those more reserved voices who seemed to want to speak but needed more invitation, especially in an environment when some shared more quickly and freely. I realized that reading the room as a facilitator is a lot like trying to keep everyone's tea cups full. Both require paying attention to the various rhythms of who sips (or speaks) more or less frequently. Both require paying attention to the different needs and dynamics of everything going on at the (proverbial) table, beyond just myself, and responding accordingly.

In our society, it's so easy to hear and absorb both explicit and implicit messaging telling us which gifts we should cultivate in order to be effective leaders. Further, we may hear that only those trainings or experiences that are accredited, or those which we receive a certificate for are the only avenues through which we can nurture those gifts. While accredited, certified trainings and experiences are certainly important and are accredited and certified for good reason, we sell ourselves short – and we sell God short – when we fail to recognize the gifts granted to us through our particular cultures and God-given heritages, ancestries and experiences.

That all being said, I know from experience that realizing one's gifts can be difficult, particularly when they may be gifts formed outside of or divergent from the dominant culture, and particularly when a person is trying to name those gifts on their own. If this sounds like you, here are some things you might try:

- Talk to your clergy or other pastoral leadership. Most (if not all) clergy love talking about spiritual gifts!
- Connect with others of a similar cultural heritage or context as you for group reflection and conversation. Together, reflect on any traditional practices or customs that feel life-giving and/or that have become a part of you. What values are rooted in these practices or customs that have equipped you to help build up the Body of Christ? i.e., are these practices rooted in joy, generosity, hospitality, healing, or, like in pouring tea, noticing others needs beyond your own? If you might need help connecting with others of your heritage and context, feel free to email me at rambasing@edsd.org.
- During our diocese's Year of Leadership, we'll begin co-creating spaces specifically for people of color and those of ethnic backgrounds to gather in community. One of our hopes is that these spaces will serve as a safe space for story-sharing, discernment, and support. If this sounds like something you'd be interested in, just send me a message.

In the meantime, cheers (with my perfectly-poured cup of tea) to realizing your own unique cultural gifts.