



*“Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.”*



## **West Richmond Church of the Brethren**

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May 2, 2021

Fifth Sunday of Easter



# Welcome and Announcements

**Prelude**

*Prelude in E Major*

Chopin

## GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

### \* Opening Words

God calls us together to reflect on God's Word and our lives in God's world. God is with us now as we sing and pray together. Let us listen that we may hear God's voice and understand God's way.

### \* Opening Prayer

Lord of all, in Jesus you have made us all sisters and brothers in Christ. There is no distinction between Gentile and Jew. There is no separation that can remove any from fellowship in Christ's community. Help us appreciate our many differences and help us seek unity so that we may proclaim your truth to all, for the sake of Jesus Christ in whom there is harmony and peace.

### \* Opening Hymn     *Marvelous grace of our loving Lord*     #151

1 Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,  
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt,  
yonder on Calvary's mount out-poured,  
there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

*Refrain:*

*Grace, grace, God's grace,  
Grace that will pardon and cleanse within.  
Grace, grace, God's grace,  
Grace that is greater than all our sin.*

2 Sin and despair, like the sea waves cold,  
threaten the soul with infinite loss.  
Grace that is greater, yes, grace untold,  
points to the refuge, the mighty cross. *[Refrain]*

3 Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace,  
freely bestowed on all who believe.  
You that are longing to see his face,  
will you this moment his grace receive? *[Refrain]*

## CELEBRATE GOD'S FAMILY

### Time with Our Children

### Congregational Prayer

**Song**                      *God of the Bible (Fresh as the Morning)*      Sing the Journey #27

1. God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,  
hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,  
you are our center, daylight or darkness,  
freedom or prison, you are our home.

*Refrain: Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change. [2x]*

2. God in our struggles, God in our hunger,  
suffering with us, taking our part,  
still you empower us, mothering Spirit,  
feeding, sustaining, from your own heart. *[Refrain]*
3. Those without status, those who are nothing,  
you have made royal, gifted with rights,  
chosen as partners, midwives of justice,  
birthing new systems, lighting new lights. *[Refrain]*
4. Not by your finger, not by your anger  
will our world order change in a day,  
but by your people, fearless and faithful,  
small paper lanterns, lighting the way. *[Refrain]*
5. Hope we must carry, shining and certain  
through all our turmoil, terror and loss,  
bonding us gladly one to the other.  
till our world changes, facing the Cross. *[Refrain]*

# WORSHIP IN GIVING

## Thoughts on Giving

One: There is no scarcity. There is not shortage. No lack of love, of compassion, of joy in the world. There is enough. There is more than enough. Only fear and greed make us think otherwise. No one need starve.

**Many: There is enough land and enough food.**

One: No one need die of thirst.

**Many: There is enough water.**

One: No one need live without mercy.

**Many: There is no end to grace.**

One: And we are all instruments of grace.

**Many: The more we give it, the more we share it, the more we use it, the more God makes.**

One: There is no scarcity of love.

## LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

### Special Music

*Whatsoever Things Are Lovely*

Carl Simone

### Scripture Lesson

Acts 15:1-18 (NRSV)

#### The Council at Jerusalem

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers. When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders,

and they reported all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, “It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.”

The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. After they finished speaking, James replied, “My brothers, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name. This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written,

‘After this I will return,  
and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen;  
from its ruins I will rebuild it,  
and I will set it up,  
so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—  
even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been  
called.

Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things known from long ago.’

## GO IN GOD’S NAME

**\* Closing Hymn**

*Renew your church*

#363

- 1 Renew your church, its ministries restore,  
both to serve and adore.  
Make it again as salt throughout the land,  
and as light from a stand.  
'Mid somber shadows of the night,  
where greed and hatreds spread their blight,  
O send us forth with pow'r endued.  
Help us, God, be renewed.
- 2 Teach us your word, reveal its truth divine;  
on our path let it shine.  
Tell of your works, your mighty acts of grace;  
from each page show your face.  
As you have loved us, sent your Son,  
and our salvation now is won,  
O let our hearts with love be stirred.  
Help us, God, know your Word!
- 3 Teach us to pray, for you are always near.  
Your still voice let us hear.  
Our souls are restless till they rest in you,  
where we find strength anew.  
Before your presence keep us still  
that we may find for us your will  
and seek your guidance ev'ry day.  
Teach us, Christ, how to pray!
- 4 Teach us to love, with heart and mind and soul.  
You, O Christ, be our goal.  
Break down old walls of prejudice and hate.  
Leave us not to our fate.  
As you have loved and giv'n your life  
to end hostility and strife,

O share your grace from heav'n above.  
Teach us, Christ, how to love!

**\* Benediction**

**Postlude**

*The Light of the World/Trusting Jesus*

Bliss/Sankey

*\* Please stand as able and led*



<b>Ministers.....</b>	<b>All Members</b>
Pastor.....	David Whitten
Worship Leader .....	Alyce Newman
Special Music .....	Sarah Beers & Bob Phillips
Flautist .....	Sarah Beers
Guitarist .....	David Whitten
Pianist.....	Bob Phillips
Dir. of Technology & Media.....	Kevin Beers

*“Prelude in E Major”* by Frederic Chopin, Lani Smith  
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