



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



West Richmond Church of the Brethren

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May 22, 2022

5th Sunday after Easter

Welcome and Announcements

Organ Prelude

Sing Joy

Gilbert Martin

GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

* Invitation to Worship

One: We live in a world filled with wonder:

All: **The leafing trees and budding flowers,**

One: The restless wind, the flight of birds,

All: **The rising of the sun and the phases of the moon,**

One: The miracle of our bodies and their motions,

All: **The gift of minds.**

One: All these things call us back to the mystery of existence.

All: **Our questions lead us to reverence God, even as we lift hearts and voices in gratitude and praise.**

* Prayer of Gathering

O God, you make yourself known in myriad ways, by the glory of sunrise and the smell of rain, by the beauty of flowers and the grace of a bird in flight, by the faces of people we love and the noises of children at play, by the words of prophets, psalmists, and teachers like Jesus. Tune our spirits in these moments to present our struggles and questions to you, that our hopes may be renewed, our faith restored, our eyes opened, our bodies healed, and our dreams amended. Fill us with awe for You in all that is. Amen.

- 1) Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready my God thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- 2) Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear,
and while the wave notes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready my God thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- 3) Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth ev'rywhere.
Open my heart, and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

CELEBRATE GOD'S FAMILY

Time with Our Children

- 1) Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible, hid from our eyes,
most blessed most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

- 2) Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might,
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.
- 3) To all, life thou givest, to both great and small.
In all life thou livest, the true life of all,
We blossom and flourish, as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changest thee.

Congregational Prayer

adapted from Jewish Sabbath Prayer Book

O God, days pass, and the years vanish, and we often walk sightless among the wonders all about us. Fill our eyes with seeing, our minds with knowing, our hearts with loving. Let there be moments when your Presence, like lightning, illumines the darkness in which we walk. Help us to see, wherever we gaze, in whatever the situation, that the bush burns unconsumed as it did before Moses. And we, clay touched by You, will reach out for holiness and exclaim in wonder, "How filled with awe is this place, is this life, is this universe. Thanks be to You." Amen.

Response to Prayer

"Spirit of Life"

#1129

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close, wings set me free,
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

WORSHIP IN GIVING

Thoughts of Giving

We are astonished each day with the boundlessness of life, love, and generosity. Yet, we are also discouraged each day

with all the sufferings about us. May we learn not to take any gift for granted, only to live in perpetual gratitude, and in service to others through our sharing.

LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

Special Music

Savior, Thy Dying Love

Robert Lowery

Scripture Lesson

Ecclesiastes 1:1-4, 17, 18; 2:24-25;
3:1-8, 14; 9:7 (adapted from *GNT*)

It is useless, useless, said the Philosopher. Life is useless, all useless. You spend your life working, laboring, and what do you have to show for it? Generations come and generations go, but the world stays just the same.

I was determined to learn the difference between knowledge and foolishness, wisdom and madness. But I found out that I might as well be chasing the wind. The wiser you are the more worries you have; the more you know, the more it hurts. The best thing we can do is eat and drink and enjoy what we have earned. And yet, I realized that even this comes from God. How else could you have anything to eat or enjoy yourself at all?

There is a time for everything that happens in this world. There is a time for birth and a time for death, a time for planting and a time for pulling up, a time for killing and a time for healing, a time for tearing down and a time for building up. There is a time for sorrow and a time for joy, a time for mourning and a time for dancing, a time for making love and a time for not making love, a time for kissing and a time for not kissing.

There is a time for finding and a time for losing, a time for saving and a time for throwing away, a time for tearing and a time for mending, a time for silence and a time for talk. There is a time for love and a time for hate, a time for war and a

time for peace. I know that everything God does will last forever. You can't add anything to it or take anything from it. And one thing God does is to make us stand in awe of the Divine. So go ahead—eat your food and be happy, drink your wine and be cheerful. It's all right with God.

Sermon “A Reverence That Comes with Questions”

GO IN GOD'S NAME

* **Hymn**

I sing the mighty power of God

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- 1) I sing the mighty pow'r of God,
that made the mountains rise,
that spread the flowing seas abroad
and built the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained
the sun to rule the day.
The moon shines full at God's command
and all the stars obey.
- 2) I sing the goodness of the Lord,
that filled the earth with food.
God formed the creatures with a word,
and then pronounced them good.
Lord, how thy wonders are displayed,
where'er I turn my eye,
If I survey the ground I tread,
or gaze upon the sky.
- 3) There's not a plant of flow'r below,
but makes thy glories known,
and clouds arise, and tempest blow,
by order from thy throne.
While all that borrows life from thee
is ever in thy care,

there's not a place where we can flee
but God is present there.

* **Benediction**

adapted from *Forty New O Antiphons* by Diane Tucker

O God of every path and passageway, Door and Key and Bridge across any abyss, Flashlight in the darkness, blackout's Candle, steady us on our way, amid all our questions. Steady us with your bright wisdom, and make us quick and nimble with love in the Jesus-path. Light our way into reverence, our way home into your eternal arms. Amen.

Piano Postlude

Leaning/Leading

arr. Phillips

* Please stand as able and led



Ministers	All Members
Pastor.....	David Whitten
Guest Speaker.....	David Brunk
Worship Leader	Susan Robertson
Song Leader.....	Bob Gangwer
Organist/Pianist	Bob Phillips
Flautist	Sarah Hartman
Violinist	Bill Kinzie
Media & Technology Director	Kevin Beers