

ALKI UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

May 2, 2021

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Communion Sunday

Please prepare your bread and cup for at-home Communion.



**We are a church where Jesus the healer meets Jesus the revolutionary,
and where together, we grow a just and peaceful world.**

Gathering Music	Betsy Stelzer, Accompanist
Welcome	Rev. Louis Mitchell
Call to Worship	Kim B, Liturgist
Sung Response	<i>Sanctuary</i> John W. Thompson and Randy Scruggs

**Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true;
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

Contemporary Voice	“Motherhood saved my life and provided reason in the middle of my chaos. It gave me the opportunity to show the world that I could still love in spite of my circumstances. I will forever be grateful for my babies and I vow to teach them love and acceptance in a world where that seem old so rare.” — Octavia Yaz-mine Lewis
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Opening Song	<i>For Everyone Born</i> Shirley Erena Murray
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Scripture Readings	Psalms 22:25-31 (adapted from the Message)
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Here in this great gathering for worship

I have discovered this praise-life.

And I'll do what I promised right here in front of the God-worshippers.

Down-and-outers sit at God's table and eat their fill.

Everyone on the hunt for God is here, praising God.

“Live it up, from head to toe. Don't ever quit!”

From the four corners of the earth people are coming to their senses,
are running back to God.

Long-lost families are falling on their faces before God.
God has taken charge; from now on God has the last word.
All the power-mongers are before God — worshipping!
All the poor and powerless, too — worshipping!
Along with those who never got it together — worshipping!
Our children and their children will get in on this
As the word is passed along from parent to child.
Babies not yet conceived will hear the good news — that God does what God says.

John 15:1-8

(adapted from the Message)

I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn't bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.

Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me.

I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is—when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

Sermon

“A Family Tree”

Rev. Louis Mitchell

Prayers of the People

(We invite you to stay muted or unmute as you desire. Please be respectful of the privacy of those names you lift in prayer — this is the internet and by its nature not completely private.)

Loving God, we lift our voices in prayer. We come to share our gratitude, our fears, our deepest hopes, and our unanswerable questions. We open our hearts to let you in to our most tender places and to share all that we hold most dear. We trust that we will be held, that we will be loved. In times of trial, help us hold on to that trust.

God, hear our prayers!

God of abundant grace, you have blessed us with unconditional love. We offer ourselves in all of our brokenness, knowing that in you, all things are whole. When we stray from your ways of justice and compassion, call us back. Have mercy on us, and help us to begin again in love.

We are imperfect, and yet, we are beloved. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

Holy One, there are many among us who suffer today, whether in mind, body or spirit. We lift up the names of our loved ones, and we pray for the healing of all who suffer.

(Please say the names, aloud or in your heart, of anyone who is in need of healing.)

We pray, too, for those who have financial needs, who are in need of employment, and who are in need of economic justice. We lift up the names of our loved ones, and we pray for a world in which no one's needs will go unmet.

(Please say the names, aloud or in your heart, of anyone who is experiencing such need.)

Gathered together in love, we gather also in remembrance. We remember those who have come before us, whose love and whose sacrifices have touched our lives, making it possible for us to be as we are. As we speak the names of our departed loved ones, we offer a prayer of thanks for these precious memories and we pray that you will comfort all who mourn.

(Please speak the names of anyone you wish to remember today.)

As our world is filled with suffering, need and grief, it is also filled with blessing and abundance. Mindful of the abundance in our own lives, we offer thanks!

(Please name aloud those blessings for which you are thankful.)

In our hearts, we carry many individual prayers. Knowing that we are all connected, one in the body of Christ, we lift up these prayers together. The prayer of one among us is the prayer of all.

(Please take a moment to offer your prayer silently)

God, in your mercy, hear our prayers!

Creator God, you have called us into being and given us purposes to fulfill. Each of us has unique gifts, and all our gifts are needed in your world.

Help us to hear and to heed our callings.

This church, too, has a calling. We come together to discern our purpose and to live into it together. Fill our hearts with love for you and your world. Strengthen us for the service ahead. Give us the courage to let go of all that holds us back from fulfilling your desires. Give us the wisdom and the creativity to discover new ways of being. God, you have called us here.

What are you calling us to do? Speak, for your servants are listening

(Let us remain in silent prayer as we listen for God.)

Amen.

Adapted from a prayer by the Rev. Jamez Terry

Communion

Words of Institution and Consecration

Rev. Louis

Communion Music

A Meditation on Unity in Christ

Betsy S

Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving

Please pray the prayer of thanksgiving with me:

Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of your chosen and beloved One.

Jesus, we take you into ourselves, symbolically but earnestly.

We strive to be one flesh with You, one heart with You,

We strive to be Your hands here in this time and place where You have planted us to serve.

Amen.

Call to Offering/Offering Prayer

Please donate generously through alkiucc.org, through a mailed donation to the church office or through text-to-give by texting the word "AlkiUCC" to 44321 and a donation link will come back to you. Your support for Alki is more important now than ever as the church seeks to be a prophetic voice for all people in the year ahead.

Musical Offering *We Are Family* Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers

Announcements

Moment of Ministry Personnel

Third Hymn *Bind Us Together* Bob Gillman

Benediction Rev. Louis Mitchell

Postlude**Hospitality Hour**

Alki UCC Sunday worship is recorded for posting on YouTube.

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Join the Worship and Music team and add your voice to planning worship for Pentecost and through the spring. Contact: Joe M at kalanicorp@gmail.com