

Order of Worship for May 25, 2025

Prelude

P: Alleluia! Jesus Christ is risen!

C: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Opening Hymn: *“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing”* - **Hymn #475**

Opening Verses:

P: This is the day which the LORD has made;

C: let us rejoice and be glad in it.

P: From the rising of the sun to its setting,

C: the name of the LORD is to be praised.

P: Better is one day in Your courts than a thousand elsewhere;

C: I would rather be doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

P: Make me to know Your ways, O LORD.

C: Teach me Your paths.

P: Sanctify us in Your truth

C: Your Word is truth.

P: From the rising of the sun to its setting,

C: the name of the LORD is to be praised.

Entrance Psalm:

P: Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will sustain you;

C: He will never permit the righteous to be moved.

P: My heart is in anguish within me;

C: the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

P: But I call to God,

C: and the LORD will save me.

P: Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan,

C: and He hears my voice.

P: He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage,

C: for many are arrayed against me.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will sustain you;

C: He will never permit the righteous to be moved.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day:

P: O God, the giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ,

Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise: *"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"* - **Hymn #649**

First Lesson: Acts 16:9-15

R: A vision appeared to Paul in the night: A man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

R: Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Lesson: Revelation 21:9–14, 21–27

P: Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ... And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass. And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

R: Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Third Lesson: John 16:23-33

P:[Jesus said:] “In that day you will ask nothing of Me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.” His disciples said, “Ah, now You are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! Now we know that You know all things and do not need anyone to question You; this is why we believe that You came from God.” Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave Me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with Me. I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

P: Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God!

Children’s Message:

Sermon Hymn: “*When Peace Like a River*” - **Hymn # 763**

Sermon: “*Peace in Jesus*” - **John 16:23-33**

We live in a time when peace appears to be in short supply. Wars and rumors of wars fill the news. Storms and weather alerts pop up all the time. Every day brings a new reason to be worried about the economy, the job market, inflation. We live in a time when restlessness and anxiousness and spitefulness and even downright hatred are blasted across our screens on a daily basis. Some of you are feeling the pressure of being in the sandwich generation, caring for children at home and for aging parents who need your help. Others of you are under pressure at work to hit sales projections or project deadlines. It seems no matter where we are in life, we’re all under pressure.

People recognize that there is something wrong. Jonathan Haidt’s book *The Anxious Generation* has gained importance for the way that it connects the high anxiety of people today, especially younger people, to the use of smartphones and social media. But the book traces the problem back even earlier, to the loss of community that began in the 1960’s. Without community, it’s easier to be anxious. It’s harder to be at peace.

Of course, many are quick to offer remedies with cures like “self-care” and “do what makes you happy” and any number of therapeutic fixes. “There is nothing wrong with you. You need to put yourself first to solve your problems and anxiousness in this life.” But how is that working? Is that bringing you peace? Is the answer to the problems of this world just to turn in on ourselves more and more? Are we to seek comfort and refuge ourselves or things of our own making?

That would be to make ourselves the gods of our lives. For a god is anything or anyone in which we seek refuge.

The answer for us is not “Look inside yourself to find your inner peace.” It is not “Try harder.” It is not “Grin and bear it. It has to get better eventually.” Instead, we look to Jesus. He doesn’t promise we won’t have trouble or tribulation in our lives. To the contrary, he promises we will have tribulation. But because of him, we also have peace.

As Jesus talks with his disciples in the upper room on Maundy Thursday, the night he was betrayed, they’re all under pressure. Jesus knows what’s coming. He tells them they will have trouble in the world, tribulation in the world. The Greek word there that is translated in our translation this morning as “tribulation” is “thlipsis,” which also can mean “pressure,” being pressed hard, pressure being brought to bear against someone. Jesus knows the intense pressure the disciples will be under in the coming days, as he heads to the cross. Jesus knew that trouble was coming, but it was trouble he was ready for. It was trouble he was born to face. It was trouble he was born to bear and to overcome.

When Jesus finishes this last discourse to his disciples, they’ll go to the Garden of Gethsemane. His disciples will collapse under the pressure and be unable to keep watch with him. They’ll abandon Jesus when he’s arrested. Jesus will be beaten and bloodied, mocked mercilessly. He’ll be tried and crucified. On the cross, he’ll be crushed under the pressure of all the sin the world has ever known and will ever know. Jesus didn’t just tell his disciples that the world was full of trials and tribulations and troubles, pressure and problems. No, Jesus told them that they had peace. They had peace because Jesus had overcome the world.

After Jesus bore the pressure of all of the sin of the world on the cross, he went and found those disciples who had been crushed under the pressure. Peter had bowed to the peer pressure of being found out, and denied Jesus three times. The rest of the disciples gave in to the pressure and fled. Thomas gave in to the pressure of logic and refused to believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

But Jesus found them all, forgave them all, and restored them all. He forgave Peter for denying, Thomas for doubting, and the rest for running away. He gave them his peace and gave them the Holy Spirit, and sent them back out into the pressure of the world. And they would face a lot of trouble. They’d appear before the same group that had condemned Jesus and be put under pressure to stop teaching in that name. That was “thlipsis,” tribulation. They were arrested multiple times, beaten and bloodied. The apostle James was killed for the faith, the first of the apostles to be martyred, and over the next thirty or so years after Jesus’ death and resurrection, ten of the twelve disciples would die martyr’s deaths. John would live on in exile as an old man. Judas would be crushed under the pressure of what he’d done in betraying Jesus. All this was “thlipsis,” tribulation, extreme pressure, exercised by the world, against Christians. And really, it’s been no different ever since.

If we were left to face the troubles of the world alone, we'd be crushed under the pressure. Thanks be to God, we're not! Jesus bore the pressure of the sin of the world on the cross, and was crushed by it, killed by it. But he didn't stay dead. Because of that, neither will we.

We'll go through times when we feel crushed under pressure. The pressure of struggling to do the right thing when it would be so easy to cheat on that exam or plagiarize that paper. The pressure of doing the right thing when it would be easy to cheat on your taxes or steal that movie online. The pressure of remaining faithful to your spouse in a world that thinks you can just do what feels good. The pressure of raising kids well instead of abandoning responsibility. The pressure of conflict among friends.

There's pressure when you're a Christian when it's not always popular to be one. There's pressure to let sports schedules push God to the sidelines. There's pressure to conform to a world that tells you just to do what makes you feel good. There's pressure to not follow God's plan for marriage. There's pressure to cheat and get ahead in classes. There's pressure to join in on making fun of someone instead of risking being made fun of yourself.

Instead of focusing on the pressure, look to the One who has been right there all along. If Jesus is with you, then you can place your confidence in Him and Him alone. If you know that Jesus is holding on to you, then you know that nothing in this world is greater than Him. You are not alone. His promises remain true for you today.

We don't face troubles and tribulations, problems and pressure in the world alone. We face them with the help of God. With the help of Jesus, who is our friend and Savior who bore the weight of the world for us. With the help of the Holy Spirit, who continues to guide us and comfort us, to bring us peace and make us holy. In Christ we do have peace no matter what troubles the world throws at us, no matter where we go. As Jesus said, "Take heart; I have overcome the world."

Responsive Prayer on Peace:

P: Lord God, You promise peace to those who trust in You.

C: "‘Peace, peace, to those far and near,’ says the LORD. ‘And I will heal them.’"

P: But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud.

C: 'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked.'"(Isaiah 57:19-21)

P: We are the wicked who do not have peace. Yet You want to bring us peace.

C: "I will listen to what God the LORD says; He promises peace to His people, His faithful servants— but let them not turn to folly. Surely His salvation is near those who fear Him, that His glory may dwell in our land." (Psalm 85:8-9)

P: You sent Jesus into this as the angels proclaimed:

C: "Glory to God in highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men." (Luke 2:14)

P: On Palm Sunday the people proclaimed:

C: "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (Luke 19:38)

P: Jesus promised His disciples on the night before He died:

C: “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27)

P: On Easter Jesus rose to bring peace:

C: “On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ After He said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.”(John 20:19, 20)

P: Help us to see:

C: “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

P: Through Joseph you brought peace to him and his brothers:

C: “‘Be at peace,’ Joseph said. ‘Don’t be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks; I received your silver.’” (Genesis 43:23)

P: “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” (Colossians 3:15)

C: “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7)

(other petitions)

Lord’s Prayer:

Hymn: “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” - Hymn #770

Prayer for Peace:

P: O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing (Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: “Christ Be My Leader” - Hymn #861