

Fourth Sunday of Easter – Justice in Action Sunday

April 26, 2026

PRELUDE

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus (arr. John Purifoy)
Kathy Havlicek-Cook, flute

WELCOME

MISSION MOMENT

Justice in Action Members

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

P Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported as citizens of the new creation.

C O Lord, our God, we give you thanks for the gift of baptism.

P O Lord our God, we give you thanks for the new life you raise up in us.

C Empower us to be living signs of your new heaven and new earth as we join your work in the world.

P Blessed be God, who calls us Beloved, + Jesus who bears the cross, and the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Let us confess our sin and acknowledge our brokenness in the presence of God and one another.

Kneel or sit. Silence is kept for reflection.

P Steadfast and faithful God,

C you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the

unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the path to join your work in the world; In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

P Beloved in Christ, God's grace stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In + Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain (ELW 363)

- 1 Come, you faithful, raise the strain
of triumphant gladness!
God has brought forth Israel
into joy from sadness,
loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters;
led them with unmoistened foot
through the Red Sea waters.

- 2 'Tis the spring of souls today:
Christ has burst his prison,
and from three days' sleep in death
as a sun has risen.
All the winter of our sins,
long and dark, is flying
from the Light to whom we give
laud and praise undying.

- 3 Now the queen of seasons, bright
with the day of splendor,
with the royal feast of feasts
comes its joy to render;
comes to glad Jerusalem,
who with true affection
welcomes in unwearied strain
Jesus' resurrection!

4 Neither could the gates of death,
nor the tomb's dark portal,
nor the watchers, nor the seal
hold you as a mortal:
but today, among your own,
you appear, bestowing
your deep peace, which evermore
passes human knowing.

5 Alleluia! now we cry
to our Lord immortal,
who triumphant burst the bars
of the tomb's dark portal;
Alleluia! with the Son
God the Father praising;
Alleluia! yet again
to the Spirit raising.

GREETING

P The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

KYRIE

(Sing BOLD line responsively with the cantor)

Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way,

Kyrie eleison, ev'ry day.

For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all;
for this holy house, for all who worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord

Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way,

Kyrie eleison, ev'ry day.

That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor;
that we may live out truth and justice and grace,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord

**Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way,
Kyrie eleison, ev'ry day.**

For peace in our hearts, for peace in our homes, for friends and family;
for life and for love, for our work and our play,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord

**Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way,
Kyrie eleison, ev'ry day.**

For your Spirit to guide; that you center our lives in the water and the Word;
that you nourish our souls with your body and blood,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord

**Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way,
Kyrie eleison, ev'ry day.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

**This is the feast of vict'ry for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.
Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are his.
This is the feast of vict'ry for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.
Sing with all the people of God,
and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.
This is the feast of vict'ry for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O Lord God,

**C you are the holy lawgiver, you are the salvation of your people. By your Spirit renew
us in your covenant of love, and train us to care tenderly for all our neighbors,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

WORD

God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

¹The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to all the congregation of the Israelites and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. ¹⁵“You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor.

¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is at stake: I am the Lord. ¹⁷“You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”

R Word of God, Word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 1

Cantor: Blessed are they, blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

Refrain Blessed are they, blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

C ¹Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel ¹ of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats ¹ of the scornful!

A ²**Their delight is in the law ¹ of the Lord,
and they meditate on God’s teaching ¹ day and night.**

Refrain Blessed are they, blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

C ³They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with
leaves that ¹ do not wither; everything they ¹ do shall prosper.

A ⁴**It is not so ¹ with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind ¹ blows away.**

C ⁵Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when ¹ judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council ¹ of the righteous.

A ⁶**For the Lord knows the way ¹ of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall ¹ be destroyed.**

Refrain Blessed are they, blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

¹You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, ²but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. ³For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, ⁴but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts. ⁵As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, ⁶nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, ⁷though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. ⁸So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

R Word of God, Word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Be not afraid, sing out for joy!

Christ is risen, alleluia!

Be not afraid, sing out for joy!

Christ is risen, alleluia!

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 22nd chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL

Matthew 22:34-46

³⁴When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” ³⁷He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” ³⁸This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. ⁴¹Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: ⁴²“What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” ⁴³He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, ⁴⁴‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”’? ⁴⁵“If David

thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?"⁴⁶ No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Erin Heidelberger

HYMN OF THE DAY

To Be Your Presence (ELW 546)

- 1 To be your presence is our mission here,
to show compassion's face and list'ning ear,
to be your heart of mercy ever near,
alleluia!
- 2 To be your presence is our mission bold,
to feed the poor and shelter homeless cold,
to be your hands of justice, right uphold,
alleluia!
- 3 To be your presence is our mission blest,
to speak for all the broken and oppressed,
to be your voice of hope, your love expressed,
alleluia!
- 4 We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice,
to serve your people is our call and choice,
and in this mission we, the church, rejoice,
Alleluia!

APOSTLES' CREED

P God has made us God's people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;**

he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS

P Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

After each petition, respond with, "receive our prayer."

(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)

Updated Prayer List Here

P God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

C Amen.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST IS SHARED

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

OUR OFFERINGS ARE GATHERED

Our gratitude is expressed in gifts for the church's mission and the world's needs. Music invites us to reflect.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Jesus Shall Reign (arr: Mark Albrecht)

Kathy Havlicek-Cook, flute

P To God be the glory.

C Amen.

OFFERTORY HYMN

At the Lamb's high feast we sing
praise to our victorious king,

who has washed us in the tide
flowing from his wounded side. Alleluia!

Father, who the crown shall give,
Savior, by whose death we live,
Spirit, guide through all our days:
Three in One, your name we praise.
Alleluia!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P Let us pray. Risen One,

C you call us to believe and bear fruit. Make the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed... *(here the minister continues with the proper preface, concluding:)* we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

P We pray in confidence in the words Jesus gave us:

**C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION

P Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,

Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,

Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,

Grant us your peace, grant us your peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION MUSIC

Creating God Your Fingers Trace (Rowthorn/W. Walker)

Megan Hulse, vocal

COMMUNION HYMNS

The King of Love My Shepherd Is (ELW 502)

- 1 The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine forever.

- 2 Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth
and, where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.

- 3 Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,

and home, rejoicing, brought me.

- 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me,
thy rod and staff my comfort still;
thy cross before to guide me.
- 5 Thou spreadest a table in my sight;
thine unction grace bestoweth;
and, oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!
- 6 And so, through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

Come Down, O Love Divine (ELW 804)

- 1 Come down, O Love divine;
seek thou this soul of mine
and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;
O Comforter, draw near;
within my heart appear
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.
- 2 Oh, let it freely burn,
till worldly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
and let thy glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.
- 3 Let holy charity
mine outward vesture be,
and lowliness become mine inner clothing--
true lowliness of heart,

which takes the humbler part,
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

- 4 And so the yearning strong,
with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the pow'r of human telling;
no soul can guess his grace
till it become the place
where in the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray. Holy One,

C **through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ☩ bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen (ELW548, tune REGENT SQUARE)

- 1 Rise, O church, like Christ arisen,
from this meal of love and grace;
may we through such love envision
whose we are, and whose, our praise.
Alleluia, alleluia;
God, the wonder of our days.

- 2 Rise, transformed, and choose to follow

after Christ, though wounded, whole;
broken, shared, our lives are hallowed
to release and to console.

Alleluia, alleluia;

Christ, our present, past, and goal.

- 3 Rise, remember well the future
God has called us to receive;
present by God's loving nurture,
Spirited then let us live.
Alleluia, alleluia;
Spirit, grace by whom we live.

- 4 Service be our sure vocation;
courage be our daily breath;
mercy be our destination
from this day and unto death.
Alleluia, alleluia.

Rise, O church, a living faith.

SENDING WORDS

P Christ is risen!

C **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing! (arr: John Leavitt)

Masako Bacon, organ

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