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**Seventh Sunday of Easter**

**May 17, 2026**

**Rev. Charlene Raitt**

**United in Christ's love, a just world for all**

# Seventh Sunday of Easter

## May 17, 2026

**Singing Prelude**

*Day by Day*

Schwartz

**Day by day.....day by day.....**

**O.....dear Lord.....three things I pray:  
to see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly,  
follow thee more nearly, day by day.**

**Day by day.....day by day.....**

**O.....dear Lord.....three things I pray:  
to see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly,  
follow thee more nearly, day by day.**

**Day by day, by day, by day, by day.**

**Welcome and Announcements**

### **We Approach God's Presence**

**Meditation/Bringing in the Light of Christ**

*Soon and Very Soon*

Crouch

**Responsive Call to Worship**

Victoria Augustine

This morning we come to worship God—

not as strangers,  
but as people learning to belong.

**We come to hear Christ's words as he prays for us—**

**That we may be one.  
That we may belong to one another.**

In a world that fragments and divides,

God gathers us into love:  
A love that gives and receives,  
a love that opens and restores.

**For Christ has called us into unity,  
and in that love, we are made whole.**

**\*Hymn**

*A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing*

# A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!

*Unison*

1 A hymn of glo - ry let us sing! New hymns through-out the  
 2 You are a pres - ent joy, O Christ, tri - um - phant love once  
 3 O ris - en Christ, as - cend - ed now, to your blessed name all

world shall ring: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! By a new way none  
 sac - ri - ficed. Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! And great the light in  
 knees shall bow. Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! You are, while end - less

ev - er trod Christ shares once more the throne of God. Al-le - lu - ia!  
 you we see to guide us to e - ter - ni - ty. Al-le - lu - ia!  
 a - ges run, in Tri - une God-head ev - er One. Al-le - lu - ia!

Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia!

WORDS: The Venerable Bede, (673-735); tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, 1978

MUSIC: *Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, Cologne, 1623; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Words © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Admin. Augsburg Fortress)

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LASST UNS ERFREUEN

L.M. Alleluias

## **\*Prayer for Transformation and New Life**

God of belonging,

You created us for one another, yet we confess how often we turn away.

We hold tightly to what we have, fearing there will not be enough.

We protect ourselves from one another, fearing rejection or loss.

Forgive us when we resist the flow of your love—

the giving and receiving

that forms us into community.

**Open our hearts again.**

**Teach us to live with generosity of spirit.**

**Teach us to trust that in giving, we are not diminished,  
but drawn more deeply into your life.**

Shape us into a people who reflect Christ's prayer—

**That we may be one,**

**as you are one.**

Through Christ, who gathers us in love.

**Amen.**

## **\*Words of Grace**

In Christ's prayer, we are being made one in God's love.

Even now, God is drawing us together, healing what is broken,  
restoring what is divided.

In Christ, we are forgiven, renewed, and made one.

**Amen.**

## **\*Response**

*Weave*

**Weave, weave, weave us together.**

**Weave us together in unity and love.**

**Weave, weave, weave us together.**

**Weave us together, together in love.**

## **We Encounter God in the Word**

**Contemplative Reading**

*All About Love*

bell hooks

**Gospel Lesson**

John 17:1-11

*NRSVue*

The Word of God. **Thanks be to God!**

**Anthem** *Ha-la-lelujah (Raise Your Song)* Choplin

**Scripture Reading** Acts 1:6-11 *the Message*  
God is still speaking. **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon** “Up, Up, and Away?” Rev. Charlene Raitt

### **We Respond to God’s Grace**

**Congregational Prayers**  
**Silent Prayers**

**Prayers of the People and Our Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Musical Response** *Hear Our Prayer* Whelpton

**Hear our prayer, O God; hear our prayer, O God.  
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.**

### **We Share God’s Love**

**Invitation to Generosity** *(Offering plates are found by each doorway for your use.)*

**\*Song of Gratitude** *Doxology*  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise God all creatures here below,  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

**\*Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

**Generous God,  
Receive these gifts as signs of our shared life in you. May they strengthen  
communities, restore relationships, and bear witness to your unifying love.  
Form us into a people who give freely, receive gratefully, and live faithfully  
as one body in Christ. Amen.**

## We Go to Carry the Light

\*Hymn *In Christ There Is No East or West* (back page)

\*Blessing and Benediction

\*Sending Blessing *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* Fawcett/Nägeli

**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.  
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

Postlude *I'm Gonna Sing* Spiritual

**Please remain seated in silence for the Postlude as the  
Light of Christ is carried into the world.  
The worship has ended; our service begins.**

Worship materials are taken from  
*All About Love*, by bell hooks, p. 164;

### Supporting Our Service Today

**Acolyte:** Bella Clapham **Liturgist:** Victoria Augustine

**Welcome Table:** Sandy Barrie **Greeter:** Posie Gallaher

**Head Usher:** Wendy Seeley **Usher Team:** Victoria Augustine, Terry Calderone,  
Char Raitt, Bonnie Thistle, Lynn Weekes

### Technology Team

*(Live Streaming, Camera, and Sound Technicians)*

Gary Woodrum, Debra Mosely, Maria Groody, David Jack, Linda Newton,  
Wally Davis, Patty Fjetland, Scott Mellen, Gary and Sharon Leidheiser

The **Lord's Table** was decorated by Victoria Augustine

The **Sanctuary Flowers** are given by  
Liz and Bob Sharpe in Celebration of Their Anniversary;  
and by Harold Steindam:

“In Thanksgiving for the support of VUCC for Word Made Flesh  
and Jenny’s Mission work with them in Sierra Leone.  
Today is the midpoint of her trip there this year.”

The **Church Sign** was changed by Faye Newton and Lisa Sclafani

**Sunday Librarian:** Barbara Talmage

**Fellowship Host:** Harold Steindam

**Senior Minister**

**Rev. Barbara Dickason**

**Music Staff**

**Barbara Quinn:** *Music Director*

**Lynda Weston:** *Bella Handbell Director*

**Other Staff**

**Gary Leidheiser:** *Custodian*

**Barb Quinn:** *Office Assistant*

**Church office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 9-1**

**Would you like to donate to VUCC online? Use your Smart Phone to scan the QR code on the right, and it will take you directly to our donations page. It is really easy!**



**The Week at a Glance**

**Mon. 05-18**

12:00 PM SpiritFed!

Noon Bible Study via Zoom (link below)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83576594637?pwd=U2024sKmOPiy3CyMqV4OarYUtofaom.1>

Meeting ID: 835 7659 4637

Passcode: 913882

**Tues. 05-19**

**9:00 AM** Staff Meeting

**10:00 AM** Leadership Council—CR

**6:00 PM** Girl Scouts

**Wed. 05-20**

**9:00 AM-12:00** Library open

**10:00 AM** Bible Study—CR

**11:30 AM** Finance Team—CR

**1:00 PM** Cut-Ups—CR

**Thurs. 05-21**

**4:00 PM** Baby Basics—Naar Hall

**6:00 PM** Daisies

**Fri. 05-22**

**8:30 AM** Men's Weekly Coffee at Panera

**9:00 AM** Knit Wits—Parlor

**Sat. 05-23**

**8:30 AM** Men's Fellowship Breakfast—CR

**Sun. 05-24 Pentecost**

**9:00 AM** Library Hour

**10:00 AM** Worship

(in situ and virtual)

**After Worship:** Fellowship Time—Naar Hall

**11:00-11:15** Library Open

# In Christ There Is No East or West

*1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:14-22*

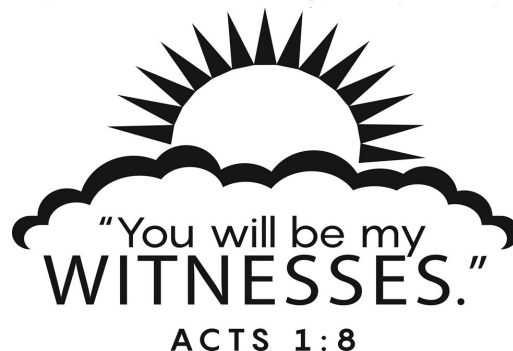
*John Oxenham, 1908; alt.  
St. 3, Laurence Hull Stookey, 1987*

1 In Christ there is no East or West, in Christ no South or North;  
 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - ery-where their high com - mu - nion find;  
 3 In Christ is nei - ther Jew nor Greek, and nei - ther slave nor free;  
 4 In Christ now meet both East and West, in Christ meet South and North;

But one com - mu - ni - ty of love through - out the whole wide earth.  
 God's ser - vice is the gold - en cord close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.  
 For men and wom - en live in God, and all are kin to me.  
 One joy - ous, true com - mu - ni - ty through - out the whole wide earth.

*Singer and composer Harry T. Burleigh studied at the National Conservatory of Music from 1892 to 1896. He is recognized as the first African-American composer to employ spirituals in concert arrangements. This tune is named after the rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in New York City, where Burleigh served as baritone soloist for more than fifty years.*

*Tune: McKEE C.M.  
African-American melody  
Arr. Harry T. Burleigh, 1939  
Alternate setting: ST. PETER*



ACTS 1:8