



# Stay

*A blessing for Ascension Day*

SIXTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER  
MAY 22, 2022  
10:00 AM

I know how your mind  
rushes ahead  
trying to fathom  
what could follow this.  
What will you do,  
where will you go,  
how will you live?

You will want  
to outrun the grief.  
You will want  
to keep turning toward  
the horizon,  
watching for what was lost  
to come back,  
to return to you  
and never leave again.

For now  
hear me when I say  
all you need to do  
is to still yourself  
is to turn toward one another  
is to stay.

*So stay here in the city  
until you have been clothed with power  
from on high.*

*- Luke 24.49*

Wait  
and see what comes  
to fill  
the gaping hole  
in your chest.  
Wait with your hands open  
to receive what could never  
come  
except to what is empty  
and hollow.

You cannot know it now,  
cannot even imagine  
what lies ahead,  
but I tell you  
the day is coming  
when breath will  
fill your lungs  
as it never has before  
and with your own ears  
you will hear words  
coming to you new  
and startling.  
You will dream dreams  
and you will see the world  
ablaze with blessing.

Wait for it.  
Still yourself.  
Stay.

*Jan Richardson*

## CHURCH LIFE UPDATE

Steven Phillips

### PRELUDE

*Clair de Lune (Light of the Moon)*  
(Devin Gulliver, piano)

Debussy

### \* CALL TO WORSHIP

Deuteronomy 6:4-9  
Hazel Landers

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;

**God's mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning.**

Great is God's faithfulness.

**The Lord is my portion, says my soul.**

### \* HYMN 260

*Alleluia! Sing to Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;  
his the scepter, his the throne;  
Alleluia! his the triumph,  
his the victory alone!  
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion  
thunder like a mighty flood:  
"Jesus out of every nation  
has redeemed us by his blood."

Alleluia! Not as orphans  
are we left in sorrow now;  
Alleluia! he is near us;  
faith believes nor questions how.  
Though the cloud from sight received him,  
when the forty days were o'er,  
shall our hearts forget his promise:  
"I am with you evermore"?

Alleluia! Bread of angels,  
here on earth our food, our stay;  
Alleluia! here the sinful  
flee to you from day to day.  
Intercessor, friend of sinners,  
earth's redeemer, hear our plea  
where the songs of all the sinless  
sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia! King eternal,  
Lord omnipotent we own;  
Alleluia! born of Mary,  
earth your footstool, heaven your throne.  
As within the veil you entered,  
robed in flesh, our great high priest;  
here on earth both priest and victim  
in the eucharistic feast.

*\* Those who are able are invited to stand.*

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Margaret LaMotte Torrence

Holy One,  
We give thanks for what is familiar;  
we cling to what we know  
—for these are your good gifts to us.  
But in so doing,  
we sometimes resist the blessing and charge  
that prepares us for a new day.

In the stillness, remind us  
that change is the nature of all that lives.  
Assure us that you walk with us through all our changes.  
Then teach us what it means to live with open hands,  
freely receiving, freely letting go,  
until we learn to trust the Giver even more than the gifts.

*(silent confession)*

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

**\* SONG OF JOY**      *There is a Louder Shout to Come (Chorus)*

Redman

Oh, what a song we'll sing  
And, oh, what a tune we'll bear!  
You deserve an anthem of the highest praise!  
Oh, what a joy will rise  
And, oh, what a sound we'll make!  
You deserve an anthem of the highest praise! *(repeat)*

## \* THE PEACE OF CHRIST

### CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Margaret LaMotte Torrence

### ANTHEM

*Prayer for Peace*  
(The Chancel Choir)

Text attributed to St. Frances  
Music by Benjamin Harlan

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy;  
  
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

### SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 24: 44-53

### SERMON

*Living with Open Hands*

Margaret LaMotte Torrence

In the singing, in the silence,  
in the hands expectant, open,  
in the blessing, in the breaking,  
in the Presence at this table

**Refrain:**

Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ,  
be the wine of grace:  
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ,  
be the bread of peace.

In the question, in the answer,  
in the moment of acceptance,  
in the heart's cry, in the healing,  
in the circle of your people **(Refrain)**

**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

**INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE AND PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

*When the ushers invite your row to receive communion,  
please come forward by the center aisle.*

*Individual portions of bread and juice are on the table.*

*(All of the bread is gluten free, and all of the juice is non-alcoholic.)*

*Please take whatever time you need to eat and drink.*

*You may then discard your empty containers in one of the baskets.*

*If you prefer to remain seated, please just signal to one of the ushers  
and the meal will be brought to you.*

The bread of God that comes down from heaven  
and gives life to the world—  
that bread is to be found at this table—  
and in the company of God's people.  
If you are looking for Jesus, draw close.  
We come, at his invitation.

**Feed us, Lord.**

**Feed us, Lord.**

**In the broken bread, be revealed again.**

**Come and feed our hearts, O Lord.**

Author of life,  
In every chapter of your people's story  
you blessed us that we might be a blessing.  
You asked us to tend your world.

And every time we wandered from your way,  
you sent prophets and poets and priests  
to remind us of our holy charge.  
When still we would not listen,  
your mercy took flesh.  
You came to dwell among us in fearless love.

**Quench us, Lord.  
Quench us, Lord.  
On this thirsty ground, may your love flow down.  
Come and quench our hearts, O Lord.**

In the fullness of time, your fierce and tender love took flesh.  
You did not come in wrath, but as the Holy One among us.  
You bent down to us.  
You healed us, and fed us—  
until the scandal of your love was more than we could bear  
and we handed you over,  
not knowing what we did.

Breath of Life,  
move now in this place.  
Make known your power in this simple meal.  
As we taste the bread and lift the cup,  
grant us courage.

**Fill us, Lord.  
Fill us, Lord,  
with the bread and wine of the risen Christ.  
Come and fill our hearts, O Lord.**

We pray as he taught us:

**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 debts,  
as we forgive our debtors:  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

### **THE SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP**

#### **PRAYER OF RESPONSE**

Faithful God, you have fed us at your table  
and bound us to each other.  
Now send us into the world to spend and share the grace  
we have tasted.  
for it is our privilege to belong to you  
and to one another,  
wherever we might go. Amen.

**Lead us, Lord.  
Lead us, Lord,  
nourished here by Christ, given strength for life.  
Come and lead our hearts, O Lord.**

**\* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Jeremiah 29: 11; Romans 8: 28, 38-39

Abby Clissold

Jesus remembered the law and taught his followers:  
For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord,  
plans for your welfare and not for harm,  
to give you a future with hope.

**We know that all things work together for good  
for those who love God,  
who are called according to his purpose.  
For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,  
nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**\* HYMN 543.**

*O Christ Surround Me*

GREEN TYLER

God, be the love to search and keep me;  
God, be the prayer to move my voice;  
God, be the strength to now uphold me:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Bind to myself the Name of Holy,  
great cloud of witnesses enfold;  
prophets, apostles, angels witness:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Brightness of sun and glow of moonlight,  
flashing of lightning, strength of wind,  
depth of the sea to soil of planet:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Walking behind to hem my journey,  
going ahead to light my way,  
and from beneath, above, and all ways:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Christ in the eyes of all who see me,  
Christ in the ears that hear my voice,  
Christ in the hearts of all who know me:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

**\* BENEDICTION**

Margaret LaMotte Torrence

Receive a blessing for all that may yet be required of you—  
that love would cast out your fear,  
that you would be more perfectly abandoned to the will of God,  
that the peace of the Christ would reign in your hearts,  
and through you would spread over the face of the earth—

**the blessing of God,  
who is the giver of life,  
the bearer of pain,  
and the maker of love,  
be yours this day and forever more.  
Amen.**

**POSTLUDE**

*Improvisation on Now Thank We All Our God*

Steven Phillips

*The image used on the front cover of the bulletin was found on  
[stpeters-cathedral.org.au/ascension](http://stpeters-cathedral.org.au/ascension)*

*The benediction we share is adapted from the work of Jim Cotter.  
In its original form, it concludes a liturgy of anointing.  
It emerged from a ministry to AIDS patients in the 1980s in England.*





*"I have said these things to you  
while I am still with you.  
But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,  
whom the Father will send in my name,  
will teach you everything,  
and remind you of all  
that I have said to you.  
Peace I leave with you;  
my peace I give to you.  
I do not give to you as the world gives.  
Do not let your hearts be troubled,  
and do not let them be afraid."*

*- John 14:25-27*



2050 Oak Street  
Sarasota, FL 34237  
(941) 955-8119  
[www.firstpressarasota.org](http://www.firstpressarasota.org)