

5th Sunday of Easter: Emerge

April 28th, 2024

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Lauren Bennett & Leona Bryson

Opening Welcome Song *You Have Made me Glad*

I will enter your gates with thanksgiving in my heart,

I will enter your courts with praise.

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

You have made me glad, O you have made me glad.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

You have made me glad, O you have made me glad.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

Repeat ALL

You have made me glad, O you have made me glad.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

You have made me glad, O you have made me glad.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

I will enter your gates with thanksgiving in my heart,

I will enter your courts with praise.

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

You have made me glad, O you have made me glad.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

You have made me glad, O you have made me glad...

I will rejoice, I will rejoice,

I will rejoice, I will rejoice.

I will rejoice for you have made me glad.

I will rejoice yeah, I will rejoice yeah,

I will rejoice yeah, I will rejoice yeah.

Call to Worship:

Join your voices in worship as we invite the Spirits in our hearts today:

One: In the dark of the womb we wondered...

**Many: What could be better than this warm and safe place?**

One: Once we were birthed into this life, at times we wondered...

**Many: Could there be more than meets the eye?**

One: In the dark of the tombs of our existence we wonder...

**Many: Is there life beyond these constraints?**

One: When we hear the story of Jesus we wonder...

**Many: Is new life possible for me?**

One: Then the love of the Divine reminds us,

Many: "You too are my child.  
You can emerge to renewed life.  
Again and again." Amen

**Worship Song** *Beautiful*

Beautiful, beautiful, Jesus is beautiful  
And Jesus makes beautiful things of my life.

Carefully touching me, causing my eyes to see  
Jesus makes beautiful things of my life.

**Opening Prayer**

**Rev. Lauren Bennett**

**Sung Response:** [Video](#)

Form me, hold me,  
open me, unfold me,  
unfurl me, untether me,  
uncurl me, uncrease me,  
unwrap me

**Our Contemporary Reading is from *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor**

**Reader: Deb Busch**

"Darkness is shorthand for anything that scares me either because I am sure that I do not have the resources to survive it or because I do not want to find out. If I had my way, I would eliminate everything from chronic back pain to the fear of the devil from my life and the lives of those I love. At least I think I would. The problem is this: when, despite all my best efforts, the lights have gone off in my life, plunging me into the kind of darkness that turns my knees to water, I have not died. The monsters have not dragged me out of bed and taken me back to their lair. Instead, I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light." -

***Please rise as you are, in body and spirit, as you are able for the reading of scripture.***

**Scripture Reading:** Acts 8:26-38

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,

so he does not open his mouth.  
In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church  
**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Special Music: His Eye is on the Sparrow MCGSL Choir**

**Sermon Cocoon: Trusting the Dark Rev. Lauren Bennett**

**Segue to Communion: *Your Love Is My Everything***  
**God, your love is my everything**  
**I find all I need in surrendering**  
**Empty hands I bring, as an offering**  
**You’re my everything, everything**

**Communion Deborah Sheperis & Kevin Levells**

**Song During Communion *Sole Desire***

**You’re the sole desire of my heart.**  
**You’re the sole desire of my heart.**  
**Still more with every passing day,**  
**as things of earth just fade away,**  
**I come to know the joy of loving You.**  
**You’re the sole desire of my heart.**

**You’re the sole desire of my heart.**  
**You’re the sole desire of my heart.**  
**Lord, speak to me, I’m standing still,**  
**I come to hear, reveal Your will,**  
**I’ll listen to Your voice and then obey.**  
**You’re the sole desire of my heart.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving Deborah Sheperis & Kevin Levells**

**Offering Jerry McGinty-Gayer**

**Cocooning God,**  
**Thank you for molding us in the dark**  
**Help us tune our attention to you**  
**And share our gifts with you and with each other**  
**As we unfurl into the world. Amen.**

**Closing Song:** *Go Light Your World!*

**Carry your candle, and run to the darkness  
Seek out the helpless, confused and torn  
And hold out your candle for all to see it  
Take your candle, and go light your world  
Take your candle, and go light your world**

**We are a family whose hearts are blazing  
So let's raise our candles and light up the sky  
Pray to our Creator, in the name of Jesus  
Make us a beacon in darkest times**

**Carry your candle, and run to the darkness  
Seek out the helpless, deceived and poor  
And hold out your candle for all to see it  
Take your candle, and go light your world  
Take your candle, and go light your world**

**Carry your candle, run to the darkness  
Seek out the helpless, confused and torn  
Hold out your candle for all to see it  
Take your candle, and go light your world  
Take your candle, and go light your world  
Take your candle, and go light your world**

**Benediction**

**First Time Visitor Greeter**

**Rev. Lauren Bennett**

**Susan Kenkel**

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Permission for "Form Me" by Elaine Kirkland