**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER May 25, 2025**

**Prairieland Parish**

*As we unite**in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present. May we together experience the presence of God*

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***We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord***



**Prelude - Welcome - Announcements**

**Opening Meditation**

this week is about carrying on a conversation with God. You see, God doesn’t tap us on the shoulder and then leave us alone to figure it out from there. God is a constant presence, guiding, advising, hinting, and strengthening us for the journey into discipleship.

Friends, for the second week in a row, our text deals with a vision that came from God and had a direct impact on the direction of the church.

So, how do we open ourselves to His voice? Is it simply an urging in the pit of our stomachs, or is it something more?

And how do we tune our hearing to hear His voice?

And then once we think we hear a voice from God, how do we test it? How do we discern God’s voice from the myriad of other voices in our talkative world?

All great questions! All great thoughts for you to carry with you this week as you discern and find your way to listening for His voice, as you find ways to clear your eyes so that you too may see the vision, as you choose to open your heart to the possibilities and opportunities God lays in your path for connection, direction, and inspiration.

**Call to Worship:**

We come this morning full of ourselves:

**Our concerns, our plans, our opinions, our schedules.**

In this moment, help us empty our minds of the relentless ‘I’ and make space for you.

**Enable us to put down our priorities; to set aside our assumptions and schemes.**

Open our hearts to recognize your love in action in our lives.

**Reassure us of your divine vision, and let us rest in your unending care.**

**Opening Prayer:**

**God who continues to open hearts and minds, we confess that too often we have crowded out your voice, being too attentive to the many noises that bombard us. Break our hearts to hear your voice and to hear the hurts and cries of those around us. Empower us to be your faithful witnesses in our homes and in all the encounters we face. In the name of our risen Savior we pray. Amen.**

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE, UMH 454 “Open My Eyes, That I May See”**

*Author: Clara H. Scott (1895)*

*Publication Date: 1989*

*Tune Information*

*Composer: Clara H. Scott (1895)*

**1. Open my eyes, that I may see**

**glimpses of truth thou hast for me;**

**place in my hands the wonderful key**

**that shall unclasp and set me free.**

**Silently now I wait for thee,**

**ready, my God, thy will to see.**

**Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**2. Open my ears, that I may hear**

**voices of truth thou sendest clear;**

**and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,**

**everything false will disappear.**

**Silently now I wait for thee,**

**ready, my God, thy will to see.**

**Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**3. Open my mouth, and let me bear**

**gladly the warm truth everywhere;**

**open my heart and let me prepare**

**love with thy children thus to share.**

**Silently now I wait for thee,**

**ready, my God, thy will to see.**

**Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

***We Hear God’s Word***

**New Testament Reading……………………………………………………………………………… Acts 16:9-15**

**New Revised Standard Version**

*9 During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” 10 When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.*

***The Conversion of Lydia***

*11 We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district[a] of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. 13 On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. 14 A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. 15 When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.” And she prevailed upon us.*

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

**CHILDREN’S SERMON**

**FAITH HYMN UMH #128 “He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought”**

*Author: Joseph H. Gilmore (1862)*

*Publication Date: 2010*

*Tune Information*

*Composer: William B. Bradbury (1864)*

**1 He leadeth me! O blessed thought!**

**O words with heavenly comfort fraught!**

**Whate'er I do, where'er I be,**

**still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!**

**Refrain:**

**He leadeth me, He leadeth me,**

**by His own hand He leadeth me:**

**His faithful follower I would be,**

**for by His hand He leadeth me.**

**2 Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine,**

**nor ever murmur nor repine,**

**content, whatever lot I see,**

**since 'tis Thy hand that leadeth me! [Refrain]**

**3 And when my task on earth is done,**

**when, by Thy grace, the victory's won,**

**e'en death's cold wave I will not flee,**

**since God through Jordan leadeth me! [Refrain]**

**“Message”**

**Joys/Concerns**

**PRAYER FOR MEMORIAL DAY**

*In the quiet sanctuaries of our own hearts,*

*let each of us name and call on the One whose power over us*

*is great and gentle, firm and forgiving, holy and healing:*

*Let us Pray…*

You who created us,

who sustain us,

who call us to live in peace,

hear our prayer this day.

Hear our prayer for all who have died,

whose hearts and hopes are known to you alone ...

Hear our prayer for those who put the welfare of others

ahead of their own

and give us hearts as generous as theirs ...

Hear our prayer for those who gave their lives

in the service of others,

and accept the gift of their sacrifice ...

Help us to shape and make a world

where we will lay down the arms of war

and turn our swords into ploughshares

for a harvest of justice and peace ...

Comfort those who grieve the loss of their loved ones

and let your healing be the hope in our hearts...

Hear our prayer this day

and in your mercy answer us

in the name of all that is holy. As we bow before you

in the name of Jesus Christ, and share in the prayer

He taught us to pray, our Father…

**Offertory/Doxology/Prayer**

God of the mountains and the valleys, of the dry places and oceans: Your voice speaks to us across creation; the flowers and the trees sing of your majesty; and the stars of the night speak of how much we still don’t know. As we offer gifts to you and speak our words of gratitude, help us to hear your voice anew. Give us ears to hear, faith to believe, and determination to truly listen to how you would send us into a hurting world. In Christ, we pray. Amen. (Acts 16:9-15)

**Departing Hymn UMH #717 “Battle Hymn of the Republic” (verses 1-3)**

*Author: Julia Ward Howe (1861, alt.)*

*Publication Date: 1995*

**1 Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;**

**he is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;**

**he hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;**

**his truth is marching on.**

**Refrain:**

**Glory, glory, hallelujah!**

**Glory, glory, hallelujah!**

**Glory, glory, hallelujah!**

**His truth is marching on.**

**2 I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps,**

**they have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;**

**I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;**

**his day is marching on. [Refrain]**

**3 He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;**

**he is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment seat;**

**O be swift, my soul, to answer him; be jubilant, my feet!**

**Our God is marching on. [Refrain]**

**Benediction**

Today is for remembering - - stand in honor of them, walk in their path of duty, remember the cost, and hold in your heart the cause of freedom. Remembering those who have passed is only half of the task that is before us today. We must also carry their love, honor and duty forward to the future generations that will pass. Our children must know who they were, what they did and why they did it. To do anything less, would be a disservice to their sacrifice and their memories. Amen.

**\*POSTLUDE**