

New Covenant Community Church
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Akron, Ohio



May 22, 2022
Tom Ulrich, Pastor

10:30 a.m.
Elissa Hock-Wimmer, Music Director

WELCOME

PRELUDE *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation* – Purcell / Berry

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come together this day, drawn by the light of God's love!

People: **In God's eternal kingdom, darkness and despair are vanquished.**

Leader: In God's eternal realm, peace and hope reign!

People: **Let all people praise God with their music and their voices!**

Leader: Let all people praise God with their deeds of lovingkindness!

People: **Let all that dwell below the skies worship the One who calls us into community.**



*HYMN OF PRAISE *From All That Dwell Below the Skies* #229

From all that dwell below the skies Let the Creator's praise arise:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let the Redeemer's name be sung Through every land, in every tongue.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

In every land begin the song, To every land the strains belong:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

In cheerful sound all voices raise And fill the world with joyful praise.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Eternal are Thy mercies, Lord; Eternal truth attends Thy Word:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore, Till suns shall rise and set no more.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Gracious and loving God, as we reflect on the wonder and glory of Your being, and the depth of Your love for us,

we recognize our failure to learn from You and from the sacrificial love of Jesus.

Forgive us when our self-interest takes precedence over Jesus' command to love one another as He has loved us,

and have mercy upon us for the times when we fail to hear Your call because our lives are so filled with the noise of the world.

Redeem us from our sin,

and inspire us to shape every community of faith by Your love and mercy.

Pour Your peace into us, so that we may become Your ambassadors of hope and healing, for we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. (Silent)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (adapted from Romans 8:1-2)

Leader: There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

People: **The law of the Spirit of life has set us free from the law of sin and death.**

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

People: **Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 146:1-10

¹ Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

² I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

³ Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.

⁴ When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish.

⁵ Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God,

⁶ who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever;

⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

the LORD loves the righteous.

⁹ The LORD watches over the strangers;

he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

¹⁰ The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

SCRIPTURE

Acts 11:1-18

¹ Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³ saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw

four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸ But I replied, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, you must not call profane.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.’ ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?’ ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, ‘Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.’”

MEDITATION

Perspectives

ANTHEM

Little David, Play On Your Harp
 Michael Neel, soloist
 (Michael is a freshman at Massillon High School)

– Spiritual

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *A Social Creed for the 21st Century*

**In faith, responding to our Creator,
 we celebrate the full humanity of each woman, man, and child,
 all created in the divine image as individuals of infinite worth.
 In the love incarnate in Jesus, despite the world’s sufferings and evils,
 we honor the deep connections within our human family
 and seek to awaken a new spirit of community.
 In hope sustained by the Holy Spirit,
 we pledge to be peacemakers in the world
 and stewards of God’s good creation.
 We — individual Christians and churches — commit ourselves to a culture of peace and
 freedom
 that embraces non-violence,
 nurtures character,
 treasures the environment,
 and builds community,
 rooted in a spirituality of inner growth with outward action.
 We make this commitment together —
 as members of Christ’s body, led by the one Spirit —
 trusting in the God who makes all things new.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND AN ALTERNATE FORM OF THE LORD’S PRAYER

**Eternal Spirit, Source of all that is and ever shall be,
 Loving Parent in whom we discern heaven,
 May knowledge of Your holiness inspire all peoples,
 And may Your commonwealth of peace and freedom flourish on earth
 Until all of humankind heed Your call to justice and compassion.
 May we find the bread that we need for today;
 And for the hurts we cause one another, may we be forgiven in the same measure that we
 forgive.
 In times of trial and temptation, help us to be strong;
 When life seems overwhelming, help us to endure;
 And thus from the yoke of sin deliver us.
 May You reign in the power of human love, now and forever. Amen.**

– adapted from the prayer book of the Anglican Church of New Zealand

INVITATION TO GIVE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN

Called as Partners in Christ’s Service

#343

Called as partners in Christ’s service, Called to ministries of grace,
 We respond with deep commitment Fresh new lines of faith to trace.
 May we learn the art of sharing, Side by side and friend with friend
 Equal partners in our caring To fulfil God’s chosen end.
 Christ’s example Christ’s inspiring, Christ’s clear call to work and worth,
 Let us follow never faltering, Reconciling folk on earth.
 Men and women, richer, poorer, All God’s people, young and old,
 Blending human skills together Gracious gifts from God unfold.
 Thus new patterns for Christ’s mission, In a small or global sense,
 Help us bear each other’s burdens, Breaking down each wall or fence.
 Words of comfort, words of vision, Words of challenge, said with care,
 Bring new power and strength for action, Make us colleagues free and fair.
 So God grant us for tomorrow Ways to order human life
 That surround each person’s sorrow With a calm that conquers strife.
 Make us partners in our living, Our compassion to increase,
 Messengers of faith thus giving Hope and confidence and peace.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands

– Hayes