



Easter

OUR SAVIOR
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sixth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 17, 2020



OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
745 Front Street S., Issaquah, WA 98027
425-392-4169

SERVICE OF THE WORD

GATHERING: THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLS US TOGETHER AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, All You People — Alexander Gondo

Quartet

*Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High; the Savior; the Spirit.
Come now and worship the Lord.*

PROCLAMATION

PM: Alleluia! Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

WELCOME

Pastor Jim Kruse

GREETING

PM: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Glory to God

Glo - ry to God in the high -

est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and

Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we

praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus

Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the
right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.
For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a -
lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High,
Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of
God the Fa - ther. A - men.
Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PM: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God,

C: you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

WORD: GOD SPEAKS TO US IN SCRIPTURE READING, PREACHING AND SONG.

FIRST READING

Acts 17:22-31

²²Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’

²⁹Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

AM: Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL

John 14:15-21

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹⁵“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

PM: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

A God for the Gods

Pastor Jim Kruse

[See the pictures of the Acropolis and Areopagus/Mars’ Hill at the end of the bulletin.]

This large marble outcropping of stone is the site in Athens where the First Reading for today morning took place. It is called the Areopagus which in Greek means, “The Rock (or

Hill) of Ares.” Ares was the Greek god of war. When the Romans took control of the Greek Empire they shared the same basic religious system but they gave all of the gods Roman names. The Roman God of war is named Mars. The Areopagus is also known as “Mars’ Hill.”

The Areopagus sits at the base of the stairs that lead to the Acropolis of Athens, the highest point of the city. At the height of its popularity, hundreds of years before Paul arrived, the Acropolis was covered on top, and on the sides with religious shrines. Over the years it had been built and rebuilt many times. But by the time Paul gets to Athens, the city had been attacked, captured, and even sacked. The Greek Empire itself had fallen apart. And Athens was now firmly under Roman control.

And yet the religious and cultural outlook of the world had not changed much. It was a culture, like most cultures before it, and many cultures after it, that believed that the world that humans inhabited, the world that we experience on a moment by moment basis, is lived in the imperfect shadow of the fuller, more complete, and more powerful world of the gods. Contact between the world of human life and this greater world of the gods was more by accident than by divine plan. In fact, according to this worldview, the purpose of almost all human religious activity was simply to get the attention of the gods. Get them to look your way, to care about you, and ultimately, to be persuaded to use their powers to improve your own life.

Every human activity, every act of love, war, wisdom, and most especially production of food, needed the power of a god promoting it, or it would fail. And each of these gods, great and small, needed some sort of shrine, some sort of artistic image, in order to attract human attention. The more important the god was to their livelihood, the bigger and fancier the shrine needed to be.

[On the right of the stairs going up is the shrine to Nike, the god of victory, being restored in this photo. The central shrine on the top of the Acropolis is the Parthenon, the shrine for Athena, the god of wisdom, and the namesake of city.]

And so, as the power and influence of the Greek people in the world decreased, the number of idols and shrines in Athens increased. The city was full of them. And this was especially true in and around the Acropolis. It has been said, a bit tongue-in-cheek, that in the city of Athens that Paul visited there were more gods than there were people.

It appears that, in the attempt to cover all their bases, the people of Athens had used up all of the names and jobs for the gods that they could think of. So, just to be sure, someone had even erected a small shrine in the middle of and entitled it, “To an Unknown God.”

On the other side of the Areopagus, down in the valley, is the ancient Agora, or city market where various schools of philosophy had set up schools to study and discuss all kinds of wisdom. Luke, who is the author of Acts, tells us that Paul begins his ministry been wandering around the city, trying to engage these philosophers and teachers in some sort of discourse over the ancient God of the Hebrews and how Jesus Christ had fulfilled their expectation of a savior. But he was not having much luck until he discovers this little shrine “To an Unknown God,” and uses their practice of creating images of the gods, to get his message across. Finally, Paul is invited up to the base of to the Areopagus to explain himself.

On its surface, it is easy to say of our world, that we have not come all that far from the ancient Athenians. We live in a world that is fractured into a small handful of major religions. And each one of these is broken into a multitude of factions. The religions of the world each claim to have some corner on the truth about where God is active and how human beings can get in on what God is doing. Taken as a whole, the spiritual life of the world looks chaotic, competitive, and confusing. How can God or the gods, hear all of this and respond regularly and faithfully?

We would like to think that Christianity, or at least our particular brand of Christianity, has risen above fray. We think that we have a clearer revelation of the power and intentions of God through the presence of Jesus Christ. We point to the evidence of the life changing activity of the risen Christ in the lives of people of faith over thousands of years, and over the face of the whole world. And even though the various denominations of Christianity argued about the details that separate them, the central message remains unique and superior to all other claims. There is only one all-powerful God, who revealed himself in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and remains accessible to all who believe in his power to save them.

But when you look more closely at the way we order our lives, the problem that Paul is addressing in Athens still exists, even among us who trust in Christ. It is a problem that is deeply embedded in the human heart. Each of us wants our lives to go the way we want it to go, and we want God to help us make it go that way. We call upon Jesus in the same way that the ancient world called upon Apollo or Athena or Zeus. We claim to be Christians, and find our identity within a recognized Christian community. But when things go sideways, our words and our actions demonstrate that we really believe that the world as we know it exists in shadow of a powerful God, and that contact between this world and God is more by accident than by divine plan.

Now, more than ever, in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, our spiritual outlook is to work hard to get God's attention, to look our way, and to persuade God to use his power to intervene on our behalf. We live our lives as though we have always kept that extra little shrine, built to honor the God that we do not understand, just in case.

From his position on the side of Mars' Hill, Paul's looks at the complex, tangled mess in Athens as says plainly, "Look, the God that you are all trying to worship, the God who is behind everything that exists, the God who is active in all things, day by day moment by moment, cannot be controlled. Human beings cannot create a place for God, an image for God, even an experience of God, and say, 'That is God! There He is!' Human beings cannot reach out to God, or influence God's powers, or manipulate God to act according to their desires.

The actions of God, Paul says, are not random and accidental. But they are deliberate and intentional, and are extended all people. All of creation, all nations, all countries and places, are of God's making. Human contact with God is not by accident. But rather, God is at all times creating, directing, providing and preserving, the lives and activities of all things. Even the human desire to grope around, trying to find God, is part of God's design.

Jesus puts Paul's words in a different way in the Gospel for today as he seeks to reassure his disciples just before his crucifixion and resurrection. As he is removing himself from

them, returning to God the Father, so that he can be present with them in spirit, he says, “I will not leave you orphaned. I am coming to you in another form. I will give you another Advocate to be with you forever. You know him, because he abides in you, and he will be in you.”

What Jesus is saying to his disciples, and what Paul is saying to the people of Athens, and what God is saying through them, to us, is to let God be God. And let the creation and creatures of creation be just that. Be satisfied with the ways that God has chosen to be revealed. Trust in the God who has been revealed in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Be satisfied with the way God chooses to run things. Let God be the one who acts, your job is to receive God in the acts and be grateful for it. All this running after God, all this creating of idols, all this hooting and hollering and attempts to peel back what is, to find out what is behind what is, is just making you look silly.

To stand amid these amazing ruins, testaments to the knowledge, skill, and passion of people who lived thousands of years and hundreds of generations ago, is to be impressed. You have to stand in awe at the deep desire of the Athenians to reach out to God. There is a part of you that is amazed and thankful that these shrines and idols have stood the test of time.

And yet, more impressive is how the words of Paul, simple, straight forward, direct, have not just carried forward in the lives of the faithful, but continue to give them life, hope, courage, vision, and peace, in the midst of a world that is still as unknown as it ever was.

God is present. You know him. “In him we live and move and have our being.”

Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF THE DAY

God of the Sparrow

(Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919; Tune: Carl F. Schalk, b. 1929)

God of the sparrow God of the whale God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe How does the creature say Praise
God of the earthquake God of the storm God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe How does the creature cry Save
God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace How does the creature say Thanks
God of the hungry God of the sick God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care How does the creature say Life
God of the neighbor God of the foe God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love How does the creature say Peace
God of the ages God of near at hand God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy How do your children say Home

OFFERING

We invite you to take a moment to offer thanksgiving to God for all the blessings of life, and remember your financial support that helps OSLC meet its ongoing ministry obligations. To request pre-printed mail-in contribution envelopes, or information about contributing electronically, please refer to the email that accompanied this bulletin under "Giving."

OFFERING PRAYER

PM: Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth.
Day by day you shower us with blessings.
As you have raised us to new life in Christ,
give us glad and generous hearts,
ready to praise you and to respond to those in need,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of Resurrection, you are our source of life and hope.

+ We give thanks for your gifts of love and life; open our hearts and minds to hear your word and call; inspire us to be your hands and voice in your world; grant us courage and creativity to joyfully share your Good News.

[A brief silence.]

We give thanks for your creation.

+ Enable us to be educated, equipped and inspired to be better stewards of your world. We give thanks for *Earth Ministry* and *Lutherans Restoring Creation*.

We pray for our world, nation, and local communities.

+ We lift up those communities where insecurity, violence, and fear are the norm. Help us to bring healing, wholeness, and safety to them.

+ We pray for those places, people, and animals in the wake of natural disasters - including the southeastern states. Grant strength to those affected as they recover and rebuild. Help us to be generous partners with *Lutheran Disaster Response*.

+ We pray that the work of Lutheran World Relief will bring health and healing to displaced Syrians and Syrian refugees.

We Celebrate New Life!

+ We celebrate with Larry & Ann Thomas as their family welcomes a new granddaughter, Ashton Kendall Wilson. We celebrate with Chuck Bachman and Wendy Winslow as their family also welcomes a new granddaughter, Vienna Juliet Walker.

We pray for all who are in need of healing and strength:

- + We lift up Mike, Marilyn, Linda, Dave, Kip, Evy Emily, Mike, Anthony, Lynnette, Sheelagh, Claire, Guests of the Community Meals Program, Sonja, Nicole, Josee and Jeannie.
- + We lift up those experiencing anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges.
- + God, you call us to care for our neighbors. Inspire our leaders and guide us to be better advocates for the sake of each member in our community.

We pray hold in prayer those affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

- + Bring peace and comfort to the families of those who have died.
- + Grant healing for those diagnosed.
- + Keep safe those whose health conditions make them especially vulnerable to this virus.
- + Protect medical workers, care providers, and first responders.
- + Sustain chaplains who bring prayer and care to those hospitalized and in nursing homes.
- + We give thanks for all non-medical essential workers who continue to serve our communities providing food, medicine, safety, childcare, and other vital services.
- + Guide those working to improve testing and those working toward a vaccine and for our government and health organization leaders as they discern a path forward.
- + Sustain those who are facing financial uncertainty due to loss of income. Help us to share generously.
- + Bless our ministry leaders as they explore care-filled and creative ways to gather online for worship, prayer, and fellowship. We give thanks for the grace-filled support our leaders have shown one another.
- + For all who anxious and worried, ground us in facts and center us in your love and peace.
- + During these days of physical isolation, grant us patience, humor, compassion, and courage.

We pray for those who are grieving:

- + Loving God, wrap your arms of love and hope around all who are experiencing any kind of loss, disconnection, or brokenness.
- + We lift up the family and friends of Charles, Barbara, Evelyn, and Susan.

For what and for whom else do the people of God pray?

[Here other intercessions may be offered.]

We pray for your church:

- + We give thanks for the leaders and participants in our church ministries. Grant energy and creativity for their work. Grant them grace to rest, grant them peace.
- + We pray for the residents, staff, and families of nursing homes and care facilities, including those that are part of our synod: Josephine Caring Community, Foss Home, Columbia Lutheran Home, Norse Home, and Hearthstone Community.

Sustain us in our journey:

- + Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

BLESSING

PM: The God of all grace,
who has called you to eternal glory in Christ,
restore, support, strengthen, and + bless you
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever.

C: Amen

POSTLUDE

O God, Our Help in Ages Past — Roger C. Wilson

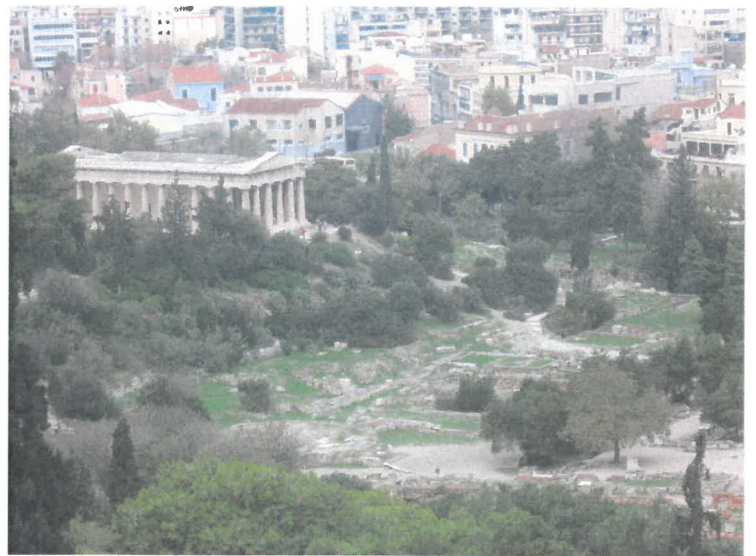
Jiyoung Lee



Parthenon



Areopagus



Agora



Acropolis Entrance

Commemorations for the Week

Erik, King of Sweden, martyr, died 1160, Monday, May 18

Erik is considered the patron saint of Sweden. As king of that nation, he tried to bring peace in the region, and to spread Christianity in Scandinavia. He was also known for his attempts to make fair laws and to protect those who were poor or sick.

Helena, mother of Constantine, died around 330, Thursday, May 21

Influenced by her son to become Christian, Helena (or Helen) lived an exemplary life of faith. She is also remembered for traveling through Palestine building churches on the sites she believed to be associated with Christ's life.

Serving in Worship:

Worship Leader:	Pastor Jim Kruse
Assisting Minister:	Connie Fletcher
Quartet:	Alice Lewis, Lori Downey, Marc Montague, Scott Hafso
Videographer:	Elizabeth Waltzer
Banner:	Elaine Stamm
Bulletin Cover:	Craig Gillin

Readings for Next Sunday: Acts 1:6-14; John 17:1-11

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Our Savior Lutheran Church Staff

Rev. James R. Kruse, *Transition Pastor*
Shari Lundberg, *Parish Administrator*
Dr. Jiyoung Lee, *Parish Organist*

Scott Hafso, *Director of Worship & Music*
Kate Gagnon, *Lay Visitation Minister*



Additional worship resources:

Readings: Psalm 66: 8-20; 1 Peter 3: 13-22

Suggested Hymn for Listening: *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*
(Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788; Tune: Roland H. Prichard, 1811-1887)

Prayer is putting our faith into action. We invite you to include these people in your daily prayers. You can make prayer requests via email at office@oslcssaquah.org. All written requests will remain on this list for 4 weeks.

Mike Golick medical emergency in Florida. (brother-in-law to Patty Gerde)

Marilyn Grey comfort as she enters hospice care. (mother to Mark Cron)

Linda Chambers comfort and peace following the death of her husband. (sister of Barbara Hinds)

Dave Carlson a kidney donor will be found quickly.

Kip Hauser healing and recovery following his angiogram. (father of Cheryl Hauser)

Evy Sneva continued healing and medication monitoring, peace for her family. (Karen Hansen)

Emily Gacek acquired COVID19 from a caregiver, healing and strength. (Connie Fletcher)

Mike Winkler in ICU with COVID19, 48 yr. old Seattle Transit bus driver, strength and healing. (Jerry & Linda Nack)

Anthony Templeton breathing problems and a long standing cold, unrelated to corona virus. (Grandson of Cheryl Landers)

Lynnette eye infection and symptoms of corona virus. (daughter of Cheryl Neeb)

Sheelagh Sacks undergoing radiation for ongoing breast cancer treatment. (Laura Anderson)

Claire Howe healing/peace & strength as she recovers from a fall (Shelley Howe)

Guests of the Community Meals Program safety, health and peace of mind. (Connie Fletcher)

Sonja 3 years old undergoing treatment for cancer. (granddaughter of Henrik & Patty Christopherson)

Nicole DeCamp healing and strength. (Ken DeCamp and Cheryl Leiter)

Josee Jordan peace of mind as she faces health challenges. (Dianne Tanner)

Jeannie Lindquist continued healing and strength.

Healing and peace of mind: Marian James;

Douglas Mandt (brother of Mary Ann Hult and Lorna Robertson); **Gregory** (nephew of Joanne Suttmeier); **Doug Patur**; **Katie Moeller**; **Margot Inman**; **Ken Acker** (son of Lucy Acker); **Marilyn Carlson**; **Taufik Hidayut** (Ken Konigsmark); **Don Wilkinson** (husband of Gwynn Wilkinson); **Rebecca Thomas** (Pr. Telyea); **Tanisha Foote** (Marilyn Carlson); **Dorothy Soland**; **Randi Strom**; **Jeanne Kuipers**; **Talton Johnson**; **John Pass**; **Florence Kinnune**; **Carol Harbolt**; **Sandy Aldworth**; **Jen Winslow**; **Larry Pruitt**.

Undergoing cancer treatment: **Amy Aldworth** (daughter-in-law of Sandy Aldworth) **Les Carlson** (father of Dave Carlson); **Harold Mandt** (brother of Mary Ann Hult and Lorna Robertson); **Chris Howe** (brother of Mark Howe); **Peggy Scalise** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Eileen Letts** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Floyd Rogers** (Connie Fletcher); **Lori Anglin** (Janet Heck); **Keith DeCamp** (brother of Ken DeCamp); **Barbara Jones** (mother of Ron Sordahl); **Doug McVety** (Helen Nychay); **Al Batt** (Connie Fletcher); **Larry Harbolt** (Ray Harbolt); **Gerald Welch** (Vern and Jeannie Lindquist); **Joe Martin** (father of Stacy Smith); **Christy Williams** (Bill Bergsma); **Diane Powis** (Paul Tolo); **Dana Mancini** (Jan Setterlund); **Greg Petersen** (Wes Collum); **Tim Teodoro** (Janet Heck); **Barry Donker** (Joan Parish); **Germaine Korum** (Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Kathryn Aitcheson** (Gerrie Hendrickson); **Yuko Takiguchi** (Teiko Soland); **Barb** (Janette Singley)

Living with cancer: **Liz Kidd** (Bob Beck); **Duane Jacobson**; **Mary Lewis** (sister-in-law of Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Mark Becker** (uncle of Paula Seeger); **Barbara Krogh Jarvis** (sister of Steve Krogh); **Suzanne Lewis** (daughter-in-law of Lyle & Alice Lewis); **Mira Bergsma**

Expectant Mothers: **Jessica Murguia** (Cheryl Hauser); **Yili Leiter** (Cheryl Leiter)

Mourning the death of loved ones: For peace and comfort during this time of grieving for the family and friends of: **Charles Chambers** (brother-in-law to Rowan & Barbara Hinds); **Barbara Nielson** (Karen Hansen); **Evelyn Timpe** (step-mother to Patty Gerde); **Susan Moffett** (Doug & Dianne Tanner)

Members and friends serving in the military; fire & police departments, & emergency rooms.

Global Missions and Missionaries: For the work of Lutheran World Relief, that they bring health and healing to displaced Syrians and Syrian refugees. (Global Missions). **Henrik & Patty Christopherson**. Congregations in Chiclayo, Peru: **Pepe** at Las Brisas, **Merci** in San Antonio and **Harold** at Las Lomas. **MaaSae Girls Lutheran Secondary School** in Tanzania.

Thanksgiving: For the joyous birth of **Vienna Juliet Walker** on April 8th (granddaughter to Chuck Bachman & Wendy Winslow).