



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

May 4, 2025

Third Sunday of Easter

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“If you speak of ‘hope’ and ‘inheritance’ to most Western Christians they will think of heaven, or of ‘waiting to be called home,’ or of ‘going to be with Jesus, way beyond the blue.’ But Romans 8 never mentions heaven, or going up to the sky as opposed to living on earth, or waiting to be called home, or anything like that. Nor is there any mention of a ‘soul’ waiting to be saved. This chapter is about new creation, not about escaping the present creation and going somewhere else.”

—N. T. WRIGHT

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of a godly life: Give us grace that we may always thankfully receive the inestimable benefit of his sacrifice, and also daily endeavor to follow in the blessed steps of his most holy life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forevermore. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)

PSALM: Psalm 30

SECOND READING: Revelation 5:11-14

GOSPEL: John 21:1-19

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Ben Sellick

A Debtor to Mercy Alone

Augustus M. Toplady · Kevin Twit

A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,
My person and offering to bring.
The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view.

The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete;
His promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet.
Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below nor above
Can make Him His purpose forego,
Or sever my soul from His love.

My name from the palms of His hands
Eternity will not erase;
Impressed on His heart it remains
In marks of indelible grace.
Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 65

LEADER Why do the nations conspire

PEOPLE **And the peoples plot in vain?**

LEADER The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together,

PEOPLE **Against the LORD and against his anointed,
saying,**

LEADER “Let us break their chains

PEOPLE **And throw off their shackles.”**

LEADER The One enthroned in heaven laughs;

PEOPLE **The LORD scoffs at them.**

LEADER “I have installed my king

PEOPLE **On Zion, my holy mountain.”**

LEADER I will proclaim the LORD’s decree:
He said to me, “You are my son;

PEOPLE **Today I have become your father.**

LEADER Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance,

PEOPLE **The ends of the earth your possession.”**

HYMN

All Creatures of Our God and King

St. Francis of Assisi · Ralph Vaughan Williams

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice, and with us sing;
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam.
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

All ye who are of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God, and on Him cast your care!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness;
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Father in heaven, we thank you for the freedom you have given us through the life, death and resurrection of your Son. But we confess today that we often live like slaves. Instead of living like you delight in us, we avoid you in shame and guilt. Instead of receiving your favor as a gift, we try to earn it with our efforts. Instead of accepting your freedom, we prefer our chains. Instead of pursuing your purposes, we cling to our short-sighted agendas. Forgive us. Embrace us. Cleanse us. Heal us. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Galatians 4:6-7

God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

LEADER Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:
 in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

LEADER The peace of the Lord be with you always.

ALL **And also with you.**

HYMN

The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power

Andrae Crouch

The blood that Jesus shed for me,
Way back on Calvary;
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day,
It will never lose its pow'r.

*It reaches to the highest mountain,
And it flows to the lowest valley;
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day,
It will never lose its pow'r.*

It soothes my doubts and calms my fears,
And it dries all my tears;
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day,
It will never lose its pow'r. *Chorus*

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
The only Son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
True God from true God,
Begotten, not made,
Of one Being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
By the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was
made man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead,
And His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN

All preschool and elementary age children are invited to the front of the church and will be dismissed to Children's Church with their teachers where they will read, sing, learn, and play in an environment suited to their language and style. Alternatively, children are always welcome to remain in the sanctuary to worship alongside the adults for the duration of the service.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world. Please submit prayer requests to centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.

OFFERING

*If you are our guest today, please feel no obligation to give. For members and regular attenders of Central, give generously as you are able. We give because all we have has been graciously given to us by God. Our offerings express our joyful dependence upon God and our commitment to join God in his work of renewal. You can give online by texting **centralchurchnyc** to **833-737-6262** or visiting centralchurchnyc.org/give.*

OFFERTORY

Resurrection Power

Chris Tomlin

You called me from the grave by name.
You called me out of all my shame.
I see the old has passed away.
The new has come.

*Now I have resurrection power living on the inside.
Jesus, You have given us freedom.
No longer bound by sin and darkness,
Living in the light of Your goodness,
You have given us freedom.*

I'm dressed in Your royalty.
Your Holy Spirit lives in me,
And I see my past has been redeemed.
The new has come. *Chorus*

Freedom, You have given us freedom.
You have given us freedom.
My chains are gone.
Freedom, You have given us freedom.
You have given us freedom, hallelujah!

Now I have resurrection power living on the inside.
Now, I'm no longer bound by sin and darkness,
Living in the light of Your goodness,
You have given us freedom! *Chorus*

THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 8:12-17

The passage can be found on page 944 of the pew Bible.

¹²So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

SERMON

Practicing the Resurrection | Our Inheritance

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

We do not presume to come to this, your Table, O Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but solely in your great mercy. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your Table, but you are the same Lord who always delights in showing mercy. Grant us, therefore gracious Lord, that we who now receive these gifts of bread and wine, according to our Savior's Word, may share in the body and blood of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, that we may dwell in him forever and he in us. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

*Communion is served with wine and gluten-free bread.
Individually wrapped wafers and grape juice are available at
each station.*

COMMUNION HYMN

It Was Finished Upon that Cross

CityAlight

How I love the voice of Jesus
On the Cross of Calvary.
He declares his work is finished.
He has spoken this hope to me.

*Though the sun had ceased its shining—
Though the war appeared as lost,
Christ had triumphed over evil.
It was finished upon that Cross.*

Now the curse, it has been broken.
Jesus paid the price for me.
Full, the pardon he has offered.
Great, the welcome that I receive.

*Boldly I approach my Father—
Clothed in Jesus' righteousness
There is no more guilt to carry.
It was finished upon that Cross.*

Death was once my great opponent.
Fear once had a hold on me.
But the Son who died to save us,
Rose that we would be free indeed!

Yes! He rose that we would be free indeed!

*Free from every plan of darkness,
Free to live and free to love,
Death is dead and Christ is risen!
It was finished upon that Cross.*

*Onward to eternal glory
To my Saviour and my God,
I rejoice in Jesus' victory,
It was finished upon that Cross.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BENEDICTION

We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good Word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.

DISMISSAL

LEADER Let us go forth to serve the world as those who love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

Members of our prayer team will be available immediately following the service at the front of the sanctuary to pray confidentially for you about any need or concern you might have. We encourage you to avail yourself of this opportunity to receive prayer. ☞