

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Please avoid parking in the gravel lot starting Monday 4/19, as paving takes place for handicapped spaces.
- 2) **Adult Sunday school in upstairs hall from 9:30-10:45am.** Curriculum is on “The 13 Apostles.” Worksheets available for children. Enter thru the lower red doors in front of the elevator 9:20-9:30am, wearing a mask. Temperatures & attendance will be taken.
- 3) For **11am worship in the sanctuary**, enter thru the lower red doors in front of the elevator 10:45-11am, wearing a mask. Temperatures & attendance will be taken. **No reservations are needed at this time.**
- 4) **1pm is the time of worship on Zoom**, until live streaming is available from the sanctuary. Installation of live streaming is coming soon!
- 5) **Communion** is scheduled Sunday **5/2**. Please have elements at hand for those on Zoom.
- 6) To watch **sermons recorded** on our YouTube Channel, go to the FPCP website: <https://www.fpcpataskala.com/> and click on WORSHIP or follow us on Facebook from the homepage.

WORSHIP for April 18, 2021 – 3rd Sunday of Easter

Prelude played by Collin Richardson, “**All Creatures of Our God and King**”

Streaming CCLI 20373701; St Francis of Assisi 1225; public domain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_eYGtEQz8&list=PLAdy2hvW6PL8_1itXDbTRrCel331DmVVU&index=7&t=0s

Call to Worship: Psalm 50:1, 10-11 *Responsively*

The Mighty One, God, the Lord,

speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to where it sets.

...for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.

I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine.

Opening Hymn: “Alleluia, Alleluia”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UIMuOCHon4>

Prayer of Confession: Colossians 3:5-10

(Responsively, pausing in silent reflection between each confession.)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to [our] earthly nature:

sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. [We] used to walk in these ways, in the life [we] once lived . But now [we] must rid [our]selves of all such things, as these:

Anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from [our] lips.

Do not lie to each other, since [we] have taken off [our] old self with its practices and have put on the new self,

Which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe [our]selves with

Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of [us] has a grievance against someone.

Forgive as the Lord forgave [us].

And over all these virtues put on love

Which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Assurance of Forgiveness: Colossians 1:22-23 *Responsively*

Once [we] were alienated from God

and were enemies in [our] minds because of [our] evil behavior.

**But now he has reconciled [us] by Christ's physical body through death to present [us] holy
in**

**his sight, without blemish and free from accusation – if [we] continue in [our] faith
established**

**and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that [we]
heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven!**

“The Gloria Patri”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uMeiUtOSVM>

Hymn of Preparation: “Jesus Lives, and So Shall I”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qF6aBDS3drA>

“Scripture cannot be set aside... What does Scripture say?” John 10:35 & Romans 4:3.

Prayer for Illumination: *Unison*

**Lord, through your Spirit enable us to consider your Word, and to enact it in our lives to
bring**

you glory and praise. Amen.

Scripture Readings: Colossians 1:15-23

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A15-23&version=NIV>

SERMON: "In Him All Things Hold Together" by The Reverend Dr. Janet Hufford

Watch sermon on: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAdy2hvW6PL93B6hbgswTxf93Evs575yd>

In the 1st passage of Colossians shared last week, Paul lifts thanks to the Father for our assured inheritance that comes through the Son, who redeems & brings us into the kingdom, growing in maturity & fullness as members of Jesus's royal family. Further, Colossians proclaims of Jesus, "In him all things hold together." This may remind us of unity & the "one new man" between Jewish & Gentile believers described in chapters 2-4 of Ephesians. But to compare, while Ephesians speaks of oneness & unity in the family of God, Colossians expands oneness & unity beyond family, in proclaiming, "in him all things hold together." There are other renderings of the same point in this 2nd passage of Colossians. V. 20: "& thru him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." V. 23b: "This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven." So again, while Ephesians speaks of oneness & unity in the body of Christ, Colossians expands the reconciliation of Jesus "in all things."

How this holding together of all things takes place is through Jesus, who at the start of this 2nd passage is immediately presented in two contexts: being both fully divine & fully human, which are core doctrines of our Christian faith. **V. 15** in today's passage immediately conveys the most striking reconciliation in Jesus of all. Jesus is both: fully divine and fully human.

V. 16-17. Fully divine, Jesus with the Father & the Holy Spirit is creator God. He is the image of the invisible God. He himself is not created. We heard on Christmas Eve how John at the start of his Gospel writes similarly. V. 1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, & the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made that has been made." This biblical concept is important to understand that Jesus himself is creator, not created. There was not a time that Jesus did not exist. Unlike us, Jesus did not come to be at his conception. Jesus already existed with the Father in heaven, as the Son, the image of the invisible God. The Council of Nicaea in 325AD affirms the divine nature of Christ in conjunction with the Father. From Nicaea came a confession accepted by all Christian churches. The first lines are as follows: "We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. 1.2 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."

Having affirmed that Jesus is fully divine, now attention turns to Jesus likewise being fully human. Thus, the Nicene creed continues: "For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. 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." Already mentioned, Paul points to Jesus as "the firstborn over all creation." Again, please understand that Jesus as firstborn does not mean that he is first created human being. After all, he is "the firstborn over all creation."

What Paul means becomes clear **in v. 18**, "he is the firstborn from among the dead." V. 18 further solidifies that Jesus is fully human. He like other human beings, before & after, him die. Since ancient times the qualification of divinity is immortality. A god cannot die. Yet

human emperors, who ordered that their subjects worship them as divine, did die. Jesus as fully human also dies, but he is “the firstborn over all creation. Specifically, “He is the firstborn from among the dead.” Here is reference to Jesus’ resurrection, the center of our faith! Death couldn’t hold Jesus. He rose. But first Jesus, fully human, died for us. Why?

V. 19-20. Through Jesus all things are reconciled to him, “whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” Through the shed blood of Jesus on the cross peace is made and all things hold together. Think of how Jesus & the Father created us with the ability for our own blood to hold together & heal open wounds! God designed our blood to clot in order to close and cover wounds for healing! But physical healing is only a temporary thing. We are human. We are mortal. Our current bodies are not designed to live forever. Spiritual healing, however, is eternal and everlasting. The blood of Jesus provides eternal spiritual healing to us.

Therefore, while Jesus is “the firstborn over all creation,” we are second born. Jesus is the first human to be resurrected from the dead, risen from the tomb to never die again. Granted Lazarus and a few others who died were healed from death by Jesus or in his name, but at some point these people died again. But believers who die receive reconciliation to God through the blood of Jesus, shed on the cross. After death, as with Jesus, will come the resurrection of our glorified bodies. The last statement in the Nicene creed is: “We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.” Paul concludes in how Jesus holds all things together in the last verses of the passage **21-23**:

To summarize, Jesus is firstborn over all creation. Through him all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven are reconciled to him. *The worship service opened today with “All Creatures of Our God and King.”* This is one of the oldest Christians hymns in our hymnals, written by St Francis of Assisi in 1225. St Francis was a monk who was known to preach the Gospel to woodland creatures living around the small monastery in Assisi, Italy. Ever sit reading the Bible under a tree or on the porch listening to the sound of chirping birds or rustling leaves? Like St Francis, I have even read Scripture aloud outside, proclaiming the gospel to every creature under heaven, since reconciliation with creation comes through Jesus. We’ll do the same when we sing outside. While finding the history of St Francis and other contemplative monks charming and quaint, we might not think that there is much of a bearing on “regular” clergy or believers. But through today’s passage, we get a picture of Jesus holding together all things, reconciling things of earth & heaven. So perhaps we’ll now when we listen to birds singing in a tree, we’ll hear them joining with us in praise for the hope of the coming fullness of the reconciliation of Christ.

To practice let us affirm our faith together with the ancient Nicene creed

Affirmation of Faith: The Nicene Creed *Unison*

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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. and was buried. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

Hymn of Response: "He Rose Triumphantly"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Q70xXzRq00>

PRAYERS of Joy and Concern, followed by:

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.

Please Continue to Give in Dedication to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

Prayer of Dedication: *Unison*

Jesus, Our Savior. In view of your mercy, we offer up our thanks thru giving. Amen.

Doxology

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSshNluVPbA>

Closing Hymn: "Christ Arose"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtxSWcfH9hk>

Benediction: Colossians 3:17 *Responsively*

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him,... in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.