

Sebastopol United Methodist Church
Sunday, May 24, 2020 – Seventh Sunday of Easter – Ascension Sunday
Order of Worship, including Scripture

Seasonal Theme

Jesus is out of the grave and alive, and He is with us.

Theme for the day:

We are the body of Christ, the resurrection community.
We are called to rejoice together in a loving community.

Call to worship:

*(please read the **BOLD** texts along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Pastor: Rejoice and sing to God.

People: **We sing of the Risen Christ.**

Pastor: Clap your hands and shout with joy.

People: **We rejoice in the living God.**

Pastor: Celebrate this day.

Unison: **We celebrate with the Spirit who calls us together.**

Special Prayer for Memorial Day

Centering & Prayer of Illumination:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

Holy God, we celebrate your presence this day. For the gift of resurrection, we give thanks and praise. For the gift of your ongoing presence in our lives, we rejoice and sing. In joyous gratitude, we pray that your Holy Spirit come and open our minds to see the power of Scripture to give life, and enlighten our hearts, in the name of the one, holy, and living God, to whom we give all glory. Amen.

Readings from Scripture: **Acts 1:4-11** **Luke 24:44-53**

[texts of Scripture follow the service, beginning on page 2]

Message: **BECOME A MEANINGFUL CHURCH!**

Pastoral Prayer

Without the breath of life, we are nothing; and without the word of God, we are dust. Let us offer our lives and offering to God (which you may send by mail, if you wish).

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

O God of all glory and majesty, we give you thanks for the gift of your Son, for his power at work in our lives, and for our gifts. Bless the gifts we bring to you for the benefits they afford in bringing life to others in your name. May the offering of our gifts and ourselves bring joy throughout the world. In Jesus's name, we pray. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction:

Stay true to yourself. Be hopeful in His power. Stay calm in God. Be joyful.

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Scripture Readings – May 24, 2020

first reading – ACTS 1:4-11

While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. ‘This’, he said, ‘is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’

So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He replied, ‘It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power

when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’

second reading – LUKE 24:44-53

‘Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

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Thank you for worshipping with us today.