



# Cranston Memorial Presbyterian Church

May 18, 2025

Fifth Sunday of Easter

## GATHERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS, SHARED JOYS AND CONCERNS

INTROIT AND REKINDLING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 148)

One: Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

All: Praise God, all the angels; praise God, all the heavenly host!

One: Let us praise the name of the Lord, for God created us all.

All: God established creation forever and ever, so let us worship God!

\*HYMN #473

For the Beauty of the Earth

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

The world often judges by outward appearances, but Jesus reveals to us a deeper reality. When we fail to live in the new way of love he commands, we distance ourselves from the truth and pretend to possess a righteousness that is only ours through Christ. In this new promise, and knowing God's steadfast love is trustworthy and true, let us confess our shortcomings together, seeking the Spirit's new workings within us.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, you call us to your merciful, gracious love, freely given without expectation or strings attached, like the unconditional love of a bridegroom. While we are eager to experience your mercy and grace in our own lives, we are quick to make our extension of your mercy and grace conditional for others, holding court in our own hearts. We would rather show mercy to those we judge worthy, forgetting the new commandment to love as you have loved us. We would rather extend grace to those who will show us grace in return, missing the trustworthy



**and true nature of your boundless forgiveness. Forgive us, Redeeming God. And transform our hearts with your amazing grace and unconditional love so that our relationships and your world are transformed.**

## **TIME FOR SILENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Behold: The former things have passed away, and God's grace flows like a river of new life. Friends, hear the good news: through the grace of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! You are made anew!

### **\* GLORIA PATRI**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning it is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

### **PASSING THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.  
All: And also with you.

### **TIME WITH CHILDREN**

#### **WORD**

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (All)**

**Gracious and Loving God, as you once declared, "See, I am making all things new." So now, through your Holy Spirit, open our hearts and minds to your transforming word in Scripture. Grant us a new vision of the height, depth, and breadth of your trustworthy and true love, that we may be inspired to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, reflecting the new creation you have begun in us. Amen.**

### **EPISTLE READING: Acts 11:1-18**

Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "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. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But I replied, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the



house where we were. 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. 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; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. 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.' 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?" 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.

One: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us,

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**SERMON**

*Radical Inclusion*

Rev. David Annett

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (from the Confession of 1967)**

The life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ has set the pattern for the church's mission. His human life involves the church in the common life of all people. His service to men and women commits the church to work for every form of human well-being. His suffering makes the church sensitive to all human suffering so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of persons in every kind of need. His crucifixion discloses to the church God's judgment on the inhumanity that marks human relations, and the awful consequences of the church's own complicity in injustice. In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming, the church sees the promise of God's renewal of human life in society and of God's victory over all wrong. The church follows this pattern in the form of its life and in the method of its action. So to live and serve is to confess Christ as Lord.

**\*HYMN #358**

**Help Us Accept Each Other**

**GIVE THANKS TO GOD**

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

**\*DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**



## 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.

## SENDING

\*HYMN #485

To God Be the Glory

\*CHARGE AND BLESSING

**POSTLUDE AND CARRYING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD** (please be seated for a moment of quiet as we contemplate the God we met today and the light that dwells within us)

**WELCOME TO CRANSTON!** We send two emails each week to those interested: an invitation to worship and a summary of prayer concerns and announcements. If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact Pastor David Annett, by phone or at [pastor@cranstonchurch.org](mailto:pastor@cranstonchurch.org). Considering Membership? Contact Pastor David Annett.

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**Prayer and Practice for the Week:** God's radical inclusion can be a challenge for us in our lives. Where are you feeling called to help bring people together today, be it in your own life or the lives of those around you?

### Session Members:

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