

# Woodbury United Methodist Church

May 24, 2020  
7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
Ascension Sunday

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PRELUDE

*America the Beautiful*  
Kate Keeler, soloist

Samuel Ward

(In Observance of Memorial Day)

GREETING

Rev. John Thomason

HYMN

*How Firm a Foundation*  
Led by Congregational Collage

Rippon

**How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in his excellent word!  
What more can he say than to you he hath said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

**“Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,  
for I am thy God and will still give thee aid;  
I’ll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.**

**“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
the rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;  
for I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.**

**“When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,  
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
the flame shall not hurt thee, I only design  
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.**

**“The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake.”**

OPENING PRAYER

Joann King, Liturgist  
adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020*  
based on 1 Peter 4; John 17

Heavenly Christ, come down from on high to be with us, even in our darkest hours. As you share in our suffering, share your love in the midst of our frustrations and failings. Raise us to new

heights of faithfulness that we may glorify you in all that we say and all that we do. Enter into our sorrows with grace and hope, that we might enter into your joy. In your holy name we pray. **Amen.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

led by Catherine Mason

Gospel Lesson for the 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
John 17:6, 9-11 (NRSV)

*Jesus Prays for His Disciples*

“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word . . . I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

Rev. Thomason

THE CHURCH AT PRAYER

Joann King

SCRIPTURE READINGS

read by: Joann King

Lessons for the 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
from *The Revised Common Lectionary*

Acts 1:6-14 (NRSV)

*The Ascension of Jesus*

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 toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward 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.”

*The Disciples Gather in Jerusalem*

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 (NRSV)

*Suffering as Christians*

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

*Tending the Flock of God*

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

HYMN

*You Are Mine*

David Haas

**I will come to you in the silence, I will lift you from all your fear.  
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice, be still and know I am here.**

**I am hope for all who are hopeless, I am eyes for all who long to see.  
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light, come and rest in me.**

*Refrain:*

**Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each by name.  
Come and follow me, I will bring you home, I love you and you are mine.**

**I am strength for all the despairing, healing for the ones who dwell in shame.  
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and all will know my name.**

*Refrain*

**I am the Word that leads all to freedom. I am the peace the world cannot give.  
I will call your name, embracing all your pain, stand up, now walk, and live!**

*Refrain*

SERMON

*Do Not Be Surprised*

Rev. Thomason

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

SPECIAL MUSIC

*God Is So Good*  
Virtual Choir

Douglas Wagner

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

BENEDICTION

Rev. Thomason

POSTLUDE

*Eternal Father, Strong to Save*  
(*Navy Hymn*, in observance of Memorial Day)  
Christopher Shay, organ

John B. Dykes