

**Rachel Grace Held Evans**  
REQUIEM EUCHARIST

Saturday, June 1st, 2019

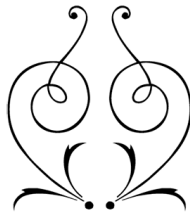
The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we too shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

This joy, however, does not make human grief un-Christian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow with those who mourn.

The communion table is open to everyone without a single exception.

You are invited to come forward and receive the bread and (non-alcoholic) juice, which, for many, is the body and blood of Christ. If you choose not to commune, you may remain seated or come forward with your arms crossed to receive a blessing. Ask your communion server for the gluten-free option, if needed.



# GATHERING

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MUSICAL PRELUDE

WELCOME

SOLO: Wounded Healer, sung by Audrey Assad

PROCESSION

*(please stand as you are able)*

Leader: I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.  
Whoever has faith in me shall have life,  
even though she die.  
And everyone who has life,  
and has committed herself to me in faith,  
shall not die for ever.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives  
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth.  
After my awaking, he will raise me up;  
and in my body I shall see God.  
I myself shall see, and my eyes behold him  
who is my friend and not a stranger.

For none of us has life in himself,  
and none becomes her own master when she dies.  
For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord,  
and if we die, we die in the Lord.  
So, then, whether we live or die,  
we are the Lord's possession.

*(please be seated)*

## PRAYER

Leader: May God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

People: **O God of grace and glory, we remember Rachel before you and thank you for giving her to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your compassion, console those who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of Christ so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered into the company of all your saints; by the power of your Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.**

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HYMN: Be Thou My Vision, led by Solveig Leithaug  
*(please stand as you are able)*

**Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,  
waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.**

**Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father; thine own may I be,  
thou in me dwelling and I one with thee.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;  
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always.  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art**

**High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
may I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,**

**still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.** *(please be seated)*

EULOGY, offered by the Rev. Brian Ward

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## WORD

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Isaiah 2:2-5, read by Tiffany Hoose

*In days to come*

*the mountain of the Lord's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be raised above the hills;  
all the nations shall stream to it.*

*Many peoples shall come and say,  
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the house of the God of Jacob;  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths."*

*For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

*He shall judge between the nations,  
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;  
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.*

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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EULOGY and SONG, offered by Amanda Held Opelt

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Psalm 139:1-11, read by Austin Channing Brown

*O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.  
Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.*

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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Revelation 7:9-12, read by Jim Chaffee

*After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

*And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."*

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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John 20:1-18, read by Sarah Bessey

*(please stand as you are able)*

Reader: The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John.

People: **Praise to You, Lord Christ.**

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then*

*the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.*

*But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.*

Reader: The Holy Gospel of our Redeemer.

People: **Praise to you, Jesus Christ.**

*(please be seated)*

**SERMON** The Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber

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**APOSTLES' CREED**

Leader: In the assurance of eternal life given at Baptism, let us dare to proclaim the faith and say...

People: **I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth;**



**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

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HYMN: Down to the River to Pray, led by Solveig Leithaug  
*(Leader will sing the first stanza solo, then the People join in)*

**As I went down in the river to pray,  
studying about that good old way.  
And who shall wear the starry crown,  
Good Lord, show me the way!**

**O dreamers, let's go down,  
let's go down, come on down.  
O dreamers, let's go down,  
down in the river to pray.**

**As I went down in the river to pray,  
studying about that good old way.  
And who shall wear the robe and crown,  
Good Lord, show me the way!**

O doubters, let's go down,  
let's go down, come on down.  
O doubters, let's go down,  
down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray,  
studying about that good old way.  
And who shall wear the starry crown,  
Good Lord, show me the way!

O seekers, let's go down,  
let's go down, come on down.  
O seekers, let's go down,  
down in the river to pray.  
As I went down in the river to pray,  
studying about that good old way.  
And who shall wear the robe and crown  
Good Lord, show me the way!

O children, let's go down,  
let's go down, come on down.  
O children, let's go down,  
down in the river to pray.

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, led by Jeff Chu

*(Please stand as you are able. When the leader says, "Lord, in your mercy," the people respond: "**Hear our prayer.**")*

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CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTIO

Leader: Let us in the presence of God and one another confess our  
brokenness and strife. Holy One who makes all things new:

People: **We confess that we have sinned against you and one another. We have thought better of ourselves than others. We have told lies, said hurtful things, acted in ways we wish we could take back, and looked the other way when action was needed. We cannot live up to even our own values and ideals. But you make all things new. In your infinite compassion, set us free from the bondage of sin and shame and lead us to the new life in Christ that you have prepared for us. Amen.**

Leader: God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, loves you as you are. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ and by his authority, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

People: **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Leader: When the disciples were locked in a room mourning the death of Jesus, he appeared to them and said, "Peace be with you"; and then, Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon them.

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

*(Please share a sign of peace with those around you)*

## EUCCHARIST

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*Celebrated by the Rev. Winnie Varghese*

*(please stand as you are able)*

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: We praise you God of freedom....

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Celebrant and People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: Blessed are you, gracious God...

...Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Celebrant: Let us pray together the prayer our Lord taught us:

People: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, and the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

*(please be seated)*

COMMUNION HYMNS

HYMN: Blessed Assurance

**Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!**

**Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
born of God's Spirit, washed in Christ's blood.**

Refrain:

**This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.**

**Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
angels descending bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. [Refrain]**

**Perfect submission, all is at rest;  
I in my Savior am happy and blessed,  
watching and waiting, looking above,  
filled with God's goodness, lost in God's love. [Refrain]**

HYMN: Amazing Grace

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
was blind, but now I see.**

**Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed.**

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares,  
I have already come;  
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.**

**The Lord has promised good to me,**

**God's Word my hope secures;  
God will my shield and portion be,  
as long as life endures.**

**When we've been there ten thousand years,  
bright shining as the sun,  
we've no less days to sing God's praise  
than when we'd first begun.**

HYMN: Great Is Thy Faithfulness

**Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
there is no shadow of turning with thee;  
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;  
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.**

Refrain:

**Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;  
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

**Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [Refrain]**

**Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [Refrain]**

HYMN: There's a Wideness in God's Mercy, sung by Audrey Assad  
*(Leader will sing first stanza. The People join on second stanza)*

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea.  
There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.  
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.

**For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind.  
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's  
Word,  
and our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.**

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#### POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Leader: Loving God, we thank you that in your passion you offer forgiveness and invite us to be with you where hunger is no more and death has no dominion. May the broken bread of life fracture our stony hearts for the sake on another world. **Amen.**

#### SENDING

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#### COMMENDATION

*(please stand as you are able)*

Leader: You only are immortal, the creator and maker of humankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

People: **Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

Leader: Merciful Savior, we commend Rachel to you. Receive her as a

sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Accept her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of your saints. **Amen.**

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#### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: Blessed Jesus, Son of the Living God, give mercy and grace to the living, pardon and peace to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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#### BENEDICTION

Blessed are the agnostics. Blessed are they who doubt. Blessed are those who have nothing to offer. Blessed are the preschoolers who cut in line at communion. *Blessed are the poor in spirit.* You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

Blessed are those whom no one else notices. The kids who sit alone at middle-school lunch tables. The laundry guys at the hospital. The sex workers and the night-shift street sweepers. The closeted. The teens who have to figure out ways to hide the new cuts on their arms. *Blessed are the meek.* You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.



Blessed are they who have loved enough to know what loss feels like. Blessed are the mothers of the miscarried. Blessed are they who can't fall apart because they have to keep it together for everyone else. Blessed are those who "still aren't over it yet." *Blessed are those who mourn.* You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

I imagine Jesus standing here blessing us because that is our Lord's nature. This Jesus cried at his friend's tomb, turned the other cheek, and forgave those who hung him on a cross. He was *God's Beatitude*—God's blessing to the weak in a world that admires only the strong.

Jesus invites us into a story bigger than ourselves and our imaginations, yet we all get to tell that story with the scandalous particularity of this moment and this place. We are storytelling creatures because we are fashioned in the image of a storytelling God. May we never neglect that gift. May we never lose our love for telling the story. **Amen.**

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## RECESSIONAL

Leader: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and giving life to those in the tomb. The Sun of Righteousness is gloriously risen, giving light to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death.

The Lord will guide our feet into the way of peace, having taken away the sin of the world. Christ will open the kingdom to all who believe in his Name, saying, Come, O blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

Into paradise may the angels lead you. At your coming may the martyrs receive you, and bring you into the holy city, Jerusalem.

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CLOSING HYMN: It Is Well With My Soul

**When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,**

**when sorrows like sea billows roll;  
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,  
“It is well, it is well with my soul.”**

Refrain:

**It is well (It is well), with my soul (with my soul);  
It is well, it is well with my soul.**

**Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
let this blest assurance control,  
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,  
and has shed his own blood for my soul. [Refrain]**

**My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,  
praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! [Refrain]**

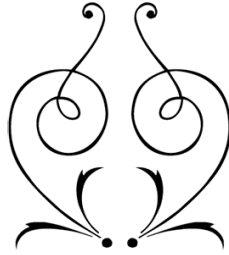
**Lord, hasten the day when my faith shall be sight,  
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;  
the trumpets will sound and the Lord will descend,  
even so, it is well with my soul. [Refrain]**

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DISMISSAL

Leader: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

People: **Thanks be to God!**



The family and loved ones of Rachel offer our deepest gratitude to the good people of First-Centenary United Methodist Church for their kindness and hospitality.

Communion servers: The Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber, the Rt. Rev. Brian Lee Cole, Kaitlin Curtice, the Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney, Kathleen Gleason, Austen Hartke, the Rev. Mihee Kim-Kort, the Rev. Winnie Varghese, Matthew Vines, and the Rev. Brian Ward

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