

7th Sunday of Easter – May 17, 2026

Call to Worship Psalm 47

Clap your hands together, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.
For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great ruler over all the earth.

**The Lord subdued peoples under us and nations under our feet.
The Lord chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob, whom God loves.**

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our Sovereign, sing praises.

For God is the ruler of all the earth; **sing praises with a psalm.**

God reigns over the nations; God sits on the holy throne.

The princes of the people gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; the Lord is very highly exalted.

Copyright © 1995 The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Used by permission of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. Scripture text adapted or reprinted from the New Revised Standard Version bible, Copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Hymn

Rejoice, the Lord is King

267

1. Rejoice, the Lord is King;
your sovereign Lord adore;
give thanks, O mortals, sing
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.
2. For Christ the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when Jesus purged our stains,
he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.
3. His reign can never fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven:
the keys of death and hell
are to our Saviour given.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.
4. He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit
and bow to his command
and fall beneath his feet.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice,
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.
5. Rejoice in glorious hope,
for Christ the Judge shall come
and take the faithful up
to their external home.
We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;
the trump of God shall sound: rejoice.

"Rejoice, the Lord is King." Words by Charles Wesley. Public domain.

Prayer of Approach

Giver of power and strength,
you take a rag-tag bunch of denying disciples and feckless followers,
creating a new community of servants who seek to do your will.

Keeper of all time,
you are enthroned on the rubble of death's shattered power,
calling us to your side and giving us a new vocation,
by which we serve the broken of the communities in which we live.

Constant Presence of hope,
you strengthen us so we never give in while confronted by evil;
you continually pray for us that we never quit when
faith proves to be more of a challenge than we imagined.

God in Community, Holy in One, we lift our hearts to you.

Call to Reconciliation

We know what we should do, yet don't.

We know the words people need to hear, but utter the ones that hurt them.

Yet, we also know that if we confess our failings to God,
we will receive forgiveness and hope.

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

God of glory: we are so busy watching the skies for signs of your presence that we forget to look around to see those we can serve in your name. We are so intent on finding just the right way to tell off someone, that we forget the words of reconciliation you have taught to us. We are so convinced we can figure out your schedule that we forget to open ourselves to the presence of your Spirit within us.

Mighty source of our lives, forgive us for all that we have done to others. Fill us with the wisdom to resist evil in our lives and strengthen us in that faith which is given to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

©2026 Thom M. Shuman. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com> May 17.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Although you have not stood on the mountaintop to see his ascension to God,
yet believe in the love and power of Christ
who taught you how to be faithful and joyful disciples.

Rejoice, and believe in him who came that you may have abundant life.

[Worship Connection: May 21, 2023](#)

Prayer for Understanding

God of Wisdom, send your Holy Spirit to give us fresh understanding of your Word in Scripture. Inspire us to respond with renewed commitment to follow Christ Jesus, your Living Word. Amen.

Scripture Reading Acts 1:1-11

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

¹In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While 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; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

The Ascension of Jesus

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But 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." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They 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."

New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. **Thanks be to God.**

Message Waiting

How good are you at waiting?

Depending on the circumstance we wait with anticipation or with dread.

There are the little waits in life, like waiting for the light to turn green. Some people have a hard time waiting for that light. You know who they are as you can see them slightly rolling forward, sometimes even before the other light has turned yellow. You might be that person anticipating the light. The anticipating doesn't change when the light will turn green, but something compels them to let their foot off the break. They cannot wait.

And who of us does not look for the shortest line up whether it be at the grocery store, entry into an event, or a car wash. If you are like me, you will avoid the car wash until

there is no line up. Few of us hate nothing more than waiting in line. Sometimes it is because we are in a rush. Mostly, I think we just dislike spending the precious minutes in a day in a line. Something about that just feels wasteful.

We count down the days until an event. With little ones we often count in sleeps, like it is three more sleeps until their birthday, or five more sleeps until we get to go to camp. As we get older one starts to count in days and weeks. For those anticipating the end of the school year, whether students, parents, or teachers, it may almost be down to the count for this year.

We wait and we anticipate. The two seems to go together whether the days are in wait of a joyful celebration or time of year, or when it is appointments, surgery, or even the end of days.

One of the longest and shortest waits can be as people sit at the side of a loved one anticipating...waiting, for that last breath. Sometimes that is a release, always it is difficult. Some of the hardest waiting that happens in life is in hospitals and for all kinds of reasons.

And so often we do not know what we are waiting for. We might have an idea, but not always. I harken back to when I was looking for a call to a congregation for ministry. I had no idea what God had in store for me. I sent out my profile to congregations that I thought would be a good match, even had a few interviews, along with two places that wanted me to come and be their minister, but none of those stuck until I got a call from the interim moderator of St. Andrew's back in 2013. I hadn't even applied or considered St. Andrew's, but the moment I came here I knew why nothing else had stuck. This was the place I had been waiting for without even knowing it.

But I have waited for many things over my life time, paychecks, children, vacations, and graduations. The intent here is to have you think about those times in your life that you waited. Did you wait with eager anticipation, with dread, or with indifference? In your waiting did you actively plan for what was next, like pack your suitcase in anticipation of a trip to the hospital or to the airport? If you are married, it is likely that you spent a whole lot of time preparing for, waiting for, your wedding day.

Waiting. Waiting for what is next. Waiting.

How we wait and what we are waiting for determines a lot for us. Interestingly enough we can wait with both joyful anticipating and fear at the same time. Particularly when we are waiting for something big. Fear, joy, hope, and all kinds of other emotions might play into how we are waiting. Things that we know are going to change how we experience and live in the world, whether good or bad, are particularly difficult to wait for.

Today we heard read the very first verses from the Book of Acts and it signals a time of waiting. This reading reiterates what was written at the end of the Gospel of Luke where we read...

⁴⁴ Then [Jesus] 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.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ 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 ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ 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.”

⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and they were continually in the temple blessing God.¹

Acts picks up the storyline that ended in the Gospel of Luke, with Jesus summarizing all of his instructions and then telling them to go back to Jerusalem and wait. Wait for the promise of the Father, wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon them.

In between times seem to be difficult for us human beings, the waiting for something to happen. In this case they had seen what the power of the Holy Spirit looked like when it descended on Jesus and the power that he had to heal, teach, and lead. But what does that look like for the ordinary person? How is that Holy Spirit going to change each person, change those who are touched by it? At this point all they could do was wait.

Pastor and teacher David Lose refers to this time of waiting as an interlude. He writes, “This, as it turns out, is also an important interlude, as they are being prepared for life after Jesus’ ascension and their changed role from disciples (students and followers) to apostles (messengers, heralds, and leaders).”² He goes on to say that these are “times of preparation, the pause for refreshment and renewal before the invitation to walk across another threshold, start a new adventure, or cross a boundary into unfamiliar but nevertheless God-beloved territory.”³

It is not to say that rest, waiting, times of being refreshed, are not something in and of themselves, but that in those times we can also attend to what God is up to in our lives.

¹ All scripture quotations taken from *New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition*. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

² David Lose. [Easter 7 A – Important Interludes | ...In the Meantime](#) Accessed May 16, 2026.

³ Ibid.

We can reflect, learn, observe, question. We can still play, pray, laugh, cry, hurt, rejoice, grieve, that and all the various ways we spend time waiting, transitioning, or resting. But waiting on God, questioning what God has in store, taking time to ponder, to wait for direction, to anticipate, all of this does, and can happen, day to day or in undeniable times of waiting in our lives.

And recognizing that this is about what God is doing in your life is so helpful. We can do this as individuals, as couples, families, or in a group such as this congregation. We went through this when we did our New Beginnings work. It was an active time of waiting...a time of discernment. We didn't really know what we were waiting for until we were there, but we took time to meet, to discuss, to question, to pray, to discern, and to be curious. We continue that even now.

Yes, we have found ourselves directed and having direction, but that work of waiting continues. There were many areas that we identified back in 2021-22 of where we hoped God was leading us and though we have accomplished much and changed so much, we continue to have to wait for the next moment, the next thing we are now able to take on whether it be in the work of relationship building or the work of keeping this place in good repair. This place where we do the relationship building. We do it pray-fully. We do it with anticipation, with hope, and with some trepidation.

The direction is not always clear, for our work here, and for our individual lives, but one thing that God promised is to always be present to, for, and with us in the power of the Holy Spirit. Unlike the apostles and believers, we don't have to wait for the Holy Spirit to be sent. The Holy Spirit is already at work in the world and, when we pay attention, we can see and feel the Holy Spirit at work in, through, and with us.

One might do well to reflect on whether the time they are going through in their lives is a time that God is calling them to wait or to act. Is it a time of active waiting? Of expectant hope and curiosity for what will be next? And what do you do with that time? How do you live into it?

How you answer this is for you to discern. How we as a congregation live into times of waiting is something we do together in worship and in our work. In our times of meeting and times of praying. Our times of learning and our times of fellowship.

Whatever it is, it is a time for God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to move in, with and through us, preparing us for how we live in the world. All of this is in accordance with how Jesus lived in the world, with care for those who were vulnerable. As the is written by the prophet Micah 8:6

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

If you are living into this, waiting on God, and living with love, you can be sure you will figure it out. None of us do any of this perfectly, but we can do it faithfully and compassionately. Thanks be to God for the times of waiting, of preparation, and of rest, as we lean into what God is doing in us and in the world. Amen.

Prayers of the People

God of the generations in time and eternity,
we turn to you in these quiet moments
to offer you our thanks and our hopes for our lives.
Today we give you thanks for all those people
who have shown us your face and taught us to follow you
through the loving example of their living faith.
We are grateful for their wisdom and courage which continue to inspire us.
Thank you for our life together in your church and the saints we have known here.
May the light of Christ shine through our lives, too,
so that we offer light for the world you love as witnesses to your purposes.

Christ of Compassion in action,
in you, we receive our call to live with purpose.
From you, we learn how to love those around us.
With you, we find strength to face each new day.
So today, we offer our prayers for those facing challenges,
and seek your guidance to respond to their cries.

We pray for those brought to mind by news headlines this week
for situations of violence, corruption and deprivation, danger and devastation ...

We pray for families going through difficult times,
for all who are sick or in sorrow, for all who are lonely or despairing ...

We pray for those agonizing over important decisions and responsibilities,
for those in leadership roles and for those who care for the most vulnerable ...

Creator, Christ and Spirit, move with us into the week ahead,
remind us each day to live according to your will and purposes in all our relationships
and to live lives of meaning so that we bear witness to the love we meet in Jesus
who taught us to pray together:

The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Worship Planner. 7th Sunday of Easter. May 17, 2026. Year A.

Lord's Prayer

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, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

Invitation to the Offering

God has given us the gift of Christ, risen and ascended for the life of the world. Therefore, let us offer our gifts in return, that others may know this glorious news. We gather our gifts together and present them as an offering of gratitude and praise. May you be encouraged to visit our website at [St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, ON – Part of the PCCWeb network of churches](#) and give a financial gift to support the work of this ministry.

Hymn

Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus

370

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Hallelujah! sing to Jesus!
his the sceptre, his the throne;
Hallelujah! his the triumph,
his the victory alone.
Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation
has redeemed us by his blood.</p> | <p>2. Hallelujah! not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
Hallelujah! he is near us,
faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received him
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise,
"I am with you evermore"?</p> |
| <p>3. Hallelujah! King eternal,
thee the Lord of lords we own:
Hallelujah! born of Mary,
earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne.
Thou within the veil hast entered,
robed in flesh, our great High Priest,
thou on earth both priest and victim
In the eucharistic feast.</p> | |

"Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus." Words by William Chatterton Dix. Public domain.

Benediction

God's spirit is poured out upon us
to make our hearts strong with love and bold with praise
that we may proclaim God's son to the ends of the earth.

May the glory of God fill you with praise,
the beauty of Christ strengthen you in service,
and the power of the holy spirit fill you with peace.

Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press. Page 165.