

Sixth Sunday Of Easter



May 9, 2021
10:30AM

Introduction

Celebrant: Welcome to Grace Episcopal Church to those of you here with us in person and those of you watching online. Today we celebrate Mother's Day on this sixth Sunday of Easter. Our Gospel is the same as what we hear on Maundy Thursday - "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another." And that is perfect for a Sunday honoring the mothers, grandmothers, and the unselfish maternal love of women everywhere. Thanks to all of you mothers and thanks to all the women whose love reflects the love of Jesus himself.

Liturgy of the Word

Processional Hymn:#488

Be Thou My Vision

Please stand and sing as you are able.

Words: Mary Elizabeth Byrne; Music: David Evans



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
3 High King of hea - ven, when vic - tory is won,

all else be nought to me, save that thou art—
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;
may I reach hea - ven's joys, bright hea - ven's Sun!

thou my best thought, — by day or by night,
thou my great Fa - ther; thine own may I be;
Heart of my heart, — what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
thou in me dwell - ing, and I one with thee.
still be my vis - ion, O Ru - ler of all.

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: **The Lord is Risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Collect for Purity

Celebrant: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and

peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly

King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we

give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus

Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you

take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy

on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -

ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,

you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most

High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the

glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray. O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as surpass our understanding: Pour into our hearts such love towards you, that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Acts 10:44-48

Please be seated.

Reader: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 98

Reader: Sing to the LORD a new song, *

People: **for he has done marvelous things.**

Reader: With his right hand and his holy arm *

People: **has he won for himself the victory.**

Reader: The LORD has made known his victory; *

People: **his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.**

Reader: He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, *

People: **and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.**

Reader: Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; *

People: **lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

Reader: Sing to the LORD with the harp, *

People: **with the harp and the voice of song.**

Reader: With trumpets and the sound of the horn *

People: **shout with joy before the King, the LORD.**

Reader: Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *

People: **the lands and those who dwell therein.**

Reader: Let the rivers clap their hands, *

People: **and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, when he comes to judge the earth.**

Reader: In righteousness shall he judge the world *

People: **and the peoples with equity.**

Second Lesson: 1 John 5:1-6

Reader: A reading from the first Letter of John.

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross where the young
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet sor - row and
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were an

Prince of Glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
 cross of Christ, my God: all the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down! Did e'er such love and
 of - fering far too small; love so a - maz - ing,

count but loss, and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

Gospel Reading: John 15:9-17

Please continue standing as you are able.

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

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

It has been observed that you can determine the character of a person by listening to the first words they say after they smack their thumb with a hammer. Just so you understand this in case you are tempted to take the Lord's name in vain, the word "Christ" is not the last name of Jesus. It is a title meaning the anointed one or the messiah. In fact, last names were not even generally recognized until the 12th century when taxation records required it.

The question for you today is, do you believe that this Jesus of Nazareth, son of David and Mary, is the messiah, the Christ? And if so, how will you live that belief out? How will you proclaim it and how does it make a difference in your life?

This week my brother was cleaning out his stuff and he sent me a large package which turned out to be a trip down memory lane. Joan and I laughed as we read newspaper articles, Junior high newsletters and church bulletins. I can show you a bulletin from Christ Episcopal Church in Springfield MO from 1964, and you probably couldn't tell how old it was without the date. Things haven't changed much in our beloved Episcopal Church. Should they?

We are a proud church married to tradition. In fact, during the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, the Lutheran and other European reformers sought to restore the bible to its primacy as the foundation of the church's authority. The Roman Catholic Church had placed way too much emphasis on the rituals, the canon laws, and the traditions of the church over and above anything else. Luther cried out in Latin, "*sola scriptura*" or "only from scripture" will the church have any authority. The Episcopal Church today tends to continue to emphasize tradition above everything else.

Perhaps ironically, the Church of England added a third leg to the stool of church authority. Not long after Luther launched the Reformation, Richard Hooker in England argued that you need one more thing to seek God's will. You need your brain. Human reason is required along with the Bible and church tradition in order to allow the will of God to guide you in your life.

The challenge we face today is that everyone from Evangelicals to Roman Catholics to Episcopalians finds it far easier to forget about using their God-given brains and instead rely only upon the traditions of the church and the Bible. I ask you, have you ever tried to sit on a stool with only two legs? It doesn't work very well, does it?

Too many people park their brains at the door when they listen to the news, read the paper, or go to church, and that is very dangerous. To listen uncritically and accept everything your pastor tells you as true, or accept everything your favorite news channel tells you, or everything a politician tells you is a path to creating a society of lemmings ready to follow any handsome piper over the cliff.

Please understand that I love the traditions, the ritual, and the liturgies of our church. But the fact remains that a church bulletin from 1964 is essentially the same as in 2021 during a period when membership in the Episcopal Church nationally declined more than 50%. If we keep doing things the same old way and getting worse results every year, should we keep doing it?

Could it be time for us to restore that third leg of the stool that many English clergy died defending? Could it be our mission as a church in Muskogee to show the world that it is possible to have a brain, to use it to comprehend the bible, and to love one another as Christ loves us? Can we restore the third leg of the stool, so we don't fall onto the floor or over a cliff?

This brings us to the psalm crying out from the very first line, "Sing to the Lord a new song." That was the psalm and theme in our wedding almost 41 years ago. Our marriage has certainly stood the test of trying many new things. And it should be that way when people love each other the way Christ loves us.

When you use your brain to understand and discern what God is asking you to do, you are truly free. When you are truly free you can fully love. And when you fully love you can fully forgive. If you stop anywhere along this track, you become stuck. Too often, being stuck becomes the same thing as tradition and people defend it.

So where does this leave us? We are free to think, to feel, and to love others the way Christ loves us. And we are free to try new things while singing praises to God. If we try to live our lives like this, perhaps tradition will no longer smother attempts to try new things. New things like our Very Big Slide. New things like life classes for adults, cooking classes for teens, and self-care for seniors. The sky is the limit for the things Grace Episcopal Church in Muskogee can do right here. We can make a difference in this community. We can make a substantial difference.

It all starts with using that thing on top of your shoulders and not allowing tradition to become the wet blanket that smothers everything. When we can get ourselves free like that, we can love others the way Christ loves us. And when we do, we'll be singing God's praises every day.

Nicene Creed

All in unison; Please stand as you are able.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Please sit, kneel or stand.

Reader: Bound together in Christ in the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us pray with one heart and mind to God our Father.

Reader: For peace from things that separate us from one another and for our salvation.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Reader: For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, especially...

People: **St. Luke's, Chickasha; St. Timothy's, Paul's Valley; Diocese of Maine; The Church of the Province of Melanesia.**

Reader: For this holy gathering and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and fear of God.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Reader: For...

People: **Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Poulson, our Bishop; Bob & Tom, our clergy; Tim & Pat, our wardens; vestry, delegates, all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God. Lord, have mercy.**

Reader: For the world and its leaders, our nation and its people. We pray for our leaders, especially...

People: **Joe, our President; Kamala, our Vice-president; Markwayne, our Congressman; James & Jim, our Senators; Kevin, our Governor; and Marlon, our Mayor. Lord, have mercy.**

Reader: For prisoners, the oppressed, all those in need or suffering, especially...

People: **Barbara & Family, Blackwell Family, Brad, Brewer Family, James & Shirley, Judy, Sherri, Bea, Eathen, Linda, John, Angie, Brian, Glen, Dante, Marilyn, Gary, Ann, Connie, Jan, Cliff, Esther, Ann, Ronald, Michael, Sheila, J.J., Marlee, Carl, all those affected by the pandemic, all the front line workers involved with patient care, all first responders, postal workers, law enforcement, all fire and safety personnel, all United States Military serving at home and abroad, and those whose suffering is known only to God.**

Reader: We pray for those who have died, (especially...)

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Reader: For ourselves, our families, and those we love. We pray for those in our parish, especially ...

People: **Joel, Ken, Sharee, Cubin.**

Reader: Also those who are traveling, (especially...)

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Reader: Remembering our most blessed Mary and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

People: **To you, O Lord.**

Reader: Heavenly Father, you have promised to hear what we ask in the Name of your Son: Accept and fulfill our petitions, we pray, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbors.

Silence is observed.

Celebrant & People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Peace

Please stand as you are able.

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Greet one another in the name of Christ.

Announcements, Birthdays & Anniversary Blessings

Please be seated.

Welcome to our guests today. If you are new to Grace for the first time or even if you have been here once or twice before, please fill out a visitor card and put it in the plate. We promise not to harass you, but we would like to include you on our weekly email broadcasts and other event notifications. Thank you for the blessing of your presence today.

Celebrant: Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to the Lord.

Offertory

During this time we make an offering to the church to help maintain it's mission in creation. Its also a time in which we fully offer ourselves to be Christ in the World around us.

Offertory Anthem:

Every time I think of you

Ken Yadon

Doxology

Please stand as you are able.

The musical score for the Doxology is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the staves.

System 1:
Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise

System 2:
him, all crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye

System 3:
heaven - ly host: praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Great Thanksgiving

Sursum Corda

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 him thanks and praise.**

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

Celebrant: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus: #S-125

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Celebrant: † Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

Celebrant: On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."††† After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." †††

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Celebrant: We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever **AMEN.**

Lord's Prayer

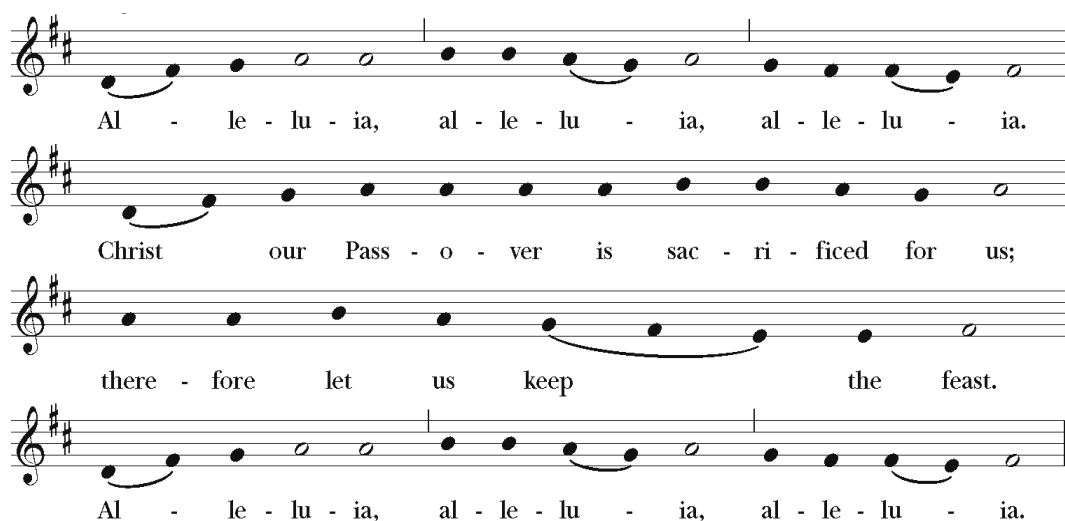
Celebrant: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Celebrant & People: 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem: #S-154



Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

At Grace Episcopal Church, "All baptized Christians from any church are welcome to receive Holy Communion."

Communion Hymn:

Ken Yador

We Go Out To Do Our Work

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Celebrant & People: Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Easter Blessing

Celebrant: May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing. **Amen.**

May God, who through the water of baptism has raised us from sin into newness of life, make you holy and worthy to be united with Christ for ever. **Amen.**

May God, who has brought us out of bondage to sin into true and lasting freedom in the Redeemer, bring you to your eternal inheritance. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Recessional Hymn:#344

Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing

Please stand and sing as you are able.

Words: John Fawcett; Music: Sicilian Mariners

1 Lord, dis - miss us with thy bless - ing; fill our hearts with
2 Thanks we give and a - dor - a - tion for thy Gos - pel's
3 so that when thy love shall call us, Sa - vior, from the

joy and peace; let us each, thy love pos - sess - ing,
joy - ful sound: may the fruits of thy sal - va - tion
world a - way, fear of death shall not ap - pall us,

tri - umph in re - deem-ing grace: O re - fresh us,
in our hearts and lives a - bound: ev - er faith - ful,
glad thy sum - mons to o - bey. May we ev - er,

O re - fresh us trav - eling through this wil - der - ness.
ev - er faith - ful to thy truth may we be found;
may we ev - er reign with thee in end - less day.

Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

THANKS TO THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK:

Celebrant..... The Rev. Bob Wickizer
 1st Reader..... David Edwards
 2nd Reader..... Pat Wilcox
 Bread/Intercessor..... Tom Harrington
 Altar Guild..... Melody Freie
 Head Usher..... Pete Schrader
 1st Cross/Server..... BJ Charbonneau
 2nd Cross..... Pat Wilcox



ON THE ALTAR:

Flowers on the altar today
are given by Edith Lubin.

Communion Wine for 2021 is
given by Mike Alberty in loving
memory of his parents.

Bread today is sponsored by
Betty & Tom Honea in honor of
their grandchildren.

MAY VESTRY PERSON OF THE MONTH:

Alex Wilson

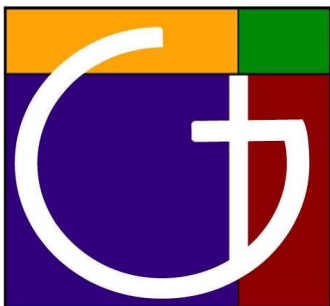


Join in our
**FREE COMMUNITY
FLEX/TAI CHI CLASS**
At Grace
Contact BJ for more info.



Grace is saving trees!

In an effort to cut expenses, balance our annual budget, and to increase our Earth-friendly practices, we are phasing out our printed service bulletins effective May 23rd. The virtual bulletin will continue to be on-screen during our services. A handout with readings, prayer list, etc. will still be available.



Grace Episcopal

218 N. 6th Street Muskogee, OK 74401

Phone/Fax: (918) 687-5416

Email: Office@GraceMuskogee.org;

Website: www.GraceMuskogee.org

Ministers: All the People of God (BCP p. 855)

Rector: The Rev. Bob Wickizer

Rector's Email: bob@gracemuskogee.org

Deacon: The Rev. Thomas A. Harrington

Music Director: Ken Yadon

