

Dear St. Timothy Folk,

Happy second half of Eastertide! Nearly all of May falls into this season which is central to our liturgical and theological life. Every day of Eastertide is a reminder to us that Easter is not just a single day, but a season and a way of life. For the disciples, the Resurrection of Jesus was not a moment in time, an event, but an ongoing reality that changed everything. As Jesus was the central relationship in their lives, the Resurrection was at the core of their proclamation of Jesus as the Son of God, who had raised Jesus from death to eternal life.

That is our proclamation as well, in the words of the Creed and woven through the words of our liturgy. We open with “Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!” and during the Eucharistic Prayer we say “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.” Following the ancient pattern of the Church, we encourage standing for prayer in place of kneeling as a recognition of the gifts of forgiveness and new life we receive through Christ’s death and Resurrection. In April we also omitted the Confession for a time for the same reason. (Please remember that sitting may replace standing if your physical body objects to standing too long. Standing is “as you are able” – God cares more about the posture of your heart than the posture of your knees.)

Also part of this season is the Feast of the Ascension which takes place on the 40th day of Easter. According to Acts 1:3, Jesus appeared to the disciples for forty days prior to his bodily ascension into heaven. Since this means it always falls on a Thursday, it is often not celebrated on that day in smaller churches (unless they happen to be Church of the Ascension), but is acknowledged on the following Sunday, sometimes called Ascension Sunday. The Feast of the Ascension ranks with Easter and Pentecost as being recognized across all Christian denominations.

The three days preceding Ascension have traditionally been observed as Rogation days. “Rogation” comes from the latin *rogare*, meaning “to ask”, and was understood as beseeching God to protect from calamities. This observance goes as far back as the fifth century. The faithful typically observed the Rogation days by [fasting and abstinence](#) in preparation to celebrate the [Ascension](#), and farmers often had their crops blessed by a priest at this time. In churches in England, and some churches in our country, a common feature of Rogation days in former times was the ceremony of [beating the bounds](#), in which a procession of parishioners, led by the minister, churchwarden, and [choirboys](#), would process around the boundary of their [parish](#) and pray for its protection in the forthcoming year. The preceding Sunday is known as Rogation Sunday, and in some places has been observed as the church version of Earth Day, with prayers for agriculture, industry, and the environment. (adapted from Wikipedia.org)

On May 19th, we will celebrate the feast of Pentecost, one of the major feasts of the Church. There is an article about Pentecost on page 2 of the Parchment. We invite everyone to wear red (color of flames representing Pentecost) to church. On Sunday, May 26th we celebrate Trinity Sunday. Fr. Frank Wilson is scheduled to celebrate and preach while I attend my 55th (!) college reunion in western Massachusetts.

As we go through the remainder of Eastertide, here is the important thing for us to remember: Jesus is alive! He is alive, and present, and available to each of us in every moment of our days and nights. We are alive in and through Jesus Christ. We have already been raised to new life through his Resurrection. May we live and proclaim that truth!

Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Rev. Linda