

Sermon Easter 2C, April 27, 2025, [Click here for slides](#)
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SLIDE 1: INTRO: PSALM 150

- 1 Hallelujah! Praise God in God's holy temple; *
praise God in the firmament of God's power.
- 2 Praise God for God's mighty acts; *
praise God for God's excellent greatness.
- 3 Praise God with the blast of the ram's-horn; *
praise God with lyre and harp.
- 4 Praise God with timbrel and dance; *
praise God with strings and pipe.
- 5 Praise God with resounding cymbals; *
praise God with loud-clanging cymbals.
- 6 Let everything that has breath *
praise the LORD. Hallelujah!

SLIDE 2: VIDEO

- Play Video Clip from Easter Day

SLIDE 3: LITTLE CHILD LEADING

- In the words of the Prophet Isaiah: ***And a little child shall lead them!***
- What a world it would be if we ALL listened and responded so immediately and obediently to the Word of God!
- *In the words of the Psalm we sang together last Sunday: **This is the day the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad! YAY!***
- *Or in the words of the Psalm we sang together today: **Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! YAY!***

SLIDE 4: Word Study

In the 6 short verses of the Psalm appointed for today, Psalm 150, we are commanded to “Praise God” no fewer than 12 times!

What does “Praise” mean????

praise=the Hebrew root word: hālal

1) *Halal means **to praise, to be clear, to shine, to flash forth***

When the thick fog of confusion, the thick clouds gloom and evil descend—our praise is light flashing forth...like the beacon of the lighthouse, that helps all those navigating stormy seas find their way safely to shore.

2) *Halal can also mean **to make a show or celebrate, often with music, singing, and dancing.***

While others are making spectacles of devastation and death, we must make a spectacle of restoration and life. As the loud din of discord and disinformation grows ever more deafening, our music of praise must grow louder, still! When we begin to feel voiceless, we must invite others to join us in reclaiming our voices and revitalizing our hope by singing together. When we begin to feel frozen by fear or fatigue, we must invite others to join us in reclaiming our bodies and reenergizing our movements by dancing together.

3) *In some contexts, Halal can even mean **to boast, to rave, or to act foolishly.***

When the powers of this world seem like dangerous boasting, raving, fools we must overpower them with the strength of our boasting, raving, foolish praise of the True Holy and Living, Loving, Liberating, Lifegiving God.

Unlike so much of Scripture, the Psalmist's instruction in Psalm 150 is very clear, very direct, very, *very* repetitive. It's also *very* thorough (remember the 5 w's of elementary school? Well apparently the Psalmist did, too!)

i) **SLIDE 5:Q: WHAT?**

(1) A: Praise! 12x the Psalmist reminds us what we must do.

ii) **SLIDE 6 Q: Whom?**

(1) *Hallelujah!* Praise be to Yahweh

iii) **SLIDE 7 Q: Where?**

(1) *Praise God in God's holy temple; **

Praise God in the firmament of God's power.

iv) **SLIDE 8 Q: Why?**

(1) Praise God for God's mighty acts; *
praise God for God's excellent greatness.

A: All God has Done! All God IS!

v) **SLIDE 9 Q: How?**

(1) *Praise God with the blast of the ram's-horn; **
praise God with lyre and harp.

(2) *Praise God with timbrel and dance; **
praise God with strings and pipe.

(3) *Praise God with resounding cymbals; **
praise God with loud-clanging cymbals.

A: Loudly! Boldly! w/ every instrument—including our bodies

vi) **SLIDE 10 Q: Who (subject):**

(1) *Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!*

A: All People! All of Creation!

SLIDE 11: ZZ & Thomas

Praise is the Psalmist's prescription for whatever ails us—Praise is the medicine that is essential to both initiate and sustain the healing process in our hearts, our community, our country, our planet.

Psalmist doesn't prescribe what we should think, or feel, or even believe. Rather the Psalmist directs us to do the one thing that we can *always* do—even when we don't know what else to do, or think, or feel, or believe (which is for many of us is perhaps most of the time): The Psalmist directs us to PRAISE!

Palm Sunday Passion Play

At it's best, the Church doesn't respond to questions with answers—the Church responds to questions with worship—with prayer and with praise. (ZZ gave voice to questions, we responded by singing a hymn) But how can we praise when we don't understand? How can we praise when we can't quite believe? Today's Gospel suggests a way forward...

Today's Gospel: "Doubting Thomas": John 20:19-31

*When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Authorities, Jesus came and stood among them and said..."Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." **When Jesus had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.***

SLIDE 12: BREATH

When the Risen Christ breathes on God's disciples, He gives them the The Holy Spirit and with it the divine super power– to forgive!

AND When the Risen Christ breathes on God's disciples, He gives them the The Holy Spirit and with it the divine super power– to PRAISE!

...Jesus breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

...Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

Scripture tell us that—in the beginning....and in the life, and death, and Resurrection of Jesus...and even still in our world today...always and everywhere, **God in Christ 1) BREATHES Creation into being, and 2) BREATHES LIFE into Creation.**

Jesus BREATHES on us —Just as he breathed on Thomas and the 12 in that upper Room on the 8th day. Jesus breathes on us and in us and over us and through us, giving us God's breath, giving us God's Spirit, giving us the power at all times and in all places to join the whole of creation and the whole company of heaven and earth in praising God.

In Times of grief and confusion

Pain and fear

Doubt Danger and despair;

In our personal and in our collective life;

When we don't know what to do, or think, or feel, or believe,

We can always praise.

Because through the Risen Christ

God, The Creator & Sustainer of the Universe continues to

breathes on us, and in us, and through us.

SLIDE 13: Closing Exercise & Psalm

Acknowledge Doubt. Fear. Grief. Despair.

Picture it as a Big iron door, or a heavy stone.

Now picture, on the other side of that door...the Resurrected Life that you long for –for yourself, for our world. Life of freedom, faith, flourishing...the Resurrected Life that is God's promise and God's desire, as well....

Now don't be shy. Remember that little kid on Easter Day. As Jesus says: Unless you change and become like a child, you will never enter the Kingdom of God...Let Christ's Light shine and flash forth through you. Let Christ's breath flow through you.

Warm up your voices, and hands and feet.

Invite you to heed the Psalmist's call

And dare to act foolishly

Dare to celebrate loudly and lavishly

With song and dance, with body and voice

Dare to let your praise flash forth and shine

We'll make it a game...Right vs. Left

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(All together): Hallelujah!

Praise God in God's holy temple; **(Right) * Hallelujah!**

praise God in the firmament of God's power. **(Left) Hallelujah!**

Praise God for God's mighty acts; ***(Right) Hallelujah!**

praise God for God's excellent greatness. **(Left) Hallelujah!**

Praise God with the blast of the ram's-horn; ***(Right) Hallelujah!**

praise God with lyre and harp. **(Left) Hallelujah!**

Praise God with timbrel *and dance*; ***(Right) Hallelujah!**

praise God with strings and pipe. **(Left) Hallelujah!**

Praise God with resounding cymbals; **(Right) *Hallelujah!**

praise God with loud-clanging cymbals. **(Left) Hallelujah!**

Let everything that has breath *praise the LORD.

(All together):Hallelujah!