

April 28, 2019
Second Sunday of Easter
Resurrection Witness
Acts 5:27-32

Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries Sunday

When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him." Acts 5:27-32

Today we sing a song of joy and thanksgiving for a new day. The psalmist calls the people to rise up and rejoice as branches bursting with renewed life. After the night of persecution, confusion and death, there is new light and hope! The risen Jesus enters our fearful lives, offers us peace, and sends us to cooperate with God's abundant grace throughout the whole of creation.

Faithful witnesses all of them, Peter and the Apostles, risking death and public humiliation because they must preach what they preach. New church starts are kind of like that, though usually without the death part, because they have no building or traditions born of "we've always done it this way." They have only the way in which they proclaim their faith and their hope. Just like Peter in the Book of Acts, pastors planting new churches have only themselves and the genuine message of their personal testimony to convince and invite. Such is the ministry of The Lighthouse Church of Chicago.

The Lighthouse Church is 5-year-old church plant called by God to be, "passionate about Jesus and serious about Justice." Lighthouse is a predominately African American LGBT-inclusive church that welcomes all people. They follow the life, teachings, and ministry of Jesus Christ, believing that God has offered the greatest love story in all of human history: the story of a God who has come to us in human form, lived, died, rose, and is soon to come again. From faith, Lighthouse takes serious the call towards Justice. Lighthouse welcomes people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, races, ethnicities, and class—beloved not in spite of the gospel, but because of the gospel. And anywhere they experience –isms or –phobias at work in the world, they commit to work to uproot them, inspired by the example of Christ. Pastor Jamie Frazier says of the Lighthouse Church of Chicago: "It is wonderful to be so utterly supported by all levels of the United Church of Christ, including National! Words cannot express the pleasure and honor it is to pastor the incredible folks at Lighthouse."

Learn more about Lighthouse here: <http://www.lighthousechicago.org>.

