

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
APRIL 28, 2024

10:30 A.M.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Introduction

This Sunday's image of how the risen Christ shares his life with us is the image of the vine. Christ the vine and we the branches are alive in each other, in the mystery of mutual abiding that we read of in the gospel and the first letter of John. Baptism makes us a part of Christ's living and life-giving self and makes us alive with Christ's life. As the vine brings food to the branches, Christ feeds us at his table. We are sent out to bear fruit for the life of the world.

Fed by God, Nourished by Christ

Imagine a nursing baby at its mother's breast—what a blissful picture of love, joy, peace, and contentment! This image can help us understand who we are as God's beloved children and how tenderly God cares for us. God's grace is unconditional, just as a mother's milk flows to an infant without anything to do with deserving. In today's gospel reading, the vine-and-branches metaphor is another image of how intimately connected Jesus is with us and how crucial it is that we, the branches, hold on to him as our vine.

"Apart from me," says Jesus, "you can do nothing." Apart from its vine, a branch can do nothing—cannot live long, cannot produce grapes, cannot nourish people and animals. Apart from its mother or another devoted caregiver, a newborn can do nothing—cannot feed itself, cannot become or stay healthy, cannot grow and bear the fruit of life and love for others. Apart from God's love and care, which Christians know in Jesus, the whole web of humanity fails to thrive.

A nursing mother sets her face and does whatever is needed—two or three times a night at first, even through mastitis, weariness, and boredom—to feed and impart life to her little one. Jesus' face is set toward the cross as he shares farewell counsel with his disciples. He, too, is ready and determined to do whatever it takes—even dying on a cross—to sustain the vineyard-world with abundant life.

The imagery of vine and branches, juxtaposed with that of God breastfeeding her babies, comes alive when we celebrate the eucharist. At the table, Jesus feeds us with his own body and blood, pouring life and nourishment into us. We are called to abide in him forever—an invitation to grace-filled, permanent relationship. In Jesus the true vine, we his branches enjoy a continual flow of grace, mercy, and love. In turn, we are energized to bear the fruit of his love, joy, and peace for the world.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”

(Refrain)

Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

(Verse 1)

Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
master who acts as a slave to them.

(Refrain)

Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

(Verse 2)

Neighbors are wealthy and poor,
varied in color and race,
neighbors are nearby and far away.

(Refrain)

Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

(Verse 3)

These are the ones we will serve,
these are the ones we will love;
all these are neighbors to us and you.

(Refrain)

Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

(Verse 4)
Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet:
this is the way we will live with you.

(Refrain)
Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

OPENING LITANY (inspired by John 15:1-8)

God is the True Vine,

And we are the branches.

Connected to God.

Connected to bear fruit!

Connected to God.

Or we wither away.

Connected to God.

Or useless!

We come to worship God, who is the True Vine.

God, teach us how to remain connected so that we might bear good fruit!

GATHERING SONGS

The Same Love

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)
You choose the humble and raise them high;
You choose the weak and make them strong;
You heal our brokenness inside and give us life.

(Refrain - All)
**The same love that set the captives free,
The same love that opened eyes to see
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,
The same God that was crucified
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.**

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)
You take the faithless one aside
And speak the words, "You are mine";
You call the cynic and the proud, "Come to me now."

(Refrain - All)

**The same love that set the captives free,
The same love that opened eyes to see
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,
The same God that was crucified
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.
Oh...**

(Music Ministers/All)

**You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.
You're calling, you're calling, you're calling us to the cross.**

**The same love that set the captives free,
The same love that opened eyes to see
Is calling us by name; you are calling us all by name.**

**The same God that spread the heavens wide,
The same God that was crucified
Is calling us all by name; you are calling us all by name.
Oh...**



My Savior Lives

(Verse 1 - All)

**Our God will reign forever; and all the world will know his name;
Everyone together sing the song of the redeemed.**

(Refrain - All)

**I know that my Redeemer lives, and now I stand on what he did;
My Savior, my Savior lives;
Every day a brand new chance to say, "Jesus, you are my only way."
My Savior, my Savior lives.**

(Verse 2 - All)

**The King has come from heaven, and darkness trembles at his name;
Victory forever is the song of the redeemed.**

(Refrain - All)

**I know that my Redeemer lives, and now I stand on what he did;
My Savior, my Savior lives;
Every day a brand new chance to say, "Jesus, you are my only way."
My Savior, my Savior lives.**

(Music Ministers / All)

**My Savior lives, my Savior lives, my Savior lives.
My Savior lives, my Savior lives, my Savior lives.
My Savior lives, my Savior lives, my Savior lives.
My Savior lives, my Savior lives, my Savior lives.**

(Refrain - All)

**I know that my Redeemer lives, and now I stand on what he did;
My Savior, my Savior lives;
Every day a brand new chance to say, "Jesus, you are my only way."
My Savior, my Savior lives.**



Living Waters

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

Are you thirsty? Are you empty?
Come, and drink these living waters.
Tired and broken? Peace unspoken,
Rest beside these living waters.

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

Christ is calling, find refreshing
At the cross of living waters.
Lay your life down: all the old gone;
Rise up in these living waters.

(Refrain - Music Ministers)

There's a river that flows
With mercy and love,
Bringing joy to the city of our God.
There our hope is secure;
Do not fear anymore;
Praise the Lord of living waters.

(Verse 3 - All)

**Spirit moving, mercy washing,
Healing in these living waters.
Lead your children to the shoreline;
Life is in these living waters.**

(Refrain - All)

**There's a river that flows
With mercy and love,
Bringing joy to the city of our God.
There our hope is secure;
Do not fear anymore;
Praise the Lord of living waters.**

(Bridge - Music Ministers)

Ooh...

(Verse 4 - All)

**Are you thirsty? Are you empty?
Come, and drink these living waters.
Love, forgiveness: vast and boundless;
Christ - he is our living waters.**

(Final Refrain - All / Music Ministers)

**There's a river that flows
With mercy and love,
Bringing joy to the city of our God.
There our hope is secure;
Do not fear anymore;
Praise the Lord of living waters.**

**There our hope is secure;
Do not fear anymore;
Praise the Lord of living waters.**

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy. **Amen.**

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and water became the essence of life. Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers. The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day. Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom's land. In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people. We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Look, here is water!

Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

WORD

*Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,
Jesus interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.*

FIRST READING

Acts 8:26-40

Led by the Spirit, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official who is returning to his African home after having been to Jerusalem to worship. Philip uses their encounter to proclaim the gospel to him. Upon coming to faith in Jesus, he is baptized by Philip.

A reading from the book of Acts.

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalms 22:25-31

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD. (Ps. 22:27)

From you comes my praise in the great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied,

Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;

all the families of nations shall bow before God.

**For dominion belongs to the LORD,
who rules over the nations.**

Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.

**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

SECOND READING

1 John 4:7-21

We love God and others because God first loved us. We cannot say we love God, whom we have not seen, while hating fellow Christians, whom we regularly see. Love toward God is to be matched by love toward others because the essence of God is love.

A reading from the first book of John.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**** GOSPEL**

John 15:1-8

On the night of his arrest, Jesus taught his disciples about the relationship they would have with him. Those who abide in his word and love bear fruit, for apart from him, they can do nothing.

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pr. Jamie Vannoy

**** APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

GATHERING OF GIFTS

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another .

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table.

HOLY COMMUNION

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**** BLESSING**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope bless you now and always. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Only a God Like You

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)
For the praises of man
I will never ever stand;
For the kingdoms of this world
I'll never give my heart away
Or shout my praise.
My allegiance and devotion,
My heart's desire and all emotion
Go to serve the Man
Who died upon that tree.

(Refrain - Music Ministers)
Only a God like you
Could be worthy of my praise
And all my hope and faith;
To only a King of all kings
Do I bow my knee and sing,
Give my ev'rything.
Only a God like you
Could be worthy of my praise
And all my hope and faith;
To only a King of all kings

Do I bow my knee and sing,
Give my ev'rything.
To only my Maker, my Father, my Savior,
Redeemer, Restorer, Rebuilder, Rewarder -
To only a God like you
Do I give my praise.

(Verse 2 - All)

**For the praises of man
I will never ever stand;
For the kingdoms of this world
I'll never give my heart away
Or shout my praise.
My allegiance and devotion,
My heart's desire and all emotion
Go to serve the Man
Who died upon that tree.**

(Refrain - All)

**Only a God like you
Could be worthy of my praise
And all my hope and faith;
To only a King of all kings
Do I bow my knee and sing,
Give my ev'rything.**

**Only a God like you
Could be worthy of my praise
And all my hope and faith;
To only a King of all kings
Do I bow my knee and sing,
Give my ev'rything.**

**To only my Maker, my Father, my Savior,
Redeemer, Restorer, Rebuilder, Rewarder -
To only a God like you
Do I give my praise.**

(Verse 3 - Music Ministers)

**Only the God who left his throne above,
He came to live with us,
Came to be one of us;
To only the One**

Who stopped to heal that blind man,
Took the time to save that one lost lamb;
To only the King who wore that crown of thorns
So I could wear the crown of life;
And to only the One who conquered sin and death
So we could be set free,
So we could stand here and sing.

(Bridge - Music Ministers / **All**)

Only a God like you,
Only a God like you,
Only a God like you.

Only a God like you,
Only a God like you,
Only a God like you.

**Only a God like you,
Only a God like you,
Only a God like you.**

**Only a God like you,
Only a God like you,
Only a God like you.**

(Ending - All)

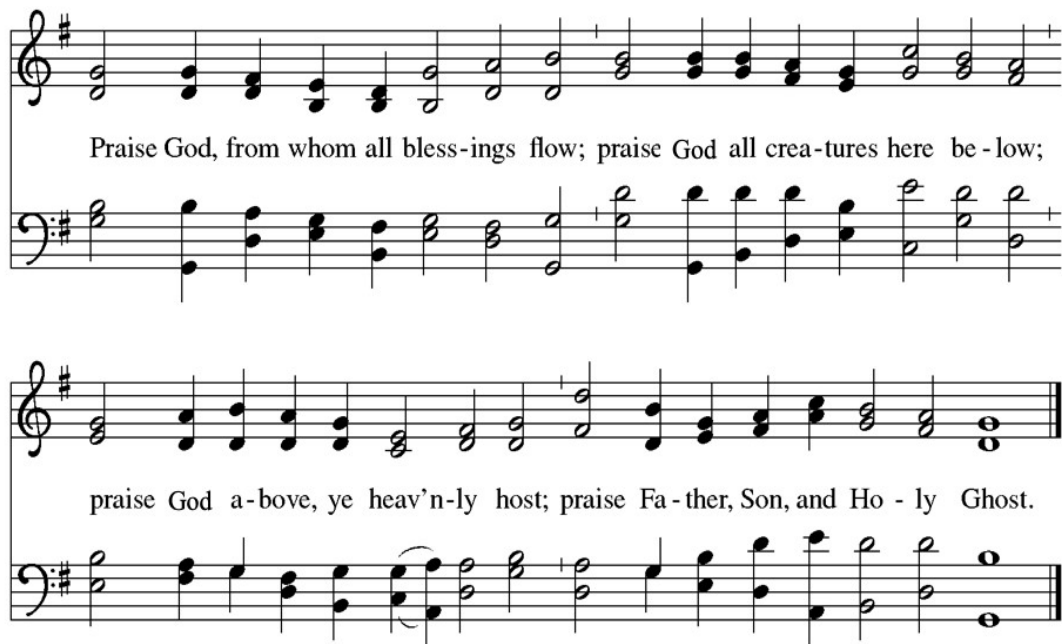
**To only my Maker, my Father, my Savior,
Redeemer, Restorer, Rebuilder, Rewarder -
To only a God like you
Do I give my praise.**

**** DISMISSAL**

Hallelujah! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad

Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.

Hallelujah, thanks be to God



Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below;

praise God above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = Worship Plus Two

**Make a commitment to not only worship each week
but also try to find a way to serve in the congregation
and seek out a way to serve our community.**

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

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