



Sunday, May 2, 2021

Fifth Sunday of Easter

St. Mark Lutheran Church

1515 S. Harris Rd.

Ypsilanti, MI 48198

stmarkypsi.com

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 described 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.

PRELUDE: Beloved

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WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into a bowl as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.
We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.
Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.
Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God,
now and forever.
Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you

OPENING SONG: Gather Us In

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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.**

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.

²⁶An 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.) ²⁷So 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 ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now 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.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As 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?" ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When 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. ⁴⁰But 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: Psalm 22:25-31

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

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD,
who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, 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.
³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**
³¹They 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.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In 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. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So 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. ¹⁷Love 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. ¹⁸There 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. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those 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. ²¹The 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.

[Jesus said:] ¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide 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. ⁵I 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. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Rebecca Truland

APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith using the words of the 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 Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
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 PEOPLE

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depends on the earth for life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence, that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You have loved us so that we can love others. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, ill, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all.

(A time of silence as we lift up those on our prayer list.)

† We lift up especially Beth Hall, Sissy Howard, Louise Conklin, Christina Wallman, Linda Campbell, Pastor Lauren Kirsh-Carr, Mick Boone, Nickole Calmeyn, Maurice Stovall, Chloe Bray and her parents, Tina Karns, Dawn Stovall, Justin Stovall, Jim Wallman, Jacob Wallman, Alex Calmeyn, Zack Calmeyn, Misty Calmeyn, Kelly Gruetzner, Linda Arbaugh, Jim Ohl, and Raye Kline.

- † We continue to pray for Richard, Terry, Charlene, Melissa, Sandy, Pam, Kevin, Chuck, Ted, Dr. Jim, Denny, Sharon, Mary, Ben, and Dusty.
- † God of great compassion and love, grant comfort and peace to those grieving the loss of their loved ones:
 - † Dan Staton, father of Byron Staton. Byron is Misty Calmeyn's brother. Be with the family and friends grieving for Dan, especially his son Byron.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Share the peace. You are invited to call or text someone and simply say "peace!"

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father in Heaven

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INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERING SONG: I Was Hungry

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OFFERING PRAYER

God of love,
you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.
Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.
Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;
for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Thank you for continuing to give to the work God is doing through St. Mark Lutheran Church. You can give by mailing your gift directly to the church. You can also give your gift by going online to www.stmarkypsi.com. Your gifts continue to sustain and nourish our ministries here at St. Mark, so thank you.

BLESSING

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: You Are the Seed

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DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

ENCIRCLED WITH PRAYER

- † Recognizing the power of prayer, please join us in praying at home throughout this week for those whose needs are known to us and those whose cares we do not know.
- † We lift up especially Beth Hall, Sissy Howard, Louise Conklin, Christina Wallman, Linda Campbell, Pastor Lauren Kirsh-Carr, Mick Boone, Nickole Calmeyn, Maurice Stovall, Chloe Bray and her parents, Tina Karns, Dawn Stovall, Justin Stovall, Jim Wallman, Jacob Wallman, Alex Calmeyn, Zack Calmeyn, Misty Calmeyn, Kelly Gruetzner, Linda Arbaugh, Jim Ohl, and Raye Kline.
- † We continue to pray for Richard, Terry, Charlene, Melissa, Sandy, Pam, Kevin, Chuck, Ted, Dr. Jim, Denny, Sharon, Mary, Ben, and Dusty.
- † God of great compassion and love, grant comfort and peace to those grieving the loss of their loved ones:
 - † Dan Staton, father of Byron Staton. Byron is Misty Calmeyn's brother. Be with the family and friends grieving for Dan, especially his son Byron.

Please contact us at office@stmarkypsi.com if you need prayer for yourself or those dear to you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour: We invite everyone – members and guests – to join us for a time of fellowship immediately after this service ends. Link to the Zoom meeting is on our website's homepage.