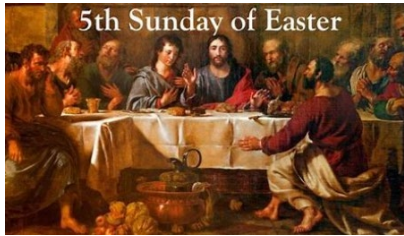


5th SUNDAY OF EASTER
April 28th, 2024 – 10 AM

WELCOME



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. 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.

- ✠ Preacher – Chaplain Liz Lahti-Rosensaft
- ✠ Officiant – Pr. Rudy Schneider

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

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

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake, God forgives you all your sins. Live now as the forgiven child of God and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you into all righteousness. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: ELW#533 – Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

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.**

GOD'S HOLY WORD

FIRST READING: Acts 8:26-40

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.

The Word of the Lord...**Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 22:25-31

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!"



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.
Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.

Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

HOLY GOSPEL

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of John 15: 1 - 8; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

[Jesus said:] ¹I 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."

The Gospel of the Lord...**Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

SERMON – Chaplain Liz Lahti-Rosensaft

"Abide with Me – The Best is yet to be."

HYMN: ELW#359 -Where Charity and Love Prevail

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news. *A brief silence.*

We pray for the church around the world, for all ministers, and for the mission of the gospel. Cleanse our hearts with your word and help us to abide in you always.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For the well-being of the earth and of all created things: for rivers and lakes, streams and estuaries, melting glaciers and all waters. Renew the face of the earth and shower us with your goodness. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For the nations and all those in authority: for local, state, and national leaders, for elected representatives at every level, and for international organizations, that justice and peace may reign. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For all those in need: for any experiencing homelessness or unemployment, for those fleeing from oppression or seeking asylum, and for all who are ill or suffering. We especially remember those from our families and community in greatest need of our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name names silently or out loud.)* God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For this congregation: for the caring ministries of this congregation, for all who visit and care for one another, and for all who seek to share your love with the world.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With thanksgiving for the saints who rest from their labors. Help us, like them, to bear much fruit and to become your disciples, and at the last, bring us to that heavenly banquet where all will feast together at your table. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**

OFFERING & 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.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!

COMMUNION HYMN 1: Lord You Are More Precious Than Silver

Lord, you are more precious than silver,
Lord, you are more costly than gold,
Lord, you are more beautiful than diamonds,
And nothing I desire compares with you,
And nothing I desire compares with you.

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ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Barnegat Light NJ

COMMUNION HYMN 2: There is a Redeemer

1. There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.

Chorus

2. Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, O for sinners slain.

Chorus

3. When I stand in glory, I will see His face,
And there I'll serve my King forever in that holy place.

Chorus

Chorus

Thank you oh my Father,
for giving us your Son,
And leaving your Spirit 'til,
The work on earth is done.

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Closing Prayer - 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.**

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.**

CLOSING HYMN: ELW#551 – The Spirit Sends us Forth to Serve

Dismissal: Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Notes:
