

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 28, 2024

Easter People Proclaim

As We Gather

When Jesus uses the image of the vine and speaks of vineyards, He is choosing something very familiar to His hearers. Viticulture is well known around the world. More than eighteen million acres

worldwide is used for growing grapes—from Panama to Tajikistan to Zimbabwe! Today, the cultivation of vineyards is still an important agricultural component in both Israel and the Jordan, lands where Jesus walked and taught. Life in the vineyard is vital! As branches grafted to the Vine that is Christ, we are vitalized by His power. As we worship, God's life-supporting power infuses us! It is time to continue growing!

PREPARATION

913 O Holy Spirit, Enter In

1 O Holy Spirit, enter in,
And in our hearts Your work
begin,
Your dwelling place now
make us.
Sun of the soul, O Light divine,
Around and in us brightly
shine,
To joy and gladness wake
us
That we may be
Truly living,

To You giving
Prayer unceasing
And in love be still increasing.

2 Give to Your Word
impressive pow'r,
That in our hearts from this
good hour
As fire it may be glowing,
That in true Christian unity
We faithful witnesses may be,
Your glory ever showing.
Hear us, cheer us
By Your teaching;
Let our preaching

And our labor
Praise You, Lord, and serve
our neighbor.

3 O mighty Rock, O Source of
life,
Let Your dear Word, in doubt
and strife,
In us be strongly burning
That we be faithful unto death
And live in love and holy faith,
From You true wisdom
learning.
Your grace and peace
On us shower;

By Your power
Christ confessing,
Let us see our Savior's
blessing.

Text: Michael Schirmer, 1606–73, adapt.; (sts. 1, 3): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.; (st. 2): tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.
Text: Public domain

Invocation

P In the name of the Father
and of the T Son and of the
Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Opening Sentences Psalm
66:1–4, 8–9; 40:5

**P Shout for joy to God, all the
earth;**

**C sing the glory of His
name; give to Him glorious
praise!**

**P Say to God, “How awesome
are Your deeds!**

**C All the earth worships
You and sings praises to
You; they sing praises to
Your name.”**

P Bless our God, O peoples;
let the sound of His praise be
heard,

C who has kept our soul
among the living and has not
let our feet slip.

P You have multiplied, O Lord
my God, Your wondrous deeds
and Your thoughts toward us;
none can compare with You!

C I will proclaim and tell of
them, yet they are more than
can be told.

P We prepare for our time of confession as we sing the confession hymn, “O Jesus, Lamb of God, Thou Art.” As penitent people, we ask God for His grace and mercy.

Confession and Absolution

P Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.

C O almighty God, most merciful Father, I, a repentant sinner, confess to You all my

sins and iniquities with which I have offended You.

By nature, I am a sinful creature. In thought, word, and deed I have continually transgressed Your law. For this I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a penitent and contrite being. Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of Your Holy Spirit that I may amend

**my sinful life and bear fruit in
keeping with true
repentance.**

**P God be gracious to you and
strengthen your faith.**

C Amen.

**P As you believe, so let it be.
As a called and ordained
servant Christ and by His
authority, I therefore forgive
you all your sins in the name of
the Father and of the T Son
and of the Holy Spirit.**

C Amen.

801 How Great Thou Art

1 O Lord my God, when I in
awesome wonder
Consider all the works Thy
hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the
mighty thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the
universe displayed; Refrain

ref Then sings my soul, my
Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How

great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior
God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

2 When through the woods
and forest glades I wander,
I hear the birds sing sweetly
in the trees;
When I look down from lofty
mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel
the gentle breeze; Refrain

ref Then sings my soul, my
Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior
God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

3 But when I think that God,
His Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die, I scarce
can take it in—
That on the cross my burden
gladly bearing

He bled and died to take
away my sin; Refrain

ref Then sings my soul, my
Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior
God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

4 When Christ shall come with
shout of acclamation
And take me home, what

joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble
adoration

And there proclaim: “My
God, how great Thou art!”

Refrain

ref Then sings my soul, my
Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior
God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How
great Thou art!

WORD

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

Sharing of God's Peace

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

O God, You make the minds of
Your faithful to be of one will.

Grant that we may love what
You have commanded and
desire what You promise, that
among the many changes of
this world our hearts may be
fixed where true joys are found;
through Jesus Christ, Your
Son, our Lord, who lives and
reigns with You and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and
forever.

C Amen.

First Reading Acts 8:26–40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. ²⁷And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over

and join this chariot.”³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.³² 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 before its
shearer is silent,
so he opens not his

mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶And as they were going along the road

they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the

gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm Psalm 150

P Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens!

C Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

P Praise Him with trumpet
sound; praise Him with lute and
harp!

**C Praise Him with
tambourine and dance;
praise Him with strings and
pipe!**

P Praise Him with sounding
cymbals; praise Him with loud
clashing cymbals!

**C Let everything that has
breath praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!**

1 John 4:1–11

¹ Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

⁴ You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from

God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse Romans 6:9; John
14:23

P Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

C Alleluia. If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

Alleluia.

Holy Gospel John 15:1–8

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

³Already you are clean

because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. 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. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and

burned. ⁷If you abide in me,
and my words abide in you,
ask whatever you wish, and it
will be done for you. ⁸By this
my Father is glorified, that you
bear much fruit and so prove to
be my disciples.”

P This is the Gospel of the
Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Children's Message

830 Spread the Reign of God the Lord

1 Spread the reign of God the
Lord,
Spoken, written, mighty Word;
Ev'rywhere His creatures call
To His heav'nly banquet hall.

2 Tell how God the Father's
will
Made the world, upholds it still,
How His own dear Son He
gave
Us from sin and death to save.

3 Tell of our Redeemer's
grace,
Who, to save our human race
And to pay rebellion's price,
Gave Himself as sacrifice.

4 Tell of God the Spirit giv'n
Now to guide us on to heav'n,
Strong and holy, just and true,
Working both to will and do.

5 Enter, mighty Word, the field;
Ripe the promise of its yield.
But the reapers, oh, how few
For the work there is to do!

6 Lord of harvest, great and
kind,
Rouse to action heart and
mind;
Let the gath'ring nations all
See Your light and heed Your
call.

Text: Jonathan Friedrich Bahnmaier, 1774–1841; tr. composite
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Sermon: Images of God's Love

Apostles' Creed

**C I believe in God, the
Father Almighty,**

**maker of heaven and
earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.**

**The third day He rose
again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand
of God the Father Almighty.**

**From thence He will come
to judge the living and the
dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of
saints,
the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the
body,
and the life T everlasting.
Amen.**

Offering

Offertory: 786 Lord of All Good

1 Lord of all good, our gifts we
bring You now;
Use them Your holy purpose
to fulfill.

Tokens of love and pledges
they shall be

That our whole life is offered
to Your will.

2 We give our minds to
understand Your ways;
Hands, eyes, and voice to
serve Your great design;
Hearts with the flame of Your
own love ablaze—
Thus for Your glory all our
pow'rs combine.



3 Father, whose bounty
all creation shows;
Christ, by whose willing

sacrifice we live;
Spirit, from whom all life in
fullness flows:
To You with grateful hearts
ourselves we give.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–84, alt.
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Prayer of the Church

P Friends in Christ, I urge you
all to lift up your hearts to God
and pray with me as Christ our
Lord has taught us and freely
promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven,
look with mercy on us, Your
needy children on earth, and
grant us grace that Your holy
name be hallowed by us and
all the world through the pure
and true teaching of Your Word
and the fervent love shown
forth in our lives. Graciously
turn from us all false doctrine
and evil living whereby Your
precious name is blasphemed
and profaned. Lord, in Your
mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified

daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into

Your merciful hands we commend [name(s)] and all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us.
Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the

devil with all his wiles. Lord, in
Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P And lastly, O heavenly
Father, deliver us from all evil
of both body and soul, now and
forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We trust, O Lord, in Your
great mercy to hear and
answer us; through Jesus
Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**C 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.**

Benediction

**P The Lord bless you and keep
you.**

The Lord make His face shine
on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with
favor and T give you peace.

C Amen.

691 Fruitful Trees, the Spirit's Sowing

1 Fruitful trees, the Spirit's
sowing,

May we ripen and increase,
Fruit to life eternal growing,
Rich in love and joy and
peace.

2 Laden branches freely
bearing
Gifts the Giver loves to
bless;
Here is fruit that grows by
sharing,
Patience, kindness,
gentleness.

3 Rooted deep in Christ our
Master,
Christ our pattern and our
goal,
Teach us, as the years fly

faster,
Goodness, faith, and
self-control.

4 Fruitful trees, the Spirit's
tending,
May we grow till harvests
cease;
Till we taste, in life unending,
Heaven's love and joy and
peace.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926
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Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 2.

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