

 **St. Paul Lutheran Church**

 **Pontiac, IL**

 **May 2, 2021**

 **Fifth Sunday of Easter**

*Altar flowers this morning were donated by Doug & Peggie Schneeman in honor of their 50th Wedding Anniversary.*

**We gather to worship, reach out, and serve the Lord.**

**Welcome**

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church. Whether you have worshipped with us many times, or this is your first time, there is a place for you here. Your presence among us is a gift.

God’s Peace be with you.

**Introduction to the day**

**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 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**

**GATHERING**

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**A: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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

 *Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.*

 We thank you, risen Christ,

 **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,

**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.

 **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. Let the church say Amen.

**A: Amen.**

**Greeting**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the

 Holy Spirit be with you all**.**

**A: And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

L: 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.

**A: Amen**.

**Children’s Message (following the message children are invited to go to Children’s Chapel)**

 **WORD**

**First Reading –** **Acts 8: 26-40**

L: A reading from Acts.

L: 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.

L:Word of God, word of life.

A**: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm Reading- Psalm 22: 25-31**

L: A reading from Psalm.

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!”

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy word.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading – 1 John 4: 7-21**

L: A reading from 1 John.

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.

L: Word of God, word of life.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

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*Please rise as you are able for the reading of the Holy Gospel.*

**Gospel Acclamation**

(spoken responsively)

L: Alleluia. I am the vine, you are the branches.

**A: those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit. Alleluia.**

**Gospel–John 15: 1-8**

L: The Holy Gospel according to John.

**A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[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.”

L: The gospel of the Lord.

**A: Praise to you, O, Christ.**

**Sermon Pastor Mathew Berger**

**Hymn of the Day Alleluia! Jesus is Risen ELW 377**

**Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth,

of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary

and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Prayers of Intercession**

Throughout our prayers, each petition ends “Hear our prayer, O God.” The congregation is invited to respond, **“Make us one in you.”**

**Sharing the Peace**

L: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**A: And also with you.**

*You are invited to share a sign of God’s peace with your neighbors by saying or typing, “Peace be with you.”*

**MEAL**

**Offering**

*Offerings can be placed in the offering box at the back of the sanctuary, made by mail or online. You can send a check to St. Paul Lutheran Church 210 Deerfield Rd Pontiac, IL 61764 or give online at* [*stpaulpontiac.org*](http://www.stpaulpontiac.org/)

**Offertory Music God of the Waters Erik Thone**

**Offering Prayer**

L: 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.

**A: Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

L: The Lord be with you.

**A: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**A: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Preface**

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,

the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;

who in dying has destroyed death,

and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,

with earth and sea and all their creatures,

and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn saying

**A: Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**Lord God of power and might,**

 **heaven and earth are full of your glory**

 **Hosanna in the highest,**

 **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

 **Hosanna in the highest.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

L: Holy, living, and loving God,

we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood,

for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,

and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus

who, living among us,

healed the sick,

fed the hungry,

and with a love stronger than death,

gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, 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.

Remembering, therefore,

his life-giving death and glorious resurrection,

we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup:

carry us in your arms from death to life,

that we may live as your people,

clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church,

both now and forever, and all God’s people said...

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

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

**A: 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**

L: The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied.

**Communion Hymn Come to the Waters Matt Maher**

**Prayer After Communion**

*a blessing is given, a prayer follows*

L: Wellspring of joy,

 Through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.

 Satisfy the hunger still around us,

 And send us as joyful witnesses,

 That your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,

 Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A: Amen.**

**Announcements**

**SENDING**

**Blessing**

L: 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 the Holy Spirit,

Bless you now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

**Sending Hymn Shout to the Lord ELW 821**

 My Jesus, my Savior,

 Lord, there is none like you.

 All of my days I want to praise

 the wonders of your mighty love.

 My comfort, my shelter,

 tower of refuge and strength;

 let ev'ry breath, all that I am

 never cease to worship you.

 Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing

 power and majesty, praise to the King.

 Mountains bow down and the seas will roar

 at the sound of your name.

 I sing for joy at the work of your hands;

 forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.

 Nothing compares to the promise I have in you.

**Dismissal**

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**A: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

L: Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

**A: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

**Postlude**

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Thank you to all those who contributed to today’s service: Worship Slides: Julie Mehlberg, Lector: Lucy Kehinde, Ushers: Mary & Denny Leach, Musician: Julie Mehlberg, Livestream: Louis Kehinde, Sound: John Mehlberg