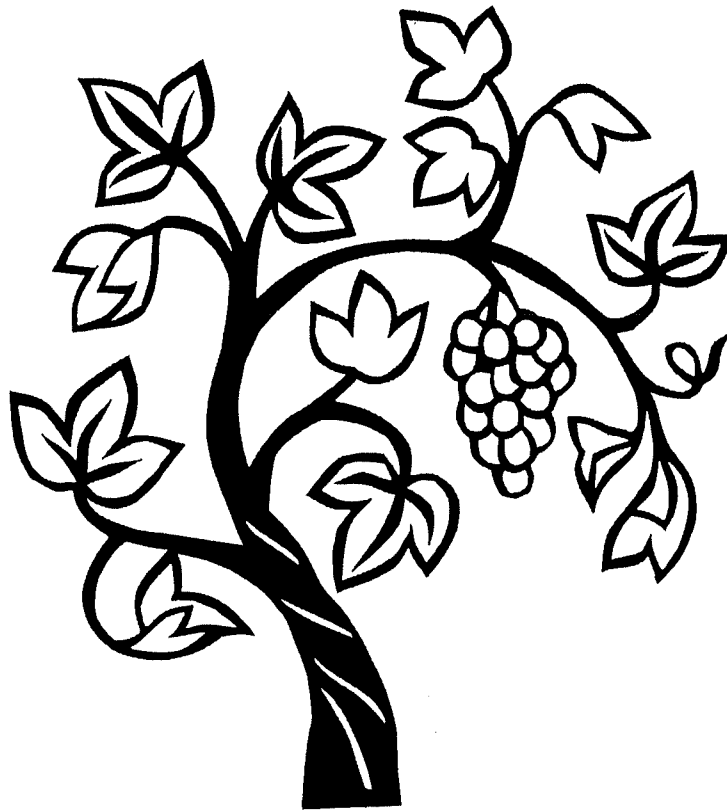


# 5th Sunday of Easter

April 28th, 2024 ~ 8:30am



+ Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church +

2451 Saucon Valley Rd. Center Valley, PA 18034

Office: 610-865-4144

The Rev. Lisa K. Borrell, Pastor ~ 610-762-2139

Quinette Brucker, Dir. of Music/Organist

# WELCOME

*(\*) Please stand as you are comfortable and able*

Prelude Music

Welcome & Announcements

\*Opening Litany (by Bruce Prewer)

P: We thank You, gracious God, for Jesus Christ the true vine, with His roots eternally grounded in You. We rejoice that by grace we have been grafted into Him, to be branches on a vine which bears the loveliest of all the fruits of earth. Yet we confess that all is not well with the way we live.

**C: Please forgive us for the occasions when we have been the ones to introduce disease into the vine, preferring its contamination to the vigor of health or to journey through the seasons without bearing any good fruit.**

P: Have mercy on us, O Lord, and do not sever us completely from the true vine.

**C: Rather heal our diseases, discipline and train our wandering tendrils, prune our unfruitful branches and cut away our diseased ones. May we remain in Christ and He in us, through all the changing seasons of life.**

P: Let us delight in bearing the fruits of love which are our true purpose and joy. For your name's sake. **Amen.**

\*Opening Hymn #389

“Christ Is Alive”

\*The Greeting and Prayer of the Day

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

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. ~ 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 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.*

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

<sup>32</sup>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. <sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." <sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>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?" <sup>38</sup>He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>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. <sup>40</sup>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.

L: Word of God, word of life.      C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 22 (selective verses read responsively, lector then congregation)

<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the great assembly;

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

<sup>26</sup>**The poor shall eat and be satisfied, let those who seek  
the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

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

<sup>28</sup>**For dominion belongs to the LORD, who rules over the nations.**

<sup>29</sup>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.

<sup>30</sup>**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,  
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

<sup>31</sup>They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

The 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.*

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>The 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.      C: **Thanks be to God.**

**\*The Gospel Acclamation**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

**\*The Holy 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.*

P: The Holy Gospel according to the 15th chapter of St. John.

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

Jesus said: <sup>1</sup>"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup>He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branch-

es 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.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.      C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## The Sermon

\*Hymn #379                      “Now the Green Blade Rises”

\*The Apostles’ Creed (professed together)

**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.**

\*Prayer of the Church

After each prayer petition, please respond:

P: God of grace ...      C: **Receive our prayer.**

Anthem                      “Jesus, Jesus, Fill Us with Your Love”

The Blessing of the Communion Elements

The Lord’s Prayer (traditional ~ prayed by all)



## + Communal Reception of the Sacrament +

This morning, the sacrament will be received by method of intinction; that is, the Pastor will dip the wafer in the juice and will hand it to each communicant so that they may receive it between thumb and forefinger and place it in their own mouth. Children and youth not yet instructed in the meaning of the sacrament are welcome to receive a blessing and a cracker. †

## \*Post-Communion Blessing, Prayer, and Benediction

P: Life-giving God, You send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

P: The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope + bless you now and always.

\*Hymn #881

“Let All Things Now Living”

The Dismissal

Go in peace and serve the Lord in love.

**Thanks be to God!**

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*thank  
you*

... to Alex Stauffer for serving as our lector

... Diane Ernst for serving as our usher & counter

... to Drew Wagner for serving as our live stream tech



The altar flowers have been sponsored by  
Noemi Hernandez in memory of loved ones



To be remembered in prayer ... Leona Callahan, Sharon Edwards, Hope Geary, Harvey and Janet Heckman, Rod and Susan Heckman, Helen Kerositz, Kathleen Tuomela May, Zachary, and the people of Israel and Ukraine.



It is Friedens' turn to volunteer at Betty Lou's during the month of May. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex. We will be collecting laundry detergent from now until then with a goal of 100 bottles.

The pantry is also seeking volunteers for the food drive that will take place on Saturday, May 11th. There is a need for drivers and sorters of the food that comes in. The drive starts at 8am and will probably wrap up around 2pm. If anyone is interested in volunteering for even a portion of that time, please speak to Kristin Nepomuceno. Thanks!