

May 2, 2021 – Easter 5

Prelude

Introduction to the Day

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.

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 the font as we give 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.**

GATHERING HYMN - ELW #449 – “We Know That Christ Is Raised”

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.

KYRIE - Page 147

CANTICLE OF PRAISE, THIS IS THE FEAST – Page 149

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 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!"

SECOND READING: 1 John 4:7-21

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 ACCLAMATION – Page 151

GOSPEL: John 15:1-8

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. 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, O Christ.

SERMON - Pastor Leena Jensen

We Are To Bear Fruit

Grace, mercy and peace to you from the Christ our Lord and Redeemer. It is spring and the start of our growing season. I have ancestry that were farmers for a few centuries back and my mother has the greenest thumb of anyone I know. She has the most beautiful blooming houseplants. She is 87 now and no longer keeps a garden. But she does a great job with trimming her honeysuckle hedge, her rounded evergreen tree in the front that adorns her Christmas lights each year. She is a marvel. I am what you might call a hack at growing things. Currently I have this humongous Christmas cactus. Up until this past Christmas, it produced so many flowers and I was so proud I would post a picture on Facebook and bask in the glory of compliments for this magnificent cactus that came to full bloom

just before Christmas. Well, last summer, I messed up, I either didn't fertilize it properly through the summer months or I did not split and transplant into multiple pots. Well since it did not produce its beautiful mass of flowers I will be splitting it into multiple pots this spring and see what happens when I bring it in after summer. If it bears flowers for Christmas, I will again post it on Facebook and brag about its beauty! I am anxious to see what happens. Anyone interested in a good-sized potted Christmas cactus? I will have a couple of extra to give away!

Today Jesus talks to his disciples of about sticking with him. Like branches of a vine. Jesus being the vine from where the branches grow from. The disciples of course are referred as the branches bearing fruit. God being the gardener providing nourishment and careful pruning so that the branches will produce good and abundant fruit. He takes pride in his crop. But this means that he also prunes the vines and removes the dead wood. We as Christians have understood humankind to have a special place in creation. We are not everlasting, spiritual beings like angels or do we live a physical existence like birds, mammals or fish. We are not Gods, as we might like to think from time to time, but we embody the Holy Spirit, the sap that flows through the vine, we take on godlike characteristics. In Genesis 1 :27 "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" — man and woman equally in the image of God as we were made.

Jesus describes us as the branches connected to the root of life by the vine. This is an image of being connected to God, with God's life, power and blessings flowing through us. The emphasis is on the internal rather than the external.

We are encouraged by Jesus to remain with him, acknowledging that we can be separated from Jesus, just like a branch of the vine might be separated if it does not receive nourishment to bear good fruit.

The term remain, refers to our relationship with Jesus, staying connected. To nurture our relationship with Jesus is seen as our life journey where we walk with Jesus through life, as opposed to striving to get to him only at the end of life in heaven. We nurture our relationship with Jesus when we accept God's will for us rather than our own. Also practising spiritual disciplines enable us to nurture our relationship with Jesus and open ourselves to this life that flows through us.

So, as I prune the branches of my cacti and provide it nourishment, I can anticipate abundant flowers again. So, it is with us and our growth and bearing fruit of the Spirit, where we take on the characteristics of God. The

Fruit of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, generosity, faithfulness, kindness, and self control. (Galatians 5:22-23)² These characteristics of the spirit both glorify God and bear witness to God's power to those around us. Another fruit is that of people who see God's love and power in our words and deeds and respond by placing their faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Branches are not intended to be brittle dry or dead. But expected to bear fruit.

We grow in our faith when nurtured through the vine, Jesus Christ. Our faith journey is not about trying harder, but being connected to Jesus the vine, God's spirit runs through us. This results in transformation and fruitfulness within us and which in turn transforms the world in which we live. AMEN

HYMN OF THE DAY – ELW #377 – “Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!”

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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.

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, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all; especially, Florence, Jason, Richard, Heather, Sheila, Vince, Robert, Dorian.

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.

Special Music as Table is Prepared

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING – Page 152

LORD’S PRAYER

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

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

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

COMMUNION SONG - “Lamb of God” Page 154

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN – ELW #389 – “Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing”

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Postlude

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Question for Reflection

What is your deepest desire?

Jesus says that “whatever you wish . . . it will be done for you” (John 15:7).

Spend time in the next days asking yourself at evermore profound levels

what you most devoutly wish for in this life and the next. Then ask for it.

(Feasting on the Word Worship Companion)

News and Announcements:

Please Prayfor Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special

Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Richard Hubert, Heather Miller, Sheila Purdy, Vince Rabishaw, Robert Schoof, Dorian Verch.

POTS FOR REPOTTING NEEDED

If you are cleaning up this spring and have any pots especially the 1 gallon size that you no longer want Ellen would love to have them. We are getting ready for the Horticultural Plant Sale and will need lots. You can drop them off at the church or my house, 171 Sawmill Rd, Pembroke, ON K8A 6W4, or I will pick up at your house. You can call at 613 732 7649. The sale is scheduled for Sunday, May 23rd at the Pembroke Market.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings a week later.

COVID-19 VACCINE REGISTRATION AND BOOKING

In order to assist our seniors, Chair Susan Dupuis asked Ellen Vandersleen and Jan Scheidt for assistance in registering and booking our senior members for the Covid-19 vaccine. We have worked our way down the list (arranged by age) and continue to assist those members who might have difficulty in registering and booking an appointment. At the same time, we are also updating our church records, asking for cell phone numbers and email addresses. It is the goal of Church Council to have an updated list of membership for when Pastor Scott and his wife, Sue arrive at the end of May. Pastor Scott begins his ministry here effective June 1st, 2021. Effective April 15, those members who received their shot, also received a return date the third week in July. Members who received their vaccine prior to April 15, will be telephoned or emailed a date for their second dose. If you require further assistance and need some help, please phone Ellen Vandersleen at (613) 732 – 7649 or Jan Scheidt at (613) 631 – 0658 and leave your name and phone number. Please note that Jan prefers to use her cell phone number (due to severe hearing loss) and it is (519) 752 – 9826. Many thanks to the many members who have graciously shared with Susan, Ellen and Jan information to update the church records. Jan Scheidt, Social Ministry Committee

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation classes have been postponed until after the stay at home is lifted.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Leena Jensen

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Lorraine MacKenzie

Projectionist: Krista Grosskleg

Recorder: Ellen Vandersleen

Sound Board Operator: Gerry Vandersleen

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

This Week at Zion – May 3 - 9

Tuesday	7pm	Worship & Music Committee Mtg.
	7p.m.	Narcotics Anonymous
Sunday	10am	Recording of Easter 6 Worship Service with Holy Communion