

Christ the Servant Lutheran Church
Putting Jesus' Way of Life into Practice by...
Encountering God, Loving One Another,
& Reaching the World.

Fifth Sunday of Easter
April 28, 2024

I am
the vine,
you are the
branches
JOHN 15:5



Climbing tendrils by David Prah/EyeEm.
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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.

Welcome to Christ the Servant Lutheran Church

(Congregational responses are in bold print.)

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✝ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive 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

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen

GATHERING SONG

“RAISE A HALLELUJAH”

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.

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

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: PSALM 22:25-31 (read responsively)

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: JOHN 15:1-8

The holy gospel according to John, the 15th chapter.

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."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

"OUR GOD"

APOSTLES' CREED

**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**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

PEACE

**The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.**

OUR OFFERINGS

MUSICAL OFFERING

"O COME TO THE ALTAR"

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

**Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by
day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to
new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready
to praise you and to respond to those in need, through
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

**The Lord be with you.
And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

**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**

COMMUNION

HYMN DURING COMMUNION

"HOLY SPIRIT"

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection 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

COMMUNITY LIFE ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

**The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
Amen**

SENDING SONG

“LORD’S PRAYER”

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



**Flowers today were placed by
Peter Songster.**

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS TODAY! THANK YOU!

Greeter: Katie
Welcome Desk: Passionate Worship
Ushers:
Reader: Ron
Sound Booth: Tim, Tom, Peter
Communion Assistants: Tony & Carol
Musicians: Revelation
Coffee Servers: Sandy & Charlie

PRAYER REQUESTS...

We pray for those in need of healing and mercy:

Leroy, Carol W., Kayla, Roger, Gary (Uncle of Sue), Sarah, Carol L., Salomie (sister-in-law of Peter), Jane (Grace’s friend), Sylvia, Roberta, Dorothy (mother of Linda), Patty (sister of Mike), and Anna.

(Please call the church office with any prayer concerns or updates.)



Congratulations to David on his confirmation and to Ramona on her first communion.



Thank you for giving to support the ministries at Christ the Servant. You may donate online on our website: www.cslcvh.org/tithe. Offering envelopes are available at the Welcome Desk.



Cross & Cradle News

Community Life

THE CALENDAR THIS WEEK AT CHRIST THE SERVANT

Today: April 28 - Fifth Sunday of Easter

- 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM - CSLC Bible Study
- 9:30 AM - CSLC Worship
- 10:30 AM - CSLC Fellowship Time
- 11:15 AM - EFLC Sunday School
- 12:30 PM - EFLC Worship

Monday, April 29

- 9:00 AM - Package bread & deliver
- 2:00 PM - 5:30 PM - Piecemakers (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, April 30

- 7:00 AM - Bread Preparation (Fellowship)
- 8:30 AM - Bread Distribution + Coffee Get-Together (FH)
- 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM - Spiritual Listening (Sanctuary)
- 6:30 PM - AA Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday, May 1

- 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Bible Study (FH)
- 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM - Handwork Group (FH)
- 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM - Youth & Confirmation
- 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM - AA (Class A)

Thursday, May 2

- 3:45 PM - 4:45 PM - YogaDevotion (S)
- 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM - Revelation Rehearsal (S)

Friday, May 3

- 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM - EFLC Choir Practice (Class A)

Saturday, May 4

- 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM - AAPC St. Paul Chapter (FH)

Sunday, May 5 - Sixth Sunday of Easter

- 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM - CSLC Bible Study
- 9:30 AM - CSLC Worship
- 10:30 AM - CSLC Fellowship Time
- 11:15 AM - EFLC Sunday School
- 12:30 PM - EFLC Worship

Welcome to Bible Study...

Sunday Bible Study

Every Sunday at 8:30 AM.

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesdays 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.

Women's Saturday Bible Study

We meet very other Saturday. Next Bible study dates: May 4, May 18, June 1.



RUMMAGE SALE

Rummage Sale/Youth Bake Sale

Thank you to all who donated, helped with the setup and/or the cleanup of the rummage sale and those who purchased from the bake sale.

Yogadevotion...

A new Yogadevotion class will begin on Thursday, May 2 through June 20, meeting weekly at 3:45 PM, in the sanctuary. A signup sheet is available in the Welcome area. All are welcome!



Blood Drive at CSLC... The next blood drive at Christ the Servant is scheduled for Monday, May 20th, from 11 AM to 5 PM. Sign up online at redcrossblood.org or at the church.

Care of Creation Team... Come join our new team! Sign up in the Welcome Area.



There will be a joint worship service with Eternal Flame Lutheran Church on Sunday, May 19 at 10:30 AM followed by a luncheon.

kids
Celebrate
Fifth Sunday of Easter



Healthy vine, healthy fruit

Fruit cannot grow unless it is connected to a vine.

Fill this vine with all kinds of healthy fruit.



Fed by God, Nourished by Christ

Imagine a nursing baby at its mother's breast—what a blissful picture of love, joy, peace, and contentment! This image can help us understand who we are as God's beloved children and how tenderly God cares for us. God's grace is unconditional, just as a mother's milk flows to an infant without anything to do with deserving. In today's gospel reading, the vine-and-branches metaphor is another image of how intimately connected Jesus is with us and how crucial it is that we, the branches, hold on to him as our vine.

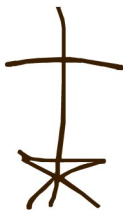


“Apart from me,” says Jesus, “you can do nothing.” Apart from its vine, a branch can do nothing—cannot live long, cannot produce grapes, cannot nourish people and animals. Apart from its mother or another devoted caregiver, a newborn can do nothing—cannot feed itself, cannot become or stay healthy, cannot grow and bear the fruit of life and love for others. Apart from God's love and care, which Christians know in Jesus, the whole web of humanity fails to thrive.

A nursing mother sets her face and does whatever is needed—two or three times a night at first, even through mastitis, weariness, and boredom—to feed and impart life to her little one. Jesus' face is set toward the cross as he shares farewell counsel with his disciples. He, too, is ready and determined to do whatever it takes—even dying on a cross—to sustain the vineyard-world with abundant life.

The imagery of vine and branches, juxtaposed with that of God breastfeeding her babies, comes alive when we celebrate the eucharist. At the table, Jesus feeds us with his own body and blood, pouring life and nourishment into us. We are called to abide in him forever—an invitation to grace-filled, permanent relationship. In Jesus the true vine, we his branches enjoy a continual flow of grace, mercy, and love. In turn, we are energized to bear the fruit of his love, joy, and peace for the world.

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CHRIST THE SERVANT LUTHERAN CHURCH

3676 Centerville Road, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

Phone 651-429-6595

Email: office@cslcvh.org Website: www.cslcvh.org

Pastor Jon Yurk

Phone: 612-231-2111 Email: Pastor@cslcvh.org