

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
15733 Dover Road  
Upperco, Maryland 21155  
The Fifth Sunday of Easter  
May 2, 2021



Welcome and Announcements

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.

We thank you, risen Christ, for 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.**

Hymn # 836 "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee (Verses 1 & 3)

**Joyful, joyful we adore thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love!  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,  
praising thee, their sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.**

**Thou art giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,  
wellspring of the joy of living,  
ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,  
all who live in love are thine;  
teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to the joy divine!**

*Contributors: Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1922. Public Domain.*

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

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 Lesson: Acts 8:26-40  
A Reading from Acts:

<sup>26</sup>Then 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.

The Word of the Lord,  
**Thanks be to God.**

Second Lesson: 1 John 4:7-21  
A Reading from First John:

<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. <sup>16</sup>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.

The Word of the Lord,  
**Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia.* . I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit.  
*Alleluia.* (John 15:5)

Holy Gospel: John 15:1-8  
The Gospel from John

<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 branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My 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: "Vines and Branches"

Hymn of the Day # 379 "Now the Green Blade Rises" (Verses 1, 3 & 4)

**Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.**

**Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,  
he that for three days in the grave had lain;  
raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.**

**When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
your touch can call us back to life again,  
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.**

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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 the Church

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. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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, sick and afraid, especially the names we speak aloud (*pause for quiet prayer*), in our hearts (*again pause...*) and those whose names fill the list of ongoing prayer concerns of this community of faith. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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.**

## 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.**

You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all holiness; you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence.

In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son, who on the tree of the cross gave salvation to all, that where death began, there life might be restored, and that he, who by a tree once overcame, might by a tree be overcome.

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.

## The Lord's Prayer

## Communion Distribution

## Post-Communion Blessing and Prayer

## The Benediction

## Sending Hymn # 742 "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (Verses 1, 2, & 3)

**What a friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and griefs to bear!**

**What a privilege to carry  
ev'rything to God in prayer!**

**Oh, what peace we often forfeit;  
oh, what needless pain we bear --  
all because we do not carry  
ev'rything to God in prayer!**

Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged --  
take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful  
who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness --  
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge --  
take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do your friends despise, forsake you?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield you;  
you will find a solace there.

*Contributors: Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886. Public Domain.*

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

Sending

**We Welcome All Our Visitors and Friends to Our Worship Service Today**

We welcome all our visitors to our worship service - To all of you, we extend an invitation to return often, your presence is a blessing to us; we hope that soon we will be able to worship together again. Do come and be with us. If you are interested in becoming a member, please see or call Pastor Carl. All are welcomed to the Lord's Table for Holy Communion or to receive a blessing.

**Please keep the following individuals in your prayers**

**Members:** Mark, Calvin, Jen, Maidie, Vivian, Colton, Bud, Carolyn & John, Carliana, Shriver, Andy, Hannah, Denise, Glenys, Matthew, Nadine, Peter, Moore family, Neuheisel family, Gene, Katie, Leon, Bri, and all homebound members.

**Family & Friends:** Jerry, Bernie & Chris, Nunan Family, Mike, Darlene, Frank, Erin, Kary, Jim & Barbara, Kevin, Jack & Elinor, Liz, Heidi, Peggy, Laura, Bruce & Jamie, Karen, Caroline, Sonia, Addison, Ashlee, Maverick, Pat, Wade, Danny, Gwyneth, McGinnis family, Marty, Rita & Chris, Torie, those facing job loss, and those in broken relationships.

**Please continue to make your weekly offering if you are able**

Our **Second Offering for May is for VBS** this summer.

[Donate online via Tithe.ly.](#)

To send by mail: 15773 Dover Road, Upperco, MD 21155

**Church News and Happenings**

**TODAY, SUNDAY, May 2<sup>nd</sup> - Fifth Sunday of Easter**

In-person Worship under the Pavilion at 9:00am

Virtual Worship via [SPC YouTube Channel](#) posted Sunday afternoon

Sunday School via Zoom at 10:30am

Confirmation Class will be held by Zoom at 7:00pm

**SUNDAY, May 9<sup>th</sup> - Sixth Sunday of Easter**

In-person Worship under the Pavilion at 9:00am

Virtual Worship via [SPC YouTube Channel](#) posted Sunday afternoon

Confirmation Class will be held by Zoom at 7:00pm

Attendance, April 25<sup>th</sup>: YouTube Video – 21 views, In-person – 13