

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

L: The risen Christ is made known to us  
in the breaking of the bread.  
Come and eat at God's table.

Distribution

*Everyone who believes in Jesus is welcome at Christ's table.*

"Lamb of God"

ELW p.191

## \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Shepherding God,  
**you have prepared a table before us  
and nourished us with your love.  
Send us forth from this banquet  
to proclaim your goodness  
and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,  
our redeemer and friend.  
Amen.**

## \*Blessing

L Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**C Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**  
L The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy,  
and the Spirit of Easter hope ☩ bless you now and always.  
**C Amen.**

\*Hymn "Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds" ELW #367

## Dismissal

L Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.  
**C Thanks be to God.**

## THOSE SERVING TODAY

Ministers: All God's People; Synod Authorized Minister: Karen Sparling;  
Organist: Nalani Bever; Reader: Kirstin Arndt; Communion Servers;  
Ayawyn Conner and Rachel Conner



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Wilton, WI

Fifth Sunday of Easter  
April 28, 2024

**Inviting People to  
Journey with Christ's Family  
in Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

*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.*

*\*(Indicates that the people should stand as they are able.)*

## Announcements

### Gathering

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

## \*Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
the wellspring of grace,  
our Easter and our joy.  
**Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Immersed in the promises of baptism,  
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning  
your voice thundered over the deep  
and water became the essence of life.  
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.

The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.  
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea  
into freedom's land.

In a desert pool the Ethiopian official  
entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John  
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection  
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,  
freeing us to live as Easter people.

We rejoice with glad hearts,  
giving all honor and praise to you,  
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

**\*Hymn "Now the Green Blade Rises" ELW#379**

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 ELW p. 184**

**\*Canticle of Praise "Glory to God" ELW p.185**

**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.**

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Risen One,

**you call us to believe and bear fruit.**

**May the gifts that we offer here**

**be signs of your abiding love.**

**Form us to be your witnesses in the world,**

**through Jesus Christ, our true vine.**

**Amen.**

**Meal**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**\*GREAT THANKSGIVING ELW p. 190**

**\*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY ELW p. 190**

**\*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Words of Institution

**\*LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

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**

Karen Sparling  
Synod Authorized Minister

Hymn

“Jesus Loves Me!”

**ELW #595**

**\*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** (God of grace, **hear our prayer.**)

**\*PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**OFFERING**

\*Offertory Hymn “Lord, Let My Heart be Good Soil” **ELW #512**

## Word

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

### First Reading

*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.*

#### A reading from Acts 8:26-40

<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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 22:25-31**

<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!"

### **Second Reading**

*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.*

### **A reading from 1 John 4:7-21**

<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"

**ELW p. 188**

### **GOSPEL READING**

#### **The holy gospel according to *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.*

#### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] <sup>1</sup>"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. <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