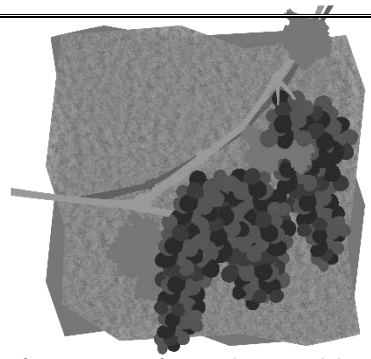


# FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Growing in Grace  
Fruitful Branches of the Vine Divine

May 2, 2021



## AS WE GATHER

The images Jesus uses as He proclaims the kingdom of God often come from the world of agriculture. His parables are filled with plants and trees and birds and animals. Grapes, grapevines, and vineyards are all used as illustrations by Jesus as He teaches the people who are His first hearers and us also. As people who have been grafted as branches into Christ the Vine through Holy Baptism, we seek ways to strengthen that connection as the Holy Spirit works in and through us. We now nourish our faith as branches in Christ's vineyard as we grow in Him by Word and Sacrament. One agricultural crop that is becoming better known in our days is the grape. Grapevines are everywhere in America, from New York and Virginia on the East Coast to California and Washington on the West Coast. Driving by a vineyard and seeing row after row of flourishing vines is a visually pleasant experience. Jesus speaks to the disciples and us that He is the true vine and we are the branches. He says that God looks for us to be fruit-bearing as we are grafted into our life-giving Lord. Through our worship together, we are nourished in fruitfulness by the Holy Spirit.

## ✂ PREPARATION ✂

### **PRAYERS OF PREPARATION:**

**Jesus Christ, the true vine, in our need we come to You, in weakness, needing Your strength for we too easily become dry and lifeless without Your life-giving spirit. Jesus Christ, the true vine, teach us to remain in You and so to find Your life flowing in us giving strength and vigor to our discipleship. And as we come closer to You our lives are drawn closer to others. Our thoughts turn to Christians living with persecution who face danger, simply for being linked to You. Father, prune back all that stands in the way of peace. On our hearts are people in need in our church and community. Wherever hearts are breaking, bodies are failing, minds are confused families are ruptured: Lord, come with Your help and healing. Here, too, as Your church gathered today, we give thanks for the saints of the past and the fruit they have borne in our community and beyond. Like them, help us to remain in You that we may be fruitful and bring glory to Your name. Through Jesus Christ, the true vine. Amen.**

## **HOLY COMMUNION IS CELEBRATED:**

As a Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) church, we believe and confess that through the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper we receive the true body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the elements of bread and wine. As we commune with faith and repentance, we receive the forgiveness of sins and power to amend our sinful lives. If you confess the same belief, we invite you to our fellowship of the Lord’s Supper.

## **WELCOME:**

**WELCOME TO GOD’S HOUSE:** We come because we seek to abide in Christ. We come because we long to be spiritually vibrant, alive, productive. We come because we strive to be faithful disciples. We are branches, rooted in the vine of Christ. We gather for worship now to the glory of the One God: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. May we grow wildly as God tends us lovingly. Let us worship our God. Welcome!

## **SELECTION**

**Minister Terry Dale**

## **INVOCATION**

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

## **OPENING SENTENCES** *Psalm 34:8; 104:24, 31; 147:11*

**Pastor:** The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,

**People:** **in those who hope in His steadfast love.**

**Pastor:** Taste and see that the LORD is good!

**People:** **Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!**

**Pastor:** O LORD, how manifold are Your works!

**People:** **In wisdom have You made them all.**

**Pastor:** May the glory of the LORD endure forever;

**People:** **may the LORD rejoice in His works.**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

**Pastor:** As penitent people, we ask God for His grace and mercy.

Pastor: Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.

**People:** **O almighty God, most merciful Father, I, a repentant sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended You. By nature, I am a sinful creature. In thought, word, and deed I have continually transgressed Your Law. For this I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a penitent and contrite being. Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of Your Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful life and bear fruit in keeping with true repentance.**

Pastor: God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

**People:** **Amen.**

Pastor: As you believe, so let it be. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

✠ **WORD** ✠

**HYMN OF PRAISE** "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah" TFBF 148 Sts. 1-3

1 Glory, glory, hallelujah! Since I laid my burdens down. Glory, glory, hallelujah!  
Since I laid my burdens down!

2 Friends don't treat me like they used to Since I laid my burdens down. Friends  
don't treat me like they used to Since I laid my burdens down!

3 I'm goin' home to live with Jesus Since I laid my burdens down. I'm goin' home to  
live with Jesus Since I laid my burdens down!

**SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

Risen and ascended Lord, You are the vine, and we are the branches. Apart from You there is no life. By Baptism, You have grafted us into Your gracious life. Cause Your Word to abide in us and make us fruitful to the glory of Your Father, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** Amen.

**FIRST READING** *Acts 8:26–40* (Philip witnesses about Jesus to the Ethiopian official.)

**Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

## **SELECTION**

**Minister Terry Dale**

**GRADUAL** *adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6*

**Leader:** Christ has risen from the dead. God the Father has crowned Him with glory and honor, He has given Him dominion over the works of His hands; He has put all things under His feet.

**EPISTLE** *1 John 4:1–11* (An exhortation to lives of Christian love)

**Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

**VERSE** *Romans 6:9, John 14:23*

Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. Alleluia. If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. Alleluia.

**HOLY GOSPEL** *John 15:1–8* (Jesus says that He is the vine and His people are the branches.)

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

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

(The Gospel is read.)

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**SELECTION**

**Minister Terry Dale**

**SERMON**

**SELECTION**

**Minister Terry Dale**

**(We Bring Our Tithes & Offering To The Lord)**

**CATECHISM**      *The Second Article*

Leader: As we celebrate the risen Christ this Easter season, we now speak together the words of the Apostles' Creed regarding our Savior, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

**People: And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Leader: What does this mean?

**People: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.**

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Leader: Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend [*names*, and] all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: And lastly, O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

### ✠ SACRAMENT ✠

**PREFACE** *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

### **PROPER PREFACE**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and proper that we should give thanks to You, Lord, our God, for You have shown mercy to all in Christ our Redeemer, the Vine divine. Receive our thanks that as branches of the Vine, we are created to bear fruit. Unite our praises with those of all the faithful who are connected to Christ and join them with the unending praise of the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.

**SANCTUS** (Holy, Holy, Holy TLH 246, St. 1)

1. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy holy, holy, merciful and mighty! God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

## **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

*Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20;  
1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

## **PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST**

*1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

**Pastor:** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

**People:** **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

## **PAX DOMINI**

**Pastor:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People:** **Amen.**

## **DISTRIBUTION (We Will Partake the Lord's Supper Together)**

## **POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for having fed us with Your life-giving food. Strengthen us through the same and help us to rejoice in Your mercies that we grow daily as fruitful branches of Christ the Vine. Finally, in Your mercy, grant us a portion with the saints in light eternal. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit are one God, world without end.

**People:** **Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**BENEDICTION**      *Numbers 6:24–26*

**Pastor:**      The Lord bless you and keep you.  
                    The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
                    The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**People:**      **Amen.**

**SELECTION**

**Minister Terry Dale**

I am  
the vine, you  
are the branches.  
He who abides in Me,  
and I in him, bears  
much fruit; for  
without Me you  
can do nothing.



**John 15:5**