

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

28 APRIL 2024



OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP, SETTING 3 (PAGES 138-145)

*The liturgy is in the front of the ELW with numbers at the bottom of the pages.
The hymns begin in the middle of the ELW with numbers at the top of the pages.*

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EASTER GREETING

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the wellspring of grace,
our Easter and our joy.

C: Amen.

P: Look, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

P: 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.

P: Look, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

P: 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.

C: Amen.

P: Look, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

HYMN #367 “NOW ALL THE VAULT OF HEAVEN RESOUNDS”

GREETING (PAGE 138)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

♪ **KYRIE** (PAGE 138-139)

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace from above, and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the
church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and
praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: Amen.

♪ **This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are his.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Sing with all the people of God
and join in the hymn of all creation.
Blessing, honor, glory and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**
**For the Lamb who was slain
has begun his reign. Alleluia.**
**This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. (*concluding...now and forever.*)

C: Amen

READINGS

ACTS 8:26-40 | PSALM 22:25-31 | 1 JOHN 4:7-21

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (PAGE 142)

**♩ Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

GOSPEL (JOHN 15:1-8)

P: The Holy Gospel according to John, the 15th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTH SERMON – Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen

SERMON – Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen

HYMN #454 “REMEMBER AND REJOICE”

CONFESSION OF FAITH: NICENE CREED

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear,
let us pray for the church, the world and all those in need of
good news.

(Each petition ends: P: God of grace, C: hear our prayer.)

P: Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom
we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our
resurrected and living Lord.

C: Amen.

PEACE (PAGE 143)

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

(Greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.)

OFFERING

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Let us pray. *(concluding ...our Savior and Lord.)*

C: Amen.

♩ **GREAT THANKSGIVING (PAGE 144)**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right....and join their unending hymn:

♩ **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER (PAGE 145)

**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.**

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

*All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are invited to receive Holy Communion
Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.*

**♪ Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.**

HYMN #452 “AWAKE, O SLEEPER, RISE FROM DEATH”

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and
keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION HYMN (HYMN #619)

**♪ I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living head!**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Let us pray. (*concluding... Jesus Christ our Lord.*)

C: Amen.

BLESSING

P: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

HYMN #881 “LET ALL THINGS NOW LIVING”

DISMISSAL

P: Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

C: Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

RINGING OF THE BELL

POSTLUDE

Pastor: Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen
Organist: Jason Boussetot or Linda Whitman
Acolyte: Faith Will
Lector: Melisa Jacobsen
Communion Assistant: Cindy Burke
Usher: Neil Holmquist
Cleaners: Ray and Deb Detlefs

Contact Information:

Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen

Cell Phone: (262) 914-9392

Email: pastorleahhollnil@gmail.com

Church Office

Phone: (563) 246-2622

Email: clparish@fbcom.net

Website: www.clparish.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clparish1861

This Week At A Glance

Wednesday	6:00 pm	Confirmation at Faith
	7:00 pm	Bible Jam at Faith
Sunday	8:00 am	Worship Service at Faith
	9:25 am	Sunday School at Our Savior's
	10:30 am	Worship Service at Our Savior's

Those to keep in prayer: Mallory Boussetot, Diane Sievers, Jade Jensen; the homebound: Carol Christensen, Ron Gasper, Delores Lahann, Lucy Lee Petersen, Myrna Kay Peterson, Rusty Porth, Betty Schau, Bus Seastrand and Vera St. John; and those serving in the military.

God Squad is gathering **items for the Clinton County Humane Society**. There is a basket and a list of suggested items at each church.

Bible School will be Monday, May 6, from 3:15-5:30 at Faith. Registration forms are at both churches. It is important to have completed forms in the church office by Friday, April 26.

Would you be willing to help at Bible School? There will be a meeting at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, April 24, at Faith to make final preparations. If you are willing to volunteer your help, please contact Pastor Leah.

The **Bible School snack** will be a trail mix. Donations of mini pretzels, raisins, M&Ms, Gold Fish, and Cheez-its would be appreciated. The items do not need to be in small individual packages. Please leave the treats in the kitchen at Faith.

A **can drive** is the God Squad fundraiser during the months of May and June. The collection bin will be located in the yard at Faith.

The Vine and The Branches

by William Barclay

John 15:1-10 "I am the real vine and my Father is the vine-dresser. He destroys every branch in me which does not bear fruit; and he cleanses every branch which does bear fruit, so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean through the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me even as I abide in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit in its own strength, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The man who abides in me, and in whom I abide, bears much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he will be cast out like a withered branch. And they gather such branches and throw them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what you will, and it will be given to you. It is by the fact that you bear such fruit, and that you show yourselves to be my disciples, that my Father is glorified. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love. As I have kept my Father's commandments, so I abide in his love."

Jesus, as so often, is working in this passage with pictures and ideas which were part of the religious heritage of the Jewish nation. Over and over again in the Old Testament, Israel is pictured as the vine or the vineyard of God. "The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel" (Isaiah 5:1-7). "Yet I planted you a choice vine" is God's message to Israel through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 2:21). Ezekiel 15:1-8 likens Israel to the vine, as does Ezekiel 19:10. "Israel is a luxuriant vine," said Hosea (Hosea 10:1). "Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt," sang the Psalmist, thinking of God's deliverance of his people from bondage (Psalms 80:8). The vine had actually become the symbol of the nation of Israel. It was the emblem on the coins of the Maccabees. One of the glories of the Temple was the great golden vine upon the front of the Holy Place. Many a great man had counted it an honour to give gold to mould a new bunch of grapes or even a new grape on to that vine. The vine was part and parcel of Jewish imagery, and the very symbol of Israel.

Jesus calls himself the true vine. The point of that word *alethinos*, true, real, genuine, is this. It is a curious fact that the symbol of the vine is never used in the Old Testament apart from the idea of degeneration. The point of Isaiah's picture is that the vineyard has run wild. Jeremiah complains that the nation has turned into "degenerate and become a wild vine." It is as if Jesus said: "You think that because you belong to the nation of Israel you are a branch of the true vine of God. But the nation it is; a degenerate vine, as all your prophets saw. It is I who am the true vine. The fact that you are a Jew will not save you. The only thing that can save you is to have an intimate living fellowship with me, for I am the vine of God and you must be branches joined to me." Jesus was laying it down that not Jewish blood but faith in him was the way to God's salvation. No external qualification can set a man right with God; only the friendship of Jesus Christ can do that.

When Jesus drew his picture of the vine he knew what he was talking about. The vine was grown all over Palestine as it still is. It is a plant which needs a great deal of attention if the best fruit is to be got out of it. It is grown commonly on terraces. The ground has to be perfectly clean. It is sometimes trained on trellises; it is sometimes allowed to creep over the ground upheld by low forked sticks; it sometimes even grows round the doors of the cottages; but wherever it grows careful preparation of the soil is essential. It grows luxuriantly and drastic pruning is necessary. So luxuriant is it that the slips are set in the ground at least twelve feet apart, for it will creep over the ground at speed. A young vine is not allowed to fruit for the first three years and each year is cut drastically back to develop and conserve its life and energy. When mature, it is pruned in December and January. It bears two kinds of branches, one that bears fruit and one that does not; and the branches that do not bear fruit are drastically pruned back, so that they will drain away none of the plant's strength. The vine can not produce the crop of which it is capable without drastic pruning--and Jesus knew that.

Further, the wood of the vine has the curious characteristic that it is good for nothing. It is too soft for any purpose. At certain times of the year, it was laid down by the law, the people must bring offerings of wood to the Temple for the altar fires. But the wood of

the vine must not be brought. The only thing that could be done with the wood pruned out of a vine was to make a bonfire of it and destroy it. This adds to the picture Jesus draws.

He says that his followers are like that. Some of them are lovely fruit-bearing branches of himself; others are useless because they bear no fruit. Who was Jesus thinking of when he spoke of the fruitless branches? There are two answers. First, he was thinking of the Jews. They were branches of God's vine. Was not that the picture that prophet after prophet had drawn? But they refused to listen to him; they refused to accept him; therefore they were withered and useless branches. Second, he was thinking of something more general. He was thinking of Christians whose Christianity consisted of profession without practice, words without deeds; he was thinking of Christians who were useless branches, all leaves and no fruit. And he was thinking of Christians who became apostates, who heard the message and accepted it and then fell away, becoming traitors to the Master they had once pledged themselves to serve.

So then there are three ways in which we can be useless branches. We can refuse to listen to Jesus Christ at all. We can listen to him, and then render him a lip service unsupported by any deeds. We can accept him as Master, and then, in face of the difficulties of the way or the desire to do as we like, abandon him. One thing we must remember. It is a first principle of the New Testament that uselessness invites disaster. The fruitless branch is on the way to destruction.

In this passage there is much about abiding in Christ. What is meant by that? It is true that there is a mystical sense in which the Christian is in Christ and Christ is in the Christian. But there are many--maybe they are in the majority--who never have this mystical experience. If we are like that, we must not blame ourselves. There is a much simpler way of looking at this and of experiencing it, a way open to anyone.

Let us take a human analogy. All analogies are imperfect but we must work with the ideas which we possess. Suppose a person is

weak. He has fallen to temptation; he has made a mess of things; he is on the way down to degeneracy of mind and heart and mental fibre. Now suppose that he has a friend of a strong and lovely and loving nature, who rescues him from his degraded situation. There is only one way in which he can retain his reformation and keep himself on the right way. He must keep contact with his friend. If he loses that contact; all the chances are that his weakness will overcome him; the old temptations will rear their heads again; and he will fall. His salvation lies in continual contact with the strength of his friend.

Many a time a down-and-out has been taken to live with someone fine. So long as he continued in that fine home and that fine presence he was safe. But when he kicked over the traces and went off on his own, he fell. We must keep contact with the fine thing in order to defeat the evil thing. Robertson of Brighton was one of the great preachers. There was a tradesman who had a little shop; in the back room he kept a photograph of Robertson, for he was his hero and his inspiration. Whenever he was tempted to carry out a bit of sharp practice, he would rush into the back room and look at the photograph and the temptation was defeated. When Kingsley was asked the secret of his life, referring to F. D. Maurice he said: "I had a friend." The contact with loveliness made him lovely.

Abiding in Christ means something like that. The secret of the life of Jesus was his contact with God; again and again he withdrew into a solitary place to meet him. We must keep contact with Jesus. We cannot do that unless we deliberately take steps to do it. To take but one example--to pray in the morning, if it be for only a few moments, is to have an antiseptic for the whole day; for we cannot come out of the presence of Christ to touch the evil things. For some few of us, abiding in Christ will be a mystical experience which is beyond words to express. For most of us, it will mean a constant contact with him. It will mean arranging life, arranging prayer, arranging silence in such a way that there is never a day when we give ourselves a chance to forget him.

Finally, we must note that here there are two things laid down about the good disciple. First, he enriches his own life; his contact

makes him a fruitful branch. Second, he brings glory to God; the sight of his life turns men's thoughts to the God who made him like that. God is glorified, when we bear much fruit and show ourselves to be disciples of Jesus. The greatest glory of the Christian life is that by our life and conduct we can bring glory to God.

Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT) – Public Domain