

*“Landmark of the Gospel Since 1834”*

**St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church**

*Our Purpose: Led by the Word of God, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church is a family who lives and shares the gospel of Jesus Christ through love and service to all.*

April 28, 2024

10:30 AM

**Easter 5**

*After the ringing of the bell ...*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Mary Anne Weibel, Organist

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the wellspring of grace,  
our Easter and our joy. **Amen.**  
In the waters of baptism, we die and rise with Christ.

**Christ is Risen, 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.  
In the waters of baptism, we die and rise with Christ.

**Christ is Risen, 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.**

In the waters of baptism, we die and rise with Christ.

**Christ is Risen, Alleluia**

HYMN

*Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

*LBW #551*

**1 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.**

**2 All thy works with joy surround Thee,  
 Earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,  
 Stars and angels sing around Thee,  
 Center of unbroken praise.  
 Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
 Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
 Chanting bird and flowing fountain  
 Call us to rejoice in thee.**

**3 Thou art giving and forgiving,  
 Ever blessing, ever blest,  
 Well-spring 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!**

#### 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.**

#### HYMN OF PRAISE

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Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.  
**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:  
 We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.  
 Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:  
 You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
 You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.  
 For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
 you alone are the Most High,  
 Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen**

#### 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 READING Acts 8:26-40

*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.*

<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.

## PSALM 22:24-30

*Read responsively*

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<sup>24</sup>My praise is of him in the great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.

<sup>25</sup>**The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the LORD shall praise him:**

**“May your heart live forever!”**

<sup>26</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.

<sup>27</sup>**For kingship belongs to the LORD;  
he rules over the nations.**

<sup>28</sup>To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship;  
all who go down to the dust fall before him.

<sup>29</sup>**My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall serve him;  
they shall be known as the LORD’s forever.**

<sup>30</sup>They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn  
the saving deeds that he has done.

## SECOND READING

1 John 4:7-21

*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.*

<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.

#### GOSPEL VERSE

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

GOSPEL READING          John 15:1-8

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

*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.*

[Jesus said:] <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.**

#### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

#### PROCLAMATION

HYMN

*O Blessed Spring*WOV #695  
(Sung to *O WALY WALY*)

**1 O blessed spring, where Word and sign  
Embrace us into Christ the Vine:  
Here Christ enjoins each one to be  
A branch of this life-giving Tree.**

**2 Through summer heat of youthful years,  
Uncertain faith, rebellious tears,  
Sustained by Christ's infusing rain,  
The boughs will shout for joy again.**

**3 When autumn cools and youth is cold,  
When limbs their heavy harvest hold,  
Then through us, warm, the Christ will move  
With gifts of beauty, wisdom, love.**

**4 As winter comes, as winters must,  
We breathe our last, return to dust;  
Still held in Christ, our souls take wing  
And trust the promise of the spring.**

**5 Christ, holy Vine, Christ, living Tree,  
Be praised for this blest mystery:  
That Word and water thus revive  
And join us to your Tree of Life.**

APOSTLES' CREED

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**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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**

PEACE

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

p. 96

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with your free Spirit.**

OFFERING 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.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the church around the world, for all ministers, and for the mission of the gospel. Cleanse our hearts with your word and help us to abide in you always. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

For the well-being of the earth and of all created things. Restore the land where there has been flooding. Renew the face of the earth and shower us with your goodness. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

For the nations and all those in authority: for local, state, and national leaders, for elected representatives at every level, and for international organizations, that justice and peace may reign. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

For all those in need: for any experiencing homelessness or unemployment, for those fleeing from oppression or seeking asylum, and for all who are ill or suffering (*especially*). God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

For this congregation: for the caring ministries of this faith community, for all who visit and minister to one another, for all who share meals in times of crisis, and for all who seek to share your love with the world. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

With thanksgiving for the saints who rest from their labors. Help us, like them, to bear much fruit and to become your disciples, and at the last, bring us to that heavenly banquet where all will feast together at your table. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

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.

**Amen.**

## 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.**

## BLESSING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The God of resurrection power,

the Christ of unending joy,

and the Spirit of Easter hope

✠ bless you now and always.

**Amen.**

## HYMN

*Now the Green Blade Rises*

*LBW #148*

**1 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.**

**2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,  
Thinking that he would never wake again,  
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen:  
Love is come again like wheat arising green.**

**3 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.**

**4 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.**

## DISMISSAL

*Go in peace, to **live and share the gospel of Jesus Christ through love and service to all.***

*Serving in mission together: Pastor Laura Cavendish and the members of St. Paul*  
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*Please take advantage of the worship stream if you are sick. Please mask if you have been closely exposed to someone with a virus. Sanitizer is available in the pews.*