

4-28-2024 5th Sunday of Easter

Hymn *God is Love, Let Heaven Adore Him* #379

1 God is Love, let heaven adore him; God is Love, let earth rejoice; let creation sing before him and exalt him with one voice. God who laid the earth's foundation, God who spread the heaven above, God who breathes through all creation: God is Love, eternal Love.

2 God is Love; and Love enfolds us, all the world in one embrace: with unfailing grasp God holds us, every child of every race. And when human hearts are breaking under sorrow's iron rod, then we find that selfsame aching deep within the heart of God.

3 God is Love; and though with blindness sin afflicts all human life, God's eternal loving-kindness guides us through our earthly strife. Sin and death and hell shall never o'er us final triumph gain; God is Love, so Love for ever o'er the universe must reign.

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One,

Have mercy upon us.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Lessons

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles *Acts 8:26-40*

An angel from the Lord spoke the following to Philip: “At noon, take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a desert road.) So he did. Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. The Spirit told Philip, “Approach this carriage and stay with it.”

Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you really understand what you are reading?”

The man replied, “Without someone to guide me, how could I?” Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him. This was the passage of scripture he was reading: *Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb*

*before its shearer is silent so he didn't open his mouth.
In his humiliation justice was taken away from him.*

*Who can tell the story of his descendants
because his life was taken from the earth?*

The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, about whom does the prophet say this? Is he talking about himself or someone else?" Starting with that passage, Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him. As they went down the road, they came to some water.

The eunuch said, "Look! Water! What would keep me from being baptized?" He ordered that the carriage halt. Both Philip and the eunuch went down to the water, where Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Lord's Spirit suddenly took Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing. Philip found himself in Azotus. He traveled through that area, preaching the good news in all the cities until he reached Caesarea.

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

Today's psalm is Psalm 22:24-30

My praise is of him in the great assembly;

I will perform my vows

in the presence of those who worship him.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall praise him:

"May your heart live for ever!"

All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord,

**and all the families of the nations
shall bow before him.**

For kingship belongs to the Lord;

he rules over the nations.

To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in
worship;

all who go down to the dust fall before him.

My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall serve him;

they shall be known as the Lord's for ever.

They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn

the saving deeds that he has done.

A reading from the First Letter of John *1 John 4:7-21*

Dear friends, let us love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. The person who does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how the love of God is revealed to us: God has sent his only Son into the world so that we can live through him. This is love: it is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as the sacrifice that deals with our sins.

Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. If we love each other, God remains in us and his love is made perfect in us. This is

how we know we remain in him and he remains in us, because he has given us a measure of his Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the savior of the world. If any of us confess that Jesus is God's Son, God remains in us and we remain in God. We have known and have believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who remain in love remain in God and God remains in them. This is how love has been perfected in us, so that we can have confidence on the Judgment Day, because we are exactly the same as God is in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear expects punishment. The person who is afraid has not been made perfect in love. We love because God first loved us. Those who say, "I love God" and hate their brothers or sisters are liars. After all, those who don't love their brothers or sisters whom they have seen can hardly love God whom they have not seen! This commandment we have from him: Those who claim to love God ought to love their brother and sister also.

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

Gradual Hymn *Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks* #178

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.

Jesus is Lord of all the earth. He is the King of creation.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you, Lord Christ. *John 15:1-8*

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. 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. 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. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Gradual Hymn *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!* #178

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.

Come, let us praise the living God,
joyfully sing to our Savior.

The Sermon

The Rev. David J. Marshall

Reflection Hymn *Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song #513*

Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight, like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might: come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's Body, to the branches of the Vine, to the Church in faith assembled, to her midst as gift and sign: come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division, with the ceaseless voice of prayer, with the power to love and witness, with the peace beyond compare: come, Holy Spirit, come.

The Nicene Creed

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: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray to God on behalf of the Church, the world, and all people. *A brief silence*

My praise is of him in the great assembly;

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

Bless your Church so that we may be connected to you as branch to the vine. *Silence*

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

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord,

and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.

Lead this congregation to abide with you through all the varied changes in life. Help all who doubt. Give peace to those whose faith has been shaken by tragedy. *Silence*

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

The poor shall eat and be satisfied

and those who seek the Lord shall praise him.

We remember before you all those who suffer with chronic medical conditions, especially Downs IV, Holden, Anne, Victoria, Kim, Michael, Barbara, Lorraine, Maria Christine, Caitlin, Amelia, Dennis, and Alice. Guide them and us along the right pathways for your Name's sake. Help those recovering from injury, especially Agie.

We pray for Turning Points, Manatee Food Bank, and all those who feed others. *Silence*

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

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord,

and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.

Give comfort to all who receive the care of skilled nursing, especially Timothy, Barbara, Kim, Lou and Ann. Give peace to those going through cancer treatments, and those in remission, especially, Margaret, Downs III, Victoria, Alex, Connie, Douglas, Frank, Gerta, Lauren, Jennifer, TJ, Jim, Stephanie, Cara, Todd and Nancy.

We pray for those in Hospice that they will have comfort in you, especially Mary Jo. *Silence*

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

Kingship belongs to the Lord;

The Lord rules over the nations.

Bless those who protect us both at home and abroad with peace and strength. Bring your peace to the whole world, especially in Gaza, Israel and Ukraine. *Silence*

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

To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship;

all who go down to the dust fall before him.

Give peace to those whom we love but see no longer. Wipe away the tears of all who grieve. Bring us with peace into your house where we will dwell with you for ever. *Silence*

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

Celebrant: O Lord, hear our prayers and strengthen and help us, that in our daily life walk with you, we serve you in all quietness of spirit; through Jesus Christ our Master. **Amen.**

The Peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Greetings, Announcements and Introductions

Offertory Anthem *Gathered in God's Name*

1. Gathered in God's name 'round the table and font.
Gathered as one family in the name of Love.
2. Gathered in God's name 'round the waters of grace,
claimed and marked by the Spirit in the name of Love.
3. Gathered in God's name 'round the peace of the Lord,
in the presence of Christ, in the name of Love.

4. Gathered in God's name with the saints on earth,
with the saints above, in the name of Love.

Refrain: **Gathered from near and far, gathered in this holy place, gathered as strangers and friends, gathered and gifted by grace. Gathered in God's name 'round the living Word. Gathered in the name of love.**

The Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
praise him all creatures here below, Alleluia, Alleluia.
Praise him above ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

The Holy Eucharist Prayer B

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 God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the
highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Hosanna in the highest**

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon

these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say, **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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Communion Hymn *O Thou Who Camest from Above* #704

1 O thou who camest from above the fire celestial to impart, kindle a flame of sacred love upon the altar of my heart.

2 There let it for thy glory burn with ever-bright, undying blaze, and trembling to its source return in humble prayer and fervent praise.

3 Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work, and speak, and think for thee; still let me guard the holy fire and still stir up the gift in me.

4 Still let me prove thy perfect will, my acts of faith and love repeat, till death thy endless mercies seal, and make the sacrifice complete.

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray. **Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Blessing

Closing Hymn *In Christ There is No East or West* #529

In Christ there is no East or West, in him no South or North,
but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide
earth.

Join hands, disciples of the faith, whate'er your race may be!
Who serves my Father as his child is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West, in him meet South
and North, all Christly souls are one in him, throughout the
whole wide earth.

The Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia