

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

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Fifth Sunday of Easter – May 2, 2021

PRELUDE - "PASSACAGLIA" – CURRIE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism

P: We thank you, risen Christ, for these waters where you make us new, leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

P: We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth, like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls, like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

P: Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear. Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness. Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

P: Make us one, risen Christ. Cleans our hearts. Shower us with life.

P: To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

HYMN #380

HALLELUJAH! JESUS LIVES!

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...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 LESSON:

ACTS 8:26-40

PSALM 22:25-31

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied.**

Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD,
who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, 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.

³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

SECOND LESSON:

1 JOHN 4:7-21

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 15th Chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

JOHN 15:1-8

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

HYMN #588 *THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY*

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

Response: Your mercy in great.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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**

HOLY COMMUNION

BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our LORD Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER

Let us pray...Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN #674 *LET US TALENTS AND TONGUES EMPLOY*

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE – “POSTLUDE” – DE MONTI

✠ ✠ ✠

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WELCOME TO ALL IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

We especially welcome those who are visiting. We invite you to sign our guest register in the narthex. Blank envelopes in the pews are for visitors.

“God’s purpose for St. Paul’s Lutheran Blue” Church is to spread the Good News of Christ’s love for all people in the Southern Lehigh community and beyond.” –Blue Church Mission Statement, adopted 2012

THE DAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR....FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

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 that we read of 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.

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.....

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, the Ethiopian is baptized by Philip.*

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.*

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 would bear fruit, for apart from him, they could do nothing.*

PRAYER FOR 5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER: O God, give us the love of you that casts out fear. (See 1 John 4:18)

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK: Compassionate God, you call us to love others as you love us. Through your love, may our lives bear fruit and glorify you. Amen.

BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR...Cliff Benner, Sandra Denora, Bill Exner, Dr. Roger Fischer, Ann Greensweig, Carly Hampton, Walt Lehr, Ken Ortwein, Jerry Smith, Sue Storat, Stephen, Anna.

Other concerns: The family and friends of Mickie Hill (Kathy Exner’s aunt)

Note: This is a short-term list, for those who are in “acute care” situations—hospitalized or in recovery, dying, facing the recent death of a loved one, or presently facing a severe life crisis. The names of those for whom we pray will be kept on the list for one month. If you wish to have them placed back on the list please contact the church office.

LEADING OUR WORSHIP

CELEBRANT	The Rev. James Hammond
ORGANIST	Dr. Jennifer Dodd
ASSISTING MINISTER	Ron Fried
LECTOR	Maggie Fried
GREETER	Maggie Fried
CHURCH COUNCIL REP	Ed Risi

WEEKLY GIFTS, PRESENTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD: ALTAR FLOWERS...by Bill & Kathy Exner in honor of their 59th Wedding Anniversary.

COMMUNION WINE & BREAD...by Greg & Wendy Storat

LOOKING AHEAD

SUN. MAY 2 – 10:30 AM WORSHIP SPECIAL
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO APPROVE REPAIRS TO THE BELL TOWER.

MON. MAY 3 – 7 – 8 PM Girl Scouts.

THURS. – 6:30 – 7:30 PM Cub Pack #364 Meeting.

SUN. MAY 9 – 10:30 AM WORSHIP – 6TH Sunday of Easter/Mother’s Day

BETTY LOU’S PANTRY is looking for two volunteers to pick up the bread from Giant and Fresh Market on the two Saturdays of the month. We currently have two couples who pick up the bread, one does one day, the other does the other day. The one couple will be moving out of the area and suggested a replacement will be needed. They go to Giant at 8:00 and bring that to the pantry and then go to Fresh Market. Total time is around an hour. No super heavy lifting. If you can help contact Debbie Stover at 484-437-3831. Thank you.

SPONSOR CHARTS...There are still many open dates on the charts to sponsor the weekly gifts to the church – Bulletins, Sanctuary Lamp Candle, Wine & Bread, etc. Your sponsorship helps defray the costs of these items. Simply sign the chart and a payment envelope will be sent to you the week of your sponsorship.

If you have an email address, please notify the church office so it can be added to the group list and you can be included when church information is sent out.

STEWARDSHIP SNIPPETS

Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 2, 2021 “Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord.” –Psalm 22:30 *Who first told you the good news about Jesus? Chances are it was a beloved elder, either a family member or pillar of the church. We receive the wisdom of our ancestors, and then we take on the mantle of responsibility and good stewardship to pass that good news along to future generations*

LESSONS

Acts 8:26-40 – 1st Lesson

26 Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south* to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) 27 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 28 and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' 30 So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' 31 He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. 32 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.

33 In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.'

34 The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' 35 Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. 36 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?*' 38 He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip* baptized him. 39 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. 40 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.

1 John 4:7-21 – 2nd Lesson

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 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. 10 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. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16 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. 17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. 18 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. 19 We love* because he first loved us. 20 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. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters* also.

John 15:1-8 - Gospel

¹⁵I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes* to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed* by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide 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. ⁵I 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. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become* my disciples.

St. Paul's Lutheran "Blue" Church
Prayers ✠ Fifth Sunday of Easter ✠
May 2, 2021

A: Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love, responding,
"Your mercy is great."

A brief silence

A: God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depends on the earth for life. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence, that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: You have loved us so that we can love others. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all. Today we pray especially for: Clifford, Sandra, Bill, Roger, Ann, Carly, Walt, Ken, Candace, Jerry, Sue, Daron, Stephen, Anna, and everyone who has asked for our prayers or known only to the Lord. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

Pastor: In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.