



5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER
MAY 2, 2021

SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 West 94th Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

(708) 423-1040
Pastor John Moeller

www.stpauloaklawn.org
Director of Music Ruth Sievers

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.

Prelude

"Chief of Sinner Though I Be"

C. S. Lang

Opening Hymn

"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"

#611, sts. 1, 2 & 4

- 1 Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine.
- 2 Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!

Love that found me—wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not.

- 4 Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
All my wants to Him are known,
All my sorrows are His own.
He sustains the hidden life
Safe with Him from earthly strife.

Text: Public domain

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P Praise the Lord!

C Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens!

P Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

C Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with lute and harp!

P Praise Him with tambourine and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe!

C Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals!

P Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

C Praise the Lord!

Confession and Absolution

We pause to remember our sins before our Heavenly Father...

P Almighty God, gracious and merciful,

C we confess that we are sinful by nature and have turned away from Your abiding love. We've been enticed by our own desires and lured away from Your love by the spirits of this age. Yet Jesus who dwells in us by faith is greater than the spirit of the Antichrist who is in the world. For the sake of our Lord Jesus, forgive our sins and bring us again to abide in Your love.

P God hears you and loves you, and He's given His only Son to die for your sins. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

Introit

Psalm 145:1–2, 8, 10, 21; antiphon: John 16:16

P A little while, and you will see me no longer;
and again a little while, and you will see me.

C I will extol You, my God and King,
and bless Your name forever and ever.

P Every day I will bless You
and praise Your name forever and ever.

C The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

P All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD,
and all Your saints shall bless You!

C My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,
and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever.

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

C A little while, and you will see me no longer;
and again a little while, and you will see me.

Prayer of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P 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.

C Amen.

First Reading

✠ Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch ✠

Acts 8:26-40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. ²⁷And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." ³⁰So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. ³³In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Anthem of Praise Solo

“Jesus Name Above All Names”

adapt. by N. Hearn; tune by P. Cain

Epistle

✠ God is Love ✠

1 John 4:1-11

¹Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. ⁴Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

✠ I Am the True Vine ✠

John 15:1-8

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. 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. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Confession of Faith

The Second Article

P 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.

C I believe 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.

P What does this mean?

C 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.

Sermon Hymn

“O Blessed Spring”

#595

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Offering—*may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving is available to everyone on our website at www.stpauloaklawn.org. For information about regular electronic giving, please contact the church office.*

Offertory Meditation

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

Preface

- 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 Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Our Lord

Proclamation of Christ

- P** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
- P** Remembering Your mercy, O Lord, and Your suffering for us on the cross, dying the death that was ours to die, rising to give us the life that death cannot overcome, ascending to the glory of the Father's right hand, and sending forth the Spirit to lead us into faith, we pray You to bring to conclusion all that You have begun and deliver us to that everlasting life and light in heaven forevermore. Hear us as we pray with one voice and as You taught us:
- C** Our Father who art in heaven...

Benediction

- P** 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.
C Amen.

✠ DISTRIBUTION of the SACRAMENT ✠

Closing Hymn

"Christ, the Word of God Incarnate"

#540 sts. 1, 3 & 4

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Christ, the Word of God incarnate,
Lord and Son of Abraham;
Christ, the radiance of the Father,
Perfect God, the great I AM;
Christ, the light, You shine unvanquished,
Light and life You bring to all;
Light our path with Your own presence,
Grant us grace to heed Your call. | 3 Christ, the shoot that springs triumphant
From the stump of Jesse's tree;
Christ, true vine, You nurture branches
To bear fruit abundantly.
Graft us into You, O Savior;
Prune our hearts so we remain
Fruitful branches in Your vineyard
Till eternal life we gain. |
|--|---|

4 Christ, our good and faithful shepherd,
Watching all Your lambs and sheep;
Christ, the gate that guards the sheepfold,
Never-failing vigil keep.
When we stray, Good Shepherd, seek us,

Find us, lift us, bear us home;
Lamb of God, our shepherd, keep us;
Let us hear Your voice alone.

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Postlude

“Christ, the Word of God Incarnate”

R. Powell



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND THANKS

Vocalists: Lori Freeze

Lector: Louis Frank

Altar Care: Martha Moeller

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Please pray for these members of our St. Paul family:

Debbie Will	Gloria Crook
Graham Jackson	Laverne Abraham
Julie & Larry Gurga	Beverly Sellers
Janice Przybycien	Kevin Hickey
Mary Ann Colander	Art Hornburg
Melva Smith	Del Purdy
Carol Small	Mike Degidio
The Anderson Family	Norma Silinski
Roy Hodgeman	Lenore Curran
Delphine Cherry	Ron Klingensmith
Louis Frank	Deb Skopec
Herta Iversen	Loretta Frank
Jane & Freddie Giacobbe	Marge Rochlitz
Ron Hickey	Shirley Smulkis
Ingrid Lesko	Katherine Hice
Gloria Meyer	Jan Briede
Delores Stegemann	Connie Braun
Kurt Seehofer	The Polezoes Family
Lincoln & Parker Alex	Patricia Murdoch
Betty Beegle	

We pray for those who grieve:

For the Ward & Buckley families as Tim Buckley's cousin, William "Billy" Ward, 29, was called home suddenly. Billy was buried on April 29th.

We pray:

*For Kurt Seehofer (recovery from surgery on 4/30);
For Ron Hickey as he celebrated his 91st birthday on 5/1;*

Announcements & Notes:

- If you know someone who lives in suburban Cook County, is homebound and needing the COVID vaccines, the "Pathlights" organization (formerly PLOWS Council on Aging) is making them available.
- There is also information available about "Meals on Wheels."
- There are fliers available with info about either of these, or you can talk with Pastor John or Sandy.
- Evening services have resumed on Wednesdays at 6:00 PM.

Please pray for these friends and family of our members:

Paul Sowa	Maryann Krieg (Wilke)
Henry Bonder	Nora Beth DeMotes
Rose Rohloff	Brenda Gurgel
Denise DeLaurentis	Dorothy Kroll
Anthony Krcelic, Jr.	Mike Horan
Bob Hessert	Georgiana Easton
Jackie Plichta	Susan M. Volk
Patricia Paulsen	Clare Donovan
Ken Kruckow	Janet Trierweiler
Alan Hecke	Christopher Bruck
Edgar Hill	Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.
Matt Favero	Sandra Wilson
Rev. Bob Mitchell	Al Silinski
Pam Palhegyi	Carol Milazzo
Rich Huscher	The Lamberth Family
Booker Cooper	Doreen Holford
Jerry Gross	Ed Kristof
Gloria Folsom	Autumn Kesling
Elizabeth Hoefler	Alan Iversen
Ron Lunt	Christopher Kosary
Sandy Plath	Iris McCoy
Shirley Demyres	Raquel Rameriz
Nick & Bridget DeAngelo	Jorene Pierzga
Sue Hardin	Justin & Ashley Fasel
Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.	Kyle Hughes
Elaine Hoffstetter	Fred Raddatz
Allyson Seehofer	Dana Kahn
Bernadette & Rich Trusk	John Carmichael
Donald Hakanson	Lisa Thomas
Donna Campbell	Carl Hoppe
Roberta Owens	Judy Collins
Paul Noffke	Sue Sortino
Pam Brown	Lisa Sanders
Shawn Harland	Ann Herold
Kristie Mercer	Skip Sorensen
Barb Potter	Wayne Volk
Terry McDonagh	Joe Evans
Charley Heitz	Chuck Kraut

Please let the church office know when your need for our congregational prayers is over (708) 423-1040.