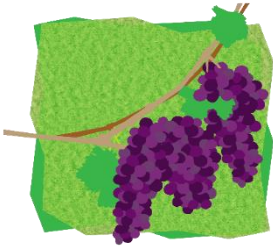


ORDER OF DIVINE SERVICE

Fifth Sunday after Easter – May 2, 2012



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.

PREPARATION

Invocation

- P In the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Opening Hymn Christ Is Our Cornerstone #912 v.1, 3

- 1 Christ is our cornerstone,
 On Him alone we build;
With His true saints alone
 The courts of heav'n are filled.
On His great love
 Our hopes we place
 Of present grace
And joys above.

- 3 Oh, then, with hymns of praise
 These hallowed courts shall ring;
Our voices we will raise
 The Three in One to sing
And thus proclaim

In joyful song,
Both loud and long,
That glorious name.

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Children's Message and Song "His Banner Over Me Is Love"
#118 v.3, 6 AGPS

Opening Sentences *Psalm 34:8; 104:24, 31; 147:11*

P The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,
C **in those who hope in His steadfast love.**

P Taste and see that the LORD is good!
C **Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!**

P O LORD, how manifold are Your works!
C **In wisdom have You made them all.**

P May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
C **may the LORD rejoice in His works.**

Confession and Absolution

P As penitent people, we ask God for His grace and mercy.

Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.

C **O almighty God, most merciful Father, I, a repentant sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended You. By nature I am a sinful creature. In thought, word, and deed I have continually transgressed Your Law. For this I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a penitent and contrite being.**

Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of Your Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful life and bear fruit in keeping with true repentance.

P God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

C **Amen.**

P As you believe, so let it be. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore 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.**

**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.**

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

Kyrie

C **Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.
O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

First Reading *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.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm *Psalm 150; antiphon: v. 6*

¹Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty heavens!

²Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his excellent greatness!

³Praise him with trumpet sound;

praise him with lute and harp!

⁴Praise him with tambourine and dance;

praise him with strings and pipe!

⁵Praise him with sounding cymbals;

praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

⁶Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD!

Epistle *1 John 4:1–21*

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. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in

love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel *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.**

Hymn

Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen

#474 v. 1, ref, 2–3, 5

- 1 Alleluia!
Jesus is risen!
Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb,
Heaven forever!
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight! Refrain
- ref Jesus is risen and we shall arise:
Give God the glory! Alleluia!
- 2 Walking the way,
Christ in the center
Telling the story to open our eyes;
Breaking our bread,
Giving us glory:
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise. Refrain
- 3 Jesus the vine,
We are the branches;
Life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;
Heaven to earth,
Christ to the people,
Gift of the future now flowing to me. Refrain
- 5 City of God,
Easter forever,
Golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
River of life,
Saints and archangels,
Sing with creation to God the I AM! Refrain
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Sermon "Keep Connected to Christ" (John 15:1-8)

Apostles' Creed

**C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And 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.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life (+) everlasting. Amen.**

Prayer of the Church

P Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son,

by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend [*names*, and] all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

(additional petitions spoken here)

After each petition:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**C 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.**

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.

Closing Hymn On What Has Now Been Sown #921

1 On what has now been sown
Thy blessing, Lord, bestow;
The pow'r is Thine alone
To make it sprout and grow.
Do Thou in grace the harvest raise,
And Thou alone shalt have the praise!

- 2 To Thee our wants are known,
From Thee are all our pow'rs;
Accept what is Thine own
And pardon what is ours.
Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive,
And to Thy Word a blessing give.
- 3 O grant that each of us,
Now met before Thee here,
May meet together thus
When Thou and Thine appear
And follow Thee to heav'n, our home.
E'en so, amen, Lord Jesus, come!

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