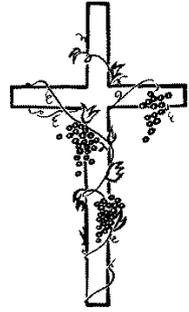


## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

SUNDAY, 9:00 A.M., MAY 2, 2021

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*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 described 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.*



**Welcome to guests and visitors!** *This pamphlet will guide your worship today. The assembly's parts are indicated by ☒ and bold font. The vertical line in the left margin indicates when the assembly stands as each is able.*

### About Holy Communion with Saint John Lutheran Church

"It is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and received there" (Augsburg Confession, Article X). "A person who has faith in these words, 'given for you' and 'shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,' is really worthy and well prepared." "Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament" (The Small Catechism, Part VI). "This church practices Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcomed to Communion" (The Use of the Means of Grace, Principle 50).

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### EASTER GREETING

*Following the introductory verses:*

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

☒ **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

*A welcome and introduction to the day are made.*

### THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

☒ **Amen.**

### SAINT JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)

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Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

**☩ We thank you, O God.**

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

**☩ We bless you, O God.**

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

**☩ We praise you, O God.**

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**☩ Amen.**

### **ENTRANCE PSALM (98)**

<sup>1</sup>Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things.

**☩ <sup>2</sup>With his right hand and his holy arm  
has he won for himself the victory.**

<sup>4</sup>He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

**☩ <sup>5</sup>Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands;  
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

<sup>6</sup>Sing to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the voice of song.

**☩ <sup>7</sup>With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
shout with joy before the king, the Lord.**

Glory 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.**

### 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.**

### CANTICLE OF PRAISE

This is the feast of victory for our God.

**☩ Alleluia. Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,  
whose blood set us free to be people of God.  
Power and riches and wisdom and strength,  
and honor and blessing and glory are his.**

This is the feast of victory for our God.

**☩ Alleluia. Sing with all the people of God  
and join in the hymn of all creation:  
Blessing and honor and glory and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

This is the feast of victory for our God,

**☩ for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.  
Alleluia. Alleluia.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

**☩ And also with you.**

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

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

<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.

The word of the Lord.

**☒ Thanks be to God.**

#### **PSALMODY: Psalm 22:24-30**

<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.

**☒ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.**

### **SECOND READING: 1 John 4:7-21**

<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.

The word of the Lord.

**☩ Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia.

**☩ Alleluia.**

The right hand of the Lord is exalted;

**☩ the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.**

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again;

**☩ death no longer has dominion over him.**

Alleluia. I am the vine, you are the branches.

**☩ Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit. Alleluia.**

### GOSPEL: John 15:1-8

The holy gospel according to John.

**☩ Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.**

### SERMON

*Silence for reflection may follow the sermon.*

## MUSICAL OFFERING

### EASTER GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**☩ Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

### PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**☩ And also with you.**

*The assembly remains in place, as the service continues.*

### NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**☩ 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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
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,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who 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.**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.*

**☩ Your mercy is great.**

*The prayers conclude: In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**☩ Amen.**

### **OFFERING PRESENTATION**

*Offerings are received at the door as one enters. The offering is presented for the work of Christ's Church, here and throughout the world.*

### **OFFERTORY**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**☩ Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;

**☩ make known his deeds among the nations;  
proclaim that his name is exalted.**

<sup>5</sup>Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;  
let this be known in all the earth.

**☩ <sup>6</sup>Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

Alleluia.

**☩ Alleluia.**

## OFFERING PRAYER

*At the conclusion, the assembly responds:*

**☞ Amen.**

*The table is set.*

## DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

*The minister continues, concluding: ... and join their unending hymn:*

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (SANCTUS)

**☞ 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.**

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. . . .

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**☞ Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life . . .

Grace our table with your presence.

**☞ Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. . . .

Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

**☞ Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places . . .  
we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.  
**☩ Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**☩ 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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The risen Christ invites us to receive from this table.  
Eat and be satisfied.

**☩ Thanks be to God.**

### **COMMUNION SONG (AGNUS DEI)**

**☩ Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

### **COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION**

*Please remain seated where you are. The communion elements will be brought to you. The host is received in your open hand. The wine will be taken by you from an individual glass. Carefully place your empty glass on the pew until end of worship.*

### **BLESSING & POST-COMMUNION PSALM (80)**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**☩ Amen.**

<sup>1</sup>Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;  
**☒ shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.**

<sup>8</sup>You have brought a vine out of Egypt;  
**☒ you cast out the nations and planted it.**

<sup>9</sup>You prepared the ground for it;  
**☒ it took root and filled the land.**

<sup>10</sup>The mountains were covered by its shadow  
**☒ and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.**

<sup>11</sup>You stretched out its tendrils to the sea  
**☒ and its branches to the river.**

<sup>14</sup>Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven; behold and tend this vine;  
**☒ preserve what your right hand has planted.**

<sup>16</sup>Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand,  
**☒ the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.**

<sup>17</sup>And so will we never turn away from you;  
**☒ give us life, that we may call upon your name.**

Glory 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.**

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*At the conclusion, the assembly responds:*

**☒ Amen.**

#### BLESSING

*Response after the blessing:*

**☒ Amen.**

#### MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please check web-sites and printed materials for further information.*

## DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**☩ Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**☩ Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

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### We Are the Branches

To encourage flowering and fruit production in vines, trees, and shrubs, most of us know that pruning is necessary. This isn't the easiest of work, nor does it make the pruned plant look all that great for a while afterward. Yet often what results after pruning is a plant that is more abundant, beautiful, and healthy than it would have been otherwise.

In our reading today, Jesus makes it very clear that he is the vine, his Father is the vine grower, and we, his disciples, are the branches on which fruit grows. Without the vine and the vine grower, the branches do not exist. Yet, often in our spiritual lives it seems as though we get these roles mixed up. We are wooed by the sense of accomplishment and value that comes from producing results of one kind or another, and we fail to acknowledge the source that makes that "fruit" possible.

However, in today's gospel, Jesus reminds us that our job isn't to produce results; it's to stay connected. "Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing," Jesus says (John 15:5). Jesus is our source and strength; it is only by our connection to Jesus the vine that we the branches bear fruit that will last, such as love, compassion, forgiveness, hope, service, kindness, and patience.

To grow this kind of fruit, Jesus relates how necessary it is for us to be pruned occasionally. In other words, those things that are not of God in our lives have to be rooted out from time to time. The process of pruning isn't always the most enjoyable and can even include a good deal of pain, but it leads to lives that are whole and abundant. As we abide in Jesus, we are given the strength we need to endure the pruning process. We also experience the peace that comes from knowing that the fruit that will follow is for the glory of God.