



United in Christ: Hope Now! Hope Always!

“Wait, Israel, for God! Wait with hope! Hope now! Hope always! Psalm 131:3

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

May 2, 2021

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones Lay Ministry Administrator: Jenny Hoffman

Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz Soloist: Kyla Betts

Lector: Jeff Zarth (8:00 a.m.) Cindy Flory (9:15 a.m.)

Ushers: Mark Wilberg, Eric Smedal (8:00 a.m.)

Mike, Siri and Soren Vienneau (9:15 a.m.)

Tune your radio to FM 87.9 Technical Support: Thomas Lehr

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.

CALL TO WORSHIP: “Alleluia, Jesus Is Risen” Johnson/Wold

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

C: Amen.

P: God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Fountain of living water,

C: **pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free.**

Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen

P: Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are ✝ forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus

C: **Amen.**

HYMN: "We Know That Christ is Raised" # 449 ELW vss. 1,2,4

vs. 1: We know that Christ is raised and dies no more.

**Embraced by death, he broke its fearful hold,
and our despair he turned to blazing joy. Hallelujah!**

vs. 2: We share by water in his saving death.

**Reborn, we share with him an Easter life,
as living members of our Savior Christ. Hallelujah!**

**vs. 4: A new creation comes to life and grows
as Christ's new body takes on flesh and blood.**

The universe restored and whole will sing: Hallelujah!

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

Honk your horns to greet one another.

LITANY

P: The word is near you,

C: **on your lips and in your heart.**

P: If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord,

C: **and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**

P: Faith comes from what is heard,

C: **and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.**

HYMN OF PRAISE: "Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!" #380 ELW

**Hallelujah! Jesus lives! He is now the Living One;
from the gloomy halls of death Christ, the conqueror, has gone,
bright forerunner to the skies of his people, yet to rise.**

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

Honk your horns to greet one another.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: **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.

ANTHEM: "Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather" by Yamaguchi & Koizumi

***see note**

FIRST READING: Acts 8:26-40

²⁶⁻²⁸ Later God's angel spoke to Philip: "At noon today I want you to walk over to that desolate road that goes from Jerusalem down to Gaza." He got up and went. He met an Ethiopian eunuch coming down the road. The eunuch had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was returning to Ethiopia, where he was minister in charge of all the finances of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was riding in a chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹⁻³⁰ The Spirit told Philip, "Climb into the chariot." Running up alongside, Philip heard the eunuch reading Isaiah and asked, "Do you understand what you're reading?" ³¹⁻³³ He answered, "How can I without some help?" and invited Philip into the chariot with him. The passage he was reading was this: As a sheep led to slaughter, and quiet as a lamb being sheared, He was silent, saying nothing. He was mocked and put down, never got a fair trial. But who now can count his kin since he's been taken from the earth? ³⁴⁻³⁵ The eunuch said, "Tell me, who is the prophet talking about: himself or some other?" Philip grabbed his chance. Using this passage as his text, he preached Jesus to

him. ³⁶⁻³⁹ As they continued down the road, they came to a stream of water. The eunuch said, “Here’s water. Why can’t I be baptized?” He ordered the chariot to stop. They both went down to the water, and Philip baptized him on the spot. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of God suddenly took Philip off, and that was the last the eunuch saw of him. But he didn’t mind. He had what he’d come for and went on down the road as happy as he could be. ⁴⁰ Philip showed up in Azotus and continued north, preaching the Message in all the villages along that route until he arrived at Caesarea.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL CANTICLE: “Now the Green Blade Rises” #379 ELW

**Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
love lives again, that with the dead has been;
love is come again like wheat arising green.**

The Gospel is announced...

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 15th Chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 15:1-8

15 ¹⁻³ “I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn’t bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken. ⁴ “Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can’t bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can’t bear fruit unless you are joined with me. ⁵⁻⁸ “I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you’re joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can’t produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is—when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN: "Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen" #377 ELW vss. 1-3

**vs 1: Alleluia! Jesus is risen! Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb, heaven forever! Oh, what a miracle God has in sight!**

***Refrain:* Jesus is risen and we shall arise. Give God the glory! Alleluia!**

**vs. 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

**vs. 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

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESION

Honk your horns after each petition.

P: 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.

A Brief Silence

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Honk your horns to greet one another.

OFFERING PRAYER

P: God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and song.

C: Amen

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE 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.

COMMUNION: "In This Feast of Love" by Jarkko Moukonen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Friends of Jesus, come to the table. Receive nourishment for your journey.

The body of Christ, broken for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you."

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace until life everlasting.

C: Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: God of the welcome table,

C: in this meal we have feasted on your goodness and have been united by your presence among us. Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts so that we may share your neighborly love with all, through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life. Amen.

ANOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Honk your horns one last time.

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

SENDING HYMN: “Christ is Alive!” #389 ELW vss. 1,2,5

**vs. 1: Christ is alive! Let Christians sing. The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring. Love, drowned in death, shall never die.**

**vs. 2: Christ is alive! No longer bound to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now, and touching ev’ry place and time.**

**vs. 5: Christ is alive, and comes to bring good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring with joy, with justice, love, and praise.**

POSTLUDE: “Salve Festa Dies” Vaughn Williams/Biery

Children taking First Communion today: Adelaide Borchert, Charles Brabender,
Elaine Conant.

*The anthem based on ELW hymn #530 expresses Christian unity in diversity, especially cultural or ethnic diversity. As servants of the Lord, believers sing of hope amid change and turmoil. They find rest in the Lord's peace and proclaim their purpose by living the way of Christ. While serving as a pastor in Toyohashi, Japan, Tokuo Yamaguchi (1900 -1995) wrote the text for the 14th International Christian Education Conference held in Tokyo in 1958.

The tune TOKYO is based on the ancient Japanese Gagaku mode of musical composition. Gagaku is the name for all traditional Japanese court music, much of it dating back to the eighth century, with previous roots in Chinese music. Composed by Isao Koizumi (1907-1992) for Yamaguchi's text. Like much Asian music, TOKYO consists of only five pitches.