

## Sunday, May 2, 2021—Fifth Sunday of Easter

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Instrumental Hymn: “You Servants of God” (adapted)  
vss. 1 & 4

1. You ser-vants, of God, your Mas-ter pro-claim  
And pub-lish a-broad God’s won-der-ful name  
The name, all vic-to-rious of Je-sus ex-tol:  
His king-dom is glo-rious, He rules o-ver all.

4. Then let us adore, and give Him His right  
All glo-ry and pow’r, all wis-dom and might,  
All hon-or and bless-ing, with an-gels a-bove,  
And thanks nev-er ceas-ing, and in-fi-nite love.

Call to Worship

We gather at the urging of the Spirit, to offer praise and thanks to God. Let us lift our voices in glad songs as we worship God in this hour. Amen!

Prayer of Invocation:

Awesome God, whose love claims us and redeems us, join us as we worship you. Speak to us through your Word. Pour out the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that we may be empowered to carry on the works of grace that were begun in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen!

First Reading:

Acts 8:26-40

Then 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.) 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 and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited

Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of 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. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life was taken from the earth.”

The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. 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?” He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. 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. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through that region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Epistle Reading:

1 John 4:7-21

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

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

Gospel Reading:

John 15:1-8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 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. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Here ends this reading of the Gospel.

Instrumental Hymn: “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

1. Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in Chris-tian love;  
The fel-low-ship of kin-dred minds is like to that a-bove.
2. Be-fore our Fath-er’s throne, we pour our ar-dent prayers;  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com-fort and our cares.
3. When we a-sun-der part, it gives us in-ward pain;  
But we shall still be join-ed in heart, and hope to meet a-gain

Prayers of the People and 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 for-ever and ever. Amen!

Sermon: "Entwined By Love, We Live to Love"

Instrumental Hymn: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (adapted)  
vss. 1 & 4

1. Love, di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling,  
joy of heav'n to earth come down  
Fix in us your hum-ble dwell-ing,  
all your faith-ful mer-cies crown.  
Je-sus you are all com-pas-sion,  
Pure un-bound-ed love your art.  
Vis-it us with your sal-va-tion  
En-ter ev-ery trem-bling heart.

4. Fin-ish then, your new cre-a-tion,  
Pure and spot-less let us be.  
Let us see your great sal-va-tion,  
Re-stored now, so per-fect-ly.  
Chang-ed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry  
Till in heav'n we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns be-fore you  
Lost in won-der, love, and praise.

Dedication of our Tithes and Offerings

You have been generous towards us, O God, and we are grateful. Filled with gratitude, we bring our gifts and offer our lives. Bless our tithes and offerings, and the ministry they sustain, that together we may proclaim the good news in Jesus Christ to all the world. Amen!

Invitation to Communion

Prayer of Institution and Communion for Online Worshipers

Communion and Benediction for In-Person Worshipers

Postludes

**Please take your bulletin home with you.**