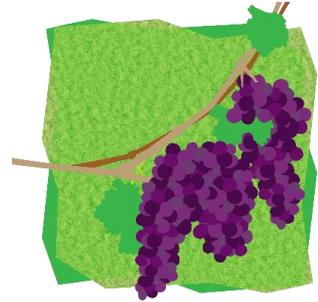


(Assistive Listening is available –
Ask for a Sound Mate personal listening system)

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Growing in Grace

May 2, 2021



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 ✘

HYMN

“Jesus Christ Is Risen Today”

#457

INVOCATION

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the ✘ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 34:8; 104:24, 31; 147:11*

Leader: The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,

People: in those who hope in His steadfast love.

Leader: Taste and see that the LORD is good!
People: **Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!**

Leader: O LORD, how manifold are Your works!
People: **In wisdom have You made them all.**

Leader: May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
People: **may the LORD rejoice in His works.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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

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

People: **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.**

Leader: God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: 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.

People: **Amen.**

✘ WORD ✘

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

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

People: **I will extol You, my God and King,
 and bless Your name forever and ever.**

HYMN OF PRAISE “Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds” #465 vs 1,2,4

SALUTATION

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: 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.

People: **Amen.**

FIRST READING *Acts 8:26–40*

(Philip witnesses about Jesus to the Ethiopian official.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6*

Christ has risen from the dead.

God the Father has crowned Him with glory and honor,
He has given Him dominion over the works of His hands;
He has put all things under His feet.

EPISTLE *1 John 4:1–11* (An exhortation to lives of Christian love)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

VERSE *Romans 6:9, John 14:23*

Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. Alleluia. If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *John 15:1–8*

(Jesus says that He is the vine and His people are the branches.)

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

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY "Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise" #680

SERMON Connected to Christ to Conquer! Pastor Schroeder

CREED *Nicene Creed* found in back of hymnal

OFFERING & PRAYER

(Members and Visitors: We would appreciate it if you would please take this time to fill out and pass the "Who's In The Pew" folders, located at the center aisle end of each pew.)

Leader: Gracious God, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, symbols of your gracious love.

People: **Receive them for the sake of Him who offered Himself for us, Jesus Christ, our brother and Lord.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Leader: 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,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: 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,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: 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,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: 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,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: 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,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: 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,

People: **hear our prayer.**

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

People: **hear our prayer.**

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

People: **Amen.**

A greeting of peace may be exchanged in accord with local custom.

✘ SACRAMENT ✘

PREFACE *2 Timothy 4:22*

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

Leader: It is truly good, right, and proper that we should give thanks to You, Lord, our God, for You have shown mercy to all in Christ our Redeemer, the Vine divine. Receive our thanks that as branches of the Vine, we are created to bear fruit. Unite our praises with those of all the faithful who are connected to Christ and join them with the unending praise of the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of all creation, for You graciously invite us to call upon You with all boldness and confidence. Gathered at Your Table, grant that we receive Your body and blood, fully trusting in Your promises that are fulfilled in Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Unite us to Christ the Vine that we live as fruitful branches and finally grant us a foretaste of the feast to come. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25

Leader: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✕ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✕ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Leader: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: Remembering Your mercy, O Lord, and how our Savior suffered upon the cross, died the death that was ours to die, rose to bestow upon us the life that death cannot overcome, ascended to the glory of the Father’s right hand, and sent forth the Spirit to lead us into faith, we pray You to bring to conclusion all that our Savior began and deliver us to that everlasting life and light in heaven forevermore. Hear us as we pray with one voice the prayer He has taught us:

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

**People: 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.**

PAX DOMINI

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

People: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Chief of Sinners Thought I Be” #611

“Lift High the Cross” #837

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Leader: Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for having fed us with Your life-giving food. Strengthen us through the same and help us to rejoice in Your mercies that we grow daily as fruitful branches of Christ the Vine. Finally, in Your mercy, grant us a portion with the saints in light eternal. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit are one God, world without end.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Leader: 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.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN “Abide, O Dearest Jesus” #919 vs 1,5,6

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Music Leader: Daniel M. Meyers
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*Holy Communion is shared on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month.
A Children’s Message is shared at worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.*