



SUNDAY, MAY 2, 2021

# 5th Sunday of Easter

"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." JOHN 15:5

*Be still and know that I am God by John Bell*

*Be still and know that I am God  
Be still and know that I am God.*

O Lord, open our lips and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.  
In your resurrection, O Christ, let heaven and earth rejoice. Alleluia.

*Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee CP 425*

*Joyful, joyful we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the dark of doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.*

*All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect they rays;  
stars and angels sing around thee, centre of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
chanting bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.*

*Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,  
well spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father and our Mother, all who live in love are thine;  
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.*

Blessed are you, God of our salvation, to you be praise and glory forever.

**As once you ransomed your people from Egypt and led them to freedom in the promised land, so now you have delivered us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the loving reign of the risen Christ.**

May we, the first fruits of your new creation, rejoice in this new day you have made and praise you for your mighty acts.

**Blessed be God: Source of all being, eternal Word and Holy Spirit. Blessed be God for ever.**

*Psalm 22:25-31*

Em *mp* Em<sup>7</sup> Em Em<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup> C Am D Esus<sup>4</sup> Em

O Ho-ly One, in pain and sor-row we know we can turn to you.

My praise is of God in the great assembly;

**I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship the Lord.**

The poor shall eat and be satisfied,  
and those who seek the Lord shall give praise:

**“May your heart live for ever!”**

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

For sovereignty belongs to the Lord,  
**who rules over the nations.**

To God alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship;  
**all who go down to the dust fall before God.**

My soul shall live for God; my descendants shall serve God;  
they shall be known as the Lord’s for ever.

They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn  
**the saving deeds that God has done. RR**

### **Acts 8:26-40**

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards 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 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. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away 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 the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.'

Listen for God's Word. **Our hearts are open.**

Death is swallowed up in victory. **Where, O death, is your sting?**

Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

**Death is swallowed up in victory.**

The trumpet will sound and the dead shall be raised. **Where, O death, is your sting?**

We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed.

**Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your sting?**

### **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 of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour 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 as 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.

Listen for God's Word. **Our hearts are open.**

***Come and Find the Quiet Centre VU 374***

***Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.***

***Silence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, face to face,  
making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.***

***In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain:  
there's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare!***

***John 15:1-8***

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. 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 the 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.

'Listen for God's Word. **Our hearts are open.**

*Sermon*

**'I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your Sovereign.'**

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, **a path in the mighty waters,**

**'Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.**

Behold, I am doing a new thing; **now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?**

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, **to give drink to my chosen people,**  
the people whom I formed for myself, **that they might declare my praise.'**

**Glory to God, Source of all being, eternal Word and Holy Spirit:**

**as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.**

Please join me in reciting the Apostles' 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 again 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.**

***Deep in Our Hearts MV 154***

***Deep in our hearts there is a common vision:  
deep in our hearts there is a common song;  
deep in our hearts there is a common story,  
telling Creation that we are one.***

***Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;  
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;  
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,  
justice and peace in harmony.***

***Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;  
deep in our hearts there is a common theme;  
deep in our hearts there is a common current,  
flowing to freedom like a stream.***

***Deep in our hearts there is a common vision:  
deep in our hearts there is a common song;  
deep in our hearts there is a common story,  
telling Creation that we are one.***

Let us offer our intercessions, petitions and thanksgivings, saying, 'Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.'

May we live as those who believe in the triumph of the cross.

**Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.**

May all people receive the good news of Christ's victory.

**Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.**

May those born to new life in the waters of baptism know the power of Christ's resurrection.

**Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.**

May those who suffer pain and anguish find healing and peace in the compassion of Christ.

**Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.**

May we be united in Christ's undying love with all who have passed through the gates of death.

**Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.**

*Additional intercessions, petitions and thanksgivings may be offered in silence or aloud. Among these concerns it is appropriate to remember*

- *the people of God that they might proclaim the risen Lord;*
- *God's creation that the peoples of the earth may meet their responsibility to care;*
- *those in despair and darkness that they may find the hope and light of Christ;*
- *those in fear of death that they may find faith through the resurrection and*
- *prisoners and captives.*

Let us pray: God of deep soil and luxurious growth, you call us from our shallow selves to find our depth in you: may we abide in him alone who can teach us who we are, Jesus Christ, the true vine. **Amen.**

Rejoicing in God's new creation and gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray as our Saviour taught us,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### ***There's a Spirit in the Air VU 582***

***There's a spirit in the air, telling Christians everywhere:  
"Praise the love that Christ revealed, living, working in our world."***

***Lose your shyness, find your tongue, tell the world what God has done:  
God in Christ has come to stay. Live tomorrow's life today!***

***When believers break the bread, when a hungry child is fed,  
praise the love that Christ revealed, living, working in our world.***

*Still the Spirit gives us light, seeing wrong and setting right:  
God in Christ has come to stay. Live tomorrow's life today!*

*When a stranger's not alone, where the homeless find a home,  
praise the love that Christ revealed, living, working, in our world.*

*May the Spirit fill our praise, guide our thoughts and change our ways.  
God in Christ has come to stay. Live tomorrow's life today!*

*There's a Spirit in the air, calling people everywhere:  
praise the love that Christ revealed, living, working, in our world.*

*Blessing*

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.**  
May the risen Christ grant us the joys of eternal life. **Amen.**

Readings for next Sunday – May 9, 2021

6th Sunday of Easter

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98

1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17