



*John 15:4, NKJV*

**Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**April 28, 2024**

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# *Zion Lutheran Church*

212 South Front Street

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Hamilton, Ohio 45011

www.zionhamilton.org

*Patti Eaton, Vicar*

*Rev. John Mittermaier, Pastor-in-Residence*

*Bill Seale, Music Minister*

*Julia Hilbert, Office Administrator*

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**WELCOME IN THE LORD'S NAME!** We are glad you joined us for worship today and hope that you will find this time of worship an inspiration and that you will feel renewed in the Holy Spirit, at one with God the Father and newly committed to Jesus.

**IF YOU DESIRE PRAYERS** for yourself or others, prayer cards are located in the pew racks. Simply complete the card and place it in the offering plate. You may also email [zionlutheranoffice@gmail.com](mailto:zionlutheranoffice@gmail.com) or call the church office.

As Lutherans, we believe in the Real Presence of our Lord in the communion bread and wine. All Baptized Christians are encouraged to receive the **SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**. Please approach the kneeling rail picking up an empty cup or cup of grape juice on the way. Then go either direction to receive the bread (wafer) and blood (wine or grape juice). Leave your empty cup in the holder on your way back to your seat.

Please take a moment to sign an **ATTENDANCE CARD** found in the pews.

A **NURSERY** is located in room 208/209 in the upper level of the education building and is available for children ages five and under but is unstaffed at this time. You may take your child and stay with them. There is also a "quiet" room in room 201.

**RESTROOMS** can be located by following The Great Hall to the elevator or going up the stairwell to the Fourth Floor. They are located just past the drinking fountain on the right of the hallway.

For more information about **PROGRAMS** offered at Zion, or general information, please review your bulletin, visit our website at [zionhamilton.org](http://zionhamilton.org) and "like" Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church on Facebook.

If you have **QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE**, please reach out to our ushers who are available at the back of the sanctuary.

**THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS TIME WITH US!** May God's blessings be with you this week and we look forward to your joining us again.

**Reaching out with God's love.**

## **Fifth Sunday of Easter**

April 28, 2024

*Setting Two, LBW*

### **Introduction** (for silent meditation)

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**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **PRELUDE**

*Let Us Break Bread Together* - Spiritual arranged by Tom Fettke

(Please use the prelude as quiet preparation for worship.)

### **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

*P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the wellspring of grace,  
our Easter and our joy.*

**C Amen.**

*P Look, here is water!*

**C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

*P Immersed in the promises of baptism,  
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.*

*P We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning  
your voice thundered over the deep  
and water became the essence of life.  
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.  
The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.  
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea  
into freedom's land.  
In a desert pool the Ethiopian official  
entered your boundless baptismal life.*

*P Look, here is water!*

**C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

*P At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John  
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection  
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,  
freeing us to live as Easter people.*

*We rejoice with glad hearts,  
giving all honor and praise to you,  
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.*

**C Amen.**

*P Look, here is water!*

**C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

*Stand*

*P Alleluia! Christ is risen.*

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

*Stand*

**HYMN** *Now the Green Blade Rises*

# 379



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,  
2 In the grave they laid him, love by ha - tred slain,  
3 Forth he came at Eas - ter like the ris - en grain,  
4 When our hearts are win - try, griev - ing, or in pain,



wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;  
think - ing that he would nev - er wake a - gain,  
he that for three days in the grave had lain;  
your touch can call us back to life a - gain,



love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;  
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps un - seen;  
raised from the dead, my liv - ing Lord is seen;  
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

Text: John MacLeod Campbell Crum, 1872–1958

Music: NOËL NOUVELET, French carol

Text from *Oxford Book of Carols*, © Oxford University Press 1928. All rights reserved.

Stand

## GREETING

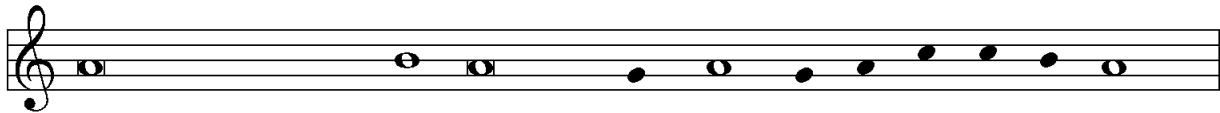
*P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

**C And also with you.**

## KYRIE



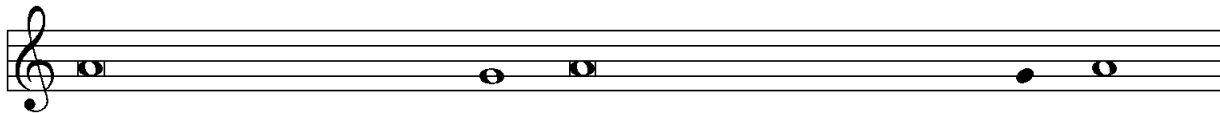
**A** In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



**A** For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



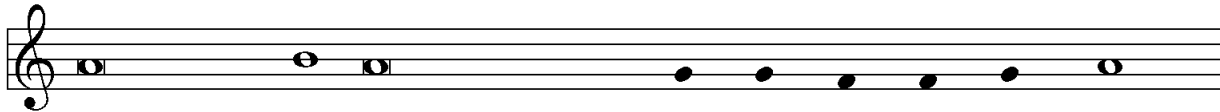
**A** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



**A** For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



**A** Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord. **C** A - men

## HYMN OF PRAISE



**A** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



**B** Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*P The Lord be with you.*

**C And also with you.**

*P Let us pray: 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.*

**C Amen**

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## **THE WORD OF THE LORD**

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*Sit*

### **FIRST LESSON**

Acts 8:26-40

*Led by the Spirit, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official who is returning to his African home after having been to Jerusalem to worship. Philip uses their encounter to proclaim the gospel to him. Upon coming to faith in Jesus, he is baptized by Philip.*

<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.

*L Word of God. Word of Life.*

**C Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 22:25-31**

(read responsively)

*<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the great assembly;*

**I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.**

*<sup>26</sup>The poor shall eat and be satisfied,*

**Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

*<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;*

**all the families of nations shall bow before God.**

*<sup>28</sup>For dominion belongs to the LORD,*

**who rules over the nations.**

*<sup>29</sup>Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;*

**all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.**

*<sup>30</sup>Their descendants shall serve the LORD,*

**whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

*<sup>31</sup>They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,*

**saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"**

**SECOND LESSON**

1 John 4:7-21

*We love God and others because God first loved us. We cannot say we love God, whom we have not seen, while hating fellow Christians, whom we regularly see. Love toward God is to be matched by love toward others because the essence of God is love.*

<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.

*L Word of God. Word of Life.*

**C Thanks be to God.**



Stand

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## GOSPEL

John 15:1-8

*P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.*

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

*On the night of his arrest, Jesus taught his disciples about the relationship they would have with him. Those who abide in his word and love bear fruit, for apart from him, they can do nothing.*

[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.”

*After the reading:*

*P The Gospel of the Lord.*

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sit

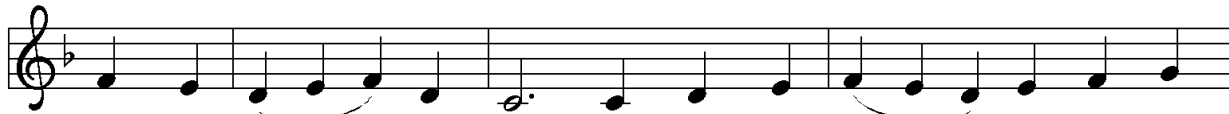
## YOUTH MESSAGE

## SERMON

Staying Connected



1 O bless - ed spring, where word and sign em - brace us  
 2 Through sum - mer heat of youth - ful years, un - cer - tain  
 3 When au - tumn cools and youth is cold, when limbs their  
 4 As win - ter comes, as win - ters must, we breathe our  
 5 Christ, ho - ly Vine, Christ, liv - ing Tree, be praised for



in - to Christ the Vine: here Christ en - joins each one to  
 faith, re - bel - lious tears, sus - tained by Christ's in - fus - ing  
 heav - y har - vest hold, then through us, warm, the Christ will  
 last, re - turn to dust; still held in Christ, our souls take  
 this blest mys - ter - y: that word and wa - ter thus re -



be a branch of this life - giv - ing Tree.  
 rain, the boughs will shout for joy a - gain.  
 move with gifts of beau - ty, wis - dom, love.  
 wing and trust the prom - ise of the spring.  
 vive and join us to your Tree of Life.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953

Music: BERGLUND, Robert Buckley Farlee, b. 1950

Text © 1993 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Music © 1993 Robert Buckley Farlee, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## NICENE CREED

*P With the whole church, let us confess our faith.*

**C 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;  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and  
was made man.**

**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.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He 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**

*Kneel as you are able.*

## **THE PRAYERS**

*Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.*

*A brief silence.*

*We pray for the church around the world, for all ministers, and for the mission of the gospel, including All Saints Lutheran Church in Cincinnati and Bridgewater Church in Hamilton. Keep all the newly baptized and confirmed in your care. Cleanse our hearts with your word and help us to abide in you always. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.***

*For the well-being of the earth and of all created things: for rivers and lakes, streams and estuaries, melting glaciers and polluted waters (local bodies of water may be named). Renew the face of the earth and shower us with your goodness. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.***

*For the nations and all those in authority: for local, state, and national leaders, for elected representatives at every level, and for international organizations, that justice and peace may reign. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.***

*For all those in need: for any experiencing homelessness or unemployment, for those fleeing from oppression or seeking asylum, and for all who are ill or suffering especially:*

Patrice Huston	Libby Brice	Bob Campbell
Maggie Brice	Donna Wolfe	Wayne Huston
Gayle Ford	Wanda Melford	Patti Sroufe
Glen French	Dennis Steele	Elmira Peterson
Clay Calihan	Minnette Bunnell	Sonya Solomon
Joyce Edler	Pam Tipton Davis	Jim Piatt
Hilary Campbell	Levi	Rob Keelor
Joni Copas	Jim Scheibling	Ed Fredian
Mike Ford	Barbara Shearer	Courtney McKee
Michael Frye (son)	Tonya Tobin	Brynn
Irene Graham	Don Boling	Patsy Kreitler
Ron Hill	Larry Jones	Earl Robinson
Pat Barnhorst	Ralph Estes	Bob Niederman
Matt Schamp	Sheryl Engel	Ron House
Tom Hole	Greg Gault	Shirley Johnson

Joan Cunningham

Our friends at home: Doug Edwards, 1133 Goodman Ave, Hamilton, OH 45013

*God of grace,*

**hear our prayer.**

*For this congregation: for the caring ministries of this faith community, for all who visit and minister to one another, for all who take communion to homes or care centers, and for all who seek to share your love with the world. God of grace,*

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

*With thanksgiving for the saints who rest from their labors. Help us, like them, to bear much fruit and to become your disciples, and at the last, bring us to that heavenly banquet where all will feast together at your table. God of grace,*

**hear our prayer.**

*Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.*

**Amen.**

*Stand*

**PEACE**

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

**C And also with you.**

*The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

*Peace be with you*

**R: Peace be with you.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

### OFFERING

*The offering is received.*

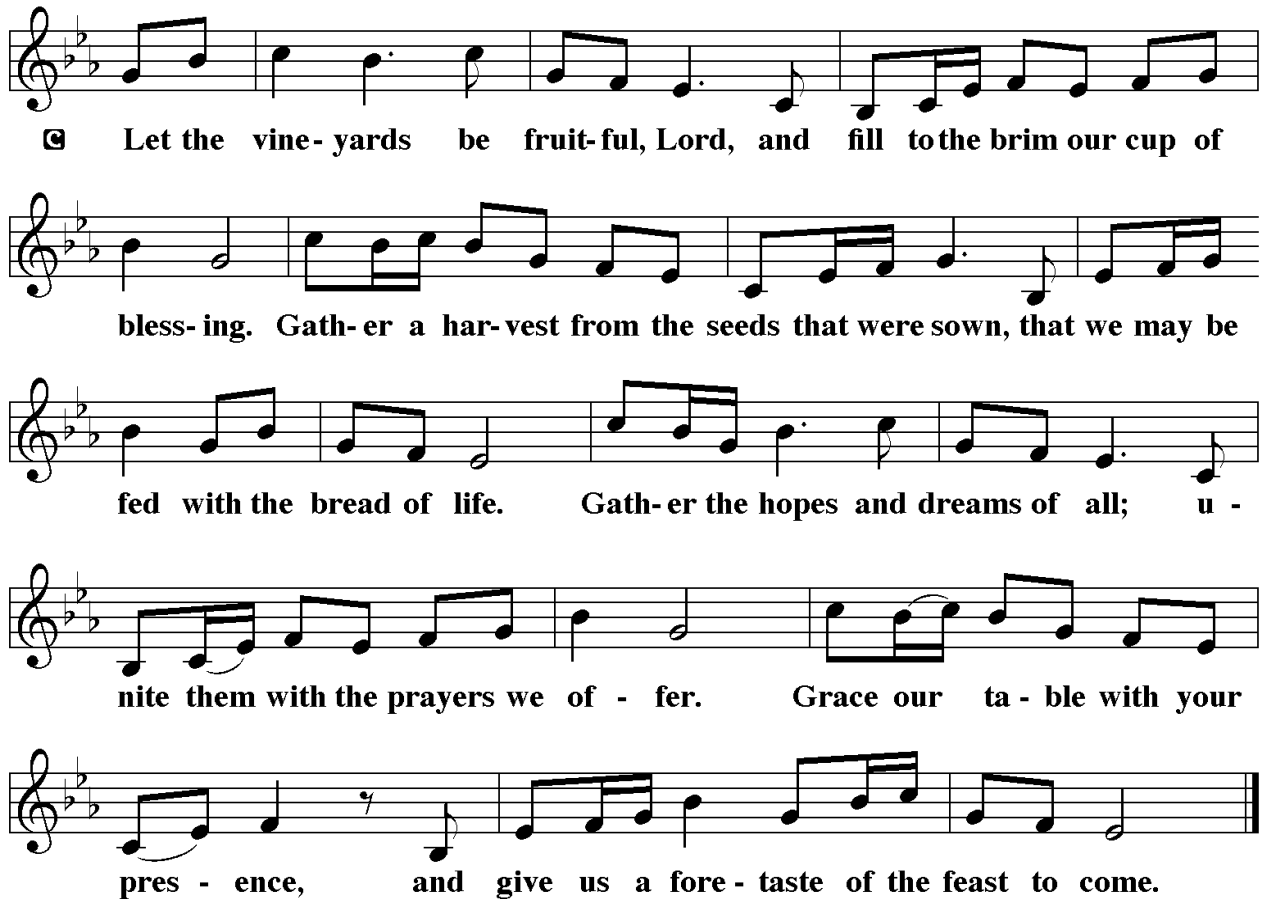
### CHORAL VOLUNTARY

*I Am The Vine – Robert Lau*

Stand

## OFFERTORY

As the plates are presented, the appointed Offertory is sung.



**C** Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

*P* Let us pray. Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

**C** Amen

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## HOLY COMMUNION

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### GREAT THANKSGIVING

*P* The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

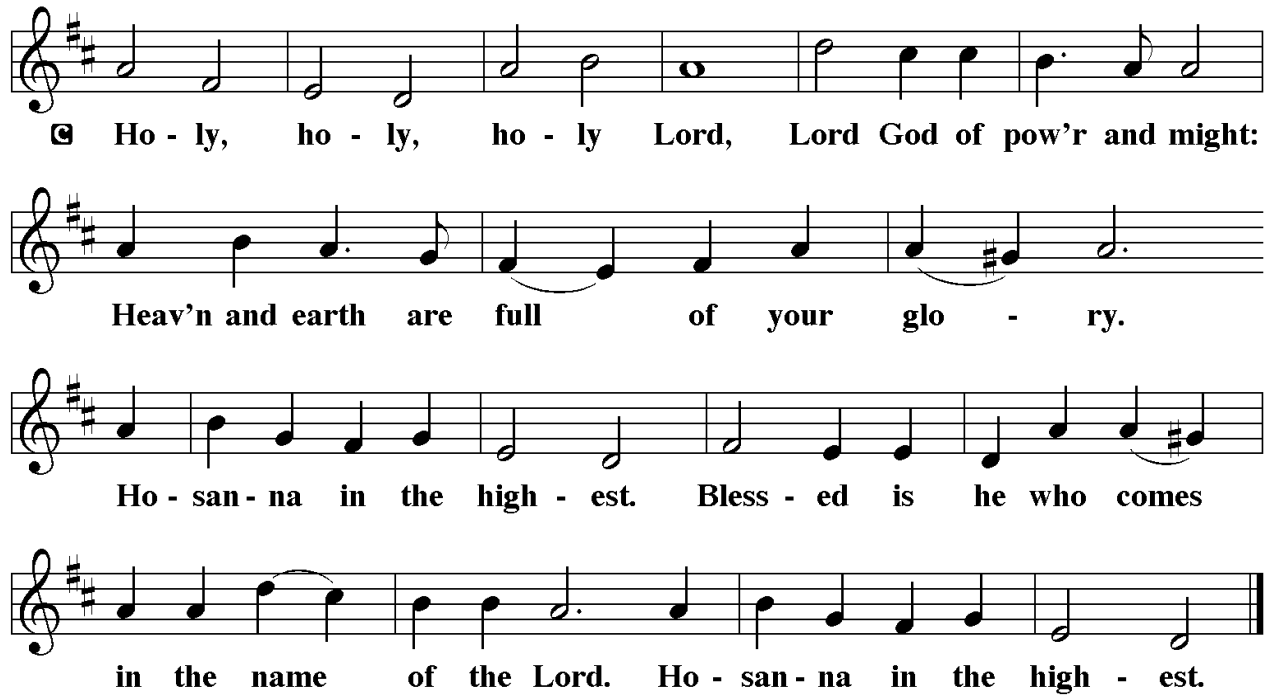
*P* Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them to the Lord.

*P* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*P* It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:  
 Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

*Holy, living, and loving God,*

*we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.*

*We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood,  
 for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,  
 and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.*

*We give you thanks for Jesus  
 who, living among us,  
 healed the sick,  
 fed the hungry,  
 and with a love stronger than death,  
 gave his life for others.*

*In the night in which he was betrayed,  
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
 Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
 Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Remembering, therefore,  
 his life-giving death and glorious resurrection,  
 we await your promised life for all this dying world.  
 Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup:*

*carry us in your arms from death to life,  
that we may live as your chosen ones,  
clothed in the righteousness of Christ.*

*Through him all glory and honor is yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church,  
both now and forever.*

**Amen**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

*P Lord, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray:*

**C 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**

*P The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread.  
Come and eat at God's table.*

*Sit*

## **COMMUNION**



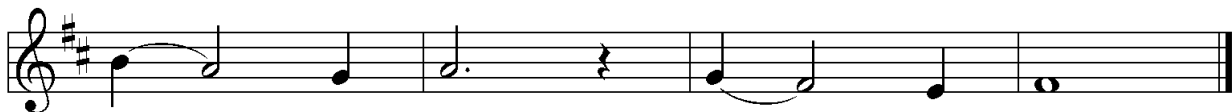
**Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.**



**Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.**



**Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;**



**grant us peace, grant us peace.**



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;  
 2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;  
 3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;  
 4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.  
 5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.  
 let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.  
 as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.  
 Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.  
 that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, alt.  
 Music: TWENTY-FOURTH, attr. Lucius Chapin, 1760–1842  
 Text © 1960 World Library Publications. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

*As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:*  
*The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.*  
*The communicant may say: **Amen***

*Stand*  
*P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ*  
*strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

**C Amen**

**CANTICLE**



**☞ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.**



**Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re - jice and proud - ly bear his name.**



**He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy**



**with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.**



*P Let us pray. Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend.*

**C Amen**

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## SENDING

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### BLESSING

*P Alleluia! Christ is risen!*

**C Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

*P The God of resurrection power,  
the Christ of unending joy,  
and the Spirit of Easter hope  
✠ bless you now and always.*

**C Amen**

**HYMN** *Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death*

# 452



1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;  
2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,  
3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,  
4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;  
5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.



so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.  
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.  
one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.  
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.  
A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984

Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829

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### DISMISSAL

*P Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.*

**C Reaching out with God's love. Alleluia!**

### POSTLUDE

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* - Ludwig van Beethoven  
Arr. Shirley Brendlinger

## FLOWERS

The flowers this morning are given to the glory of God:

*Altar Flowers:* in celebration of Barbara Shearer's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday by Kathy Chambers & Michael Chambers.

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### Today's Worship Assistants

Ministers:..... All Members of this Congregation  
Presider and Preacher:..... Vicar Patti Eaton  
Music Director and Organist:.....Bill Seale  
Worship Assistant:..... Erin Sanchez  
Communion Assistant:.....Sonya Smith  
Acolyte: ..... Pacer Beers  
Lector: .....Sonya Smith  
Technicians:.....Nathaniel Kaelin (streaming)  
Ron Alcorn (radio)  
Ushers:.....Mike Frye, Allen Roberts  
Altar Guild:.....Joan Cunningham

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**Last week's attendance (4/14/2024): 70** in person, **141** including Facebook & YouTube views, and known radio listeners

**Last week's offering (4/21/2024): \$1,013.00**

Thank you for continuing your offering and stewardship commitments. Offering may be put in the offering plate or mailed to the church office. Additionally, Zion has a digital option. We have equipped the website ([www.zionhamilton.org](http://www.zionhamilton.org)) with a digital offering portal. This function allows you to make a one-time or recurring offering gift to Zion. All gifts are recorded to ensure proper tax reporting.



**Attention Zion Members:** We are sending cards again, not only to our shut ins but every member of Zion. We would like them signed by as many people as are here each week. So, each week you'll find a card to sign in the great hall. This is our way of sending out our Christian love to fellow members. Everyone loves to get something besides bills in the mail!

# Fed by God, Nourished by Christ

Imagine a nursing baby at its mother's breast—what a blissful picture of love, joy, peace, and contentment! This image can help us understand who we are as God's beloved children and how tenderly God cares for us. God's grace is unconditional, just as a mother's milk flows to an infant without anything to do with deserving. In today's gospel reading, the vine-and-branches metaphor is another image of how intimately connected Jesus is with us and how crucial it is that we, the branches, hold on to him as our vine.

“Apart from me,” says Jesus, “you can do nothing.” Apart from its vine, a branch can do nothing—cannot live long, cannot produce grapes, cannot nourish people and animals. Apart from its mother or another devoted caregiver, a newborn can do nothing—cannot feed itself, cannot become or stay healthy, cannot grow and bear the fruit of life and love for others. Apart from God's love and care, which Christians know in Jesus, the whole web of humanity fails to thrive.

A nursing mother sets her face and does whatever is needed—two or three times a night at first, even through mastitis, weariness, and boredom—to feed and impart life to her little one. Jesus' face is set toward the cross as he shares farewell counsel with his disciples. He, too, is ready and determined to do whatever it takes—even dying on a cross—to sustain the vineyard-world with abundant life.

The imagery of vine and branches, juxtaposed with that of God breastfeeding her babies, comes alive when we celebrate the eucharist. At the table, Jesus feeds us with his own body and blood, pouring life and nourishment into us. We are called to abide in him forever—an invitation to grace-filled, permanent relationship. In Jesus the true vine, we his branches enjoy a continual flow of grace, mercy, and love. In turn, we are energized to bear the fruit of his love, joy, and peace for the world.