

# Ascension Lutheran Church

**Fifth Sunday of Easter** ..... **May 2, 2021**

**Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!**

*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.*

## **PRELUDE**

Please stand.

### **\*THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,  
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,  
for these waters where you make us new,  
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us  
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,  
like rains to our thirsting earth,  
like streams that revive our souls,  
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.  
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.  
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

Make us one, risen Christ.  
Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life.  
To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God, now and forever.  
Amen.

Please be seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

**HYMN #379** ..... **“Now the Green Blade Rises”**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,<br/>wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;<br/>love lives again, that with the dead has been;<br/>love is come again like wheat arising green.</p> | <p>3 Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,<br/>he that for three days in the grave had lain;<br/>raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;<br/>love is come again like wheat arising green.</p>          |
| <p>2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,<br/>thinking that he would never wake again;<br/>laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;<br/>love is come again like wheat arising green.</p>  | <p>4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving,<br/>or in pain,<br/>your touch can call us back to life again,<br/>fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;<br/>love is come again like wheat arising green.</p> |

Text: John MacLeod Campbell Crum, 1872-1958

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

Please stand.

**\*GREETING**

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

**And also with you.**

## **\*KYRIE**

In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,  
and for the unity of all , let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us  
pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

## **\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.  
**Amen.**

Please be seated.

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

A reading from Acts.

<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.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 22:25-31** (read responsively by whole verse)

<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!”

Please stand for the reading of the gospel.

**\*GOSPEL: John 15:1-8**

The holy gospel according to John, the fifteenth chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

**SERMON ..... The Rev. Christina Auch**

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin  
my hand will save.  
I, who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?"

*Refrain*

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the  
night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my  
heart.

2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them.  
They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them.  
Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them.  
My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide  
till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them.  
Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

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Please stand.

**\*NICENE CREED**

God has gathered his people into one Church through Christ. Together with sisters and brothers throughout the world, we confess our faith.

**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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

### **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

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. **Your mercy is great.**

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. **Your mercy is great.**

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. **Your mercy is great.**

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. We pray especially for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts.....

**Kathy** Backof (Donna Lilly's friend), **Martha** Beam (Eleanor Hendrick's friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Adam** Bridges & **Brittany** Smith (Libby Stone's cousin and his fiancé), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant's grandson), **Kathy** Callahan (Ludie Wilkie's friend), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges' friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges' Aunt), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams' friends), **Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long's friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman's friend), **Charles** Duval (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Barbara Duval** (Ludy Wilkie's friends), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie's friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White's friend), **Carol Ann** Forgas (Bill Bridges' friend), **Chris** Galloway (Vicky Galloway's husband), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Carl** Greenwald (DeBell's friends), **Richard** Hollifield (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne's friend), **Debbie** Irvin (Bill Bridges' friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Kay** Johnson (Eleanor Hendrick's cousin), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mark** Kailing (Bob and Vickie Jones' nephew), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William's niece), **Bryan** Legrand (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman's friend), **Pam** Lucas (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Maribeth** Norris Mies (Carol Berger's cousin), **Mary Bell** Moore (Lacy's neighbor), **Jane** Morrow (Daryl and Rose Cook's friend), **Pat** Mullen (Johanna Gillespie's friend), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly's niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer (Carol Berger's sister), **Gerard** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's brother), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges' friends), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Shannon** Sellers (Libby Stone's cousin), **Jean and Jim** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend), **Jerry** Tesseneer (Daryl and Rose Cook's friend), **Georgeanne** Thomas (Judy Bridges friend), **David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop's husband), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck's friend's mother), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan's brother), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams' grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley

(Sandra Waldrop's aunt)

**Members:** **Dean** Davis, **Lin** Washburn, **Dot** Paul, **Bob** Bryant, **William** Coyne, **Jim** Wilson, **Bobbie** Johnson, **Gerald** Washburn, **Ray** Valentine, **Lucinda** Wallen, **Lisa** Upton, **Sandy** Harman and **Ann** Sipe.

**In Undergraduate College:** **Emma** Auch, **Brooke** Buchanan, **Samantha** Hoffman, **Jacob** Stone, **Catherine** Lilly

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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.  
**Your mercy is great.**

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.  
**Amen.**

Please be seated.

**THE PEACE OF CHRIST** (We are not “passing” the peace in any physical way. Online you are invited to share a greeting of peace in the comments.)

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

**OFFERING**

*Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate.2. Click the registration link and enter your payment information.3. Receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.*

*Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.*

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

**OFFERTORY HYMN #184** ..... **“Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”**

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,  
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.  
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,  
that we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;  
unite them with the prayers we offer.  
Grace our table with your presence,  
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

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Please stand.

**\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**\*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,  
almighty and merciful God,

for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,

the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin.;

who in dying has destroyed death,

and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the

resurrection with earth and sea and all their creatures,  
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,  
we praise your name and join their unending praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

**\*WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

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.

**\*LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.  
**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**

The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied.

Please be seated.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

This is the body and blood of Christ, given and shed for you. **Amen.**

Please remain seated.

If you are not communing, please receive this blessing for you:

“Jesus loves you and keeps you all the days of your life.”

### **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

Wellspring of joy,

through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.

Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses,

that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

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. **Amen.**

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

**HYMN #805** .....

**“Lead on, O King Eternal!”**

- 1 Lead on, O King eternal!  
The day of march has come;  
henceforth in fields of conquest  
your tents will be our home.  
Through days of preparation  
your grace has made us strong;  
and now, O King eternal,  
we lift our battle song.
- 2 Lead on, O King eternal,  
till sin's fierce war shall cease,  
and holiness shall whisper  
the sweet amen of peace;  
for not with swords loud clashing,  
nor roll of stirring drums,  
but deeds of love and mercy  
the heav'nly kingdom comes.
- 3 Lead on, O King eternal:  
we follow, not with fears,  
for gladness breaks like morning  
where'er your face appears.  
Your cross is lifted o'er us;  
we journey in its light;  
the crown awaits the conquest;  
lead on, O God of might!

Text: Ernest W. Shurtleff, 1862-1917

**DISMISSAL**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

You are the body of Christ raised up for the world.

Go in peace. Share the Good News.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!**

**POSTLUDE**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Holy Communion** When you are worshiping at home, you are encouraged to set up a temporary altar called a tabernacle at home. Find a small table or bench, place on it a nice plate and a cup or goblet. Find a slice or loaf of bread and use either wine or grape juice in the cup. When the time comes for communion, lift the bread and wine with the pastor, giving thanks to God for the gift of communion that offers us forgiveness, community, and new life in Christ.

**Indoor Worship:** We are worshiping in the sanctuary with COVID-safe precautions. Medical masks and social distancing are required. Seating is limited, communion will be received with prepackaged elements and there will not be any congregational singing. The service is limited to 50 people so please sign up in advance by using the link in the e-news or calling or emailing the office or Pastor Christina.

**Fellowship Hall Use:** The fellowship hall is available for groups of less than 50 with social distancing and masks required and no food or drink allowed. The kitchen remains closed. Contact Debby in the church office for more information.

**Prayer Concerns:** Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

**Please continue your tithes and offerings.** Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt.

Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.

## **A LOOK AHEAD**

**May 2** – 9 a.m. Bible Study (Zoom); 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion (in person, and streaming on Facebook and Zoom)

**May 4** – 7 p.m. Congregation Council

**May 9** – 9 a.m. Bible Study (Zoom); 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion (in person, and streaming on Facebook and Zoom)

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# **Ascension Lutheran Church**

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**Rose Cook, Financial Secretary**

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