

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THEME: God supplies us with a great source for encouragement.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING BLESSING

P: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

OPENING UP TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

P: Gracious Lord God,

C: **We come to you in worship to give you thanks and praise....but we're here because of your grace which covers our sins. It is important for us to remember that we are sinners, breaking your law of love in many ways. Today we think especially of our tendency to lose our connection with you. We think that we are self-sufficient. Teach us today that we need to be connected to Jesus—the vine. Forgive us, Lord, and help us to see clearly that by being connected to you, we can love others as you command.**

CONFESSIONAL SONG

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer,
When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer,
Come and listen to me.

(Repeat)

P: God is good and gracious, and looks at us with the eyes of love that see past our narrowness and self-righteousness, that forgives these and all our sins, so that we can be at peace with him and live more powerfully in his love. By the loving urging of God, I therefore proclaim to you now the forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

SONG OF PRAISE

Lord I Lift Your Name On High

Lord I lift your name on high, Lord I love to sing your praises
I'm so glad you're in my life, I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from heaven to earth, to show the way

From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay

From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky

Lord, I lift your name on high.

(repeat)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us Pray.....O God, we experience great changes in this world. Just when we think that we have settled into a comfortable routine, quickly life changes. As we think about our life, very little has remained constant. But You have remained constant. Your love for us is the same. What You command, promise and desire is the same. Direct our hearts today where true joy can be found. Remind us that we are Your people. We pray this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Old Testament: Acts 8:26-40

God provides a needed guide for the Ethiopian eunuch

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with 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 before its shearer is silent,
so he opens not his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Epistle: I John 4:1-11

The sign that we are God's children is that we love one another

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

CHOIR ANTHEM **Are You Washed in the Blood?** **By Elisha A. Hoffman**

GOSPEL: John 15:1-8

A branch bears fruit when connected to the true vine

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. 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. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN “Green Book” 476 **Have no Fear, Little Flock**

Have no fear, little flock;
Have no fear, little flock,
For the Father has chosen
To give you the Kingdom;
Have no fear, little flock!

Have good cheer, little flock;
Have good cheer, little flock,
For the Father will keep you
In his love forever;
Have good cheer, little flock!

Praise the Lord high above;
Praise the Lord high above,
For he stoops down to heal you,
Up lift and restore you,
Praise the Lord high above!

Thankful hearts raise to God;
Thankful hearts raise to God,
For he stays close beside you,
In all things works with you;
Thankful hearts raise to God!

APOSTLE'S CREED

P: We confess our faith along with Christians of all times and places

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

And was born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate.

Was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

And is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

The holy Christian Church,

The communion of saints,

The forgiveness of sins,

The resurrection of the body,

And the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

(We offer our thanksgiving for what God has first given us—ourselves, our time, our possessions)

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Merciful Father,

C: We offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—ourselves, our time and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

After each portion of the prayers, these words are spoken:

P: Lord, in your mercy

C: hear our prayer)

THE 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 him thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Green Book" 296 Just As I Am

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am; thy love unknown
Has broken ev'ry barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

"Red Book" 126 Let Us Break Bread Together

Let us break bread together on our knees;
Let us break bread together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees;
Let us drink wine together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.

Let us bow 'round the altar on our knees;
Let us bow 'round the altar on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees;
Let us praise God together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.

BENEDICTION

P: 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.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POST-SERVICE MUSIC