

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

4672 N Cedar Ave. Fresno, CA 93726

Rev. Michael N. Vernava

Rev. Khai N. Lee

Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 28, 2024

The Mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to honor our Lord Jesus Christ through worship and ministering to all God's people equipping them for service to God and to each other.

CREATIVE WORSHIP

As We Gather: Calling A Faithful Pastor

O Gracious Father, You led Your holy apostles to ordain ministers for the proclamation of Your Word and the Faithful administration of the Sacraments of Christ. Grant to this congregation the guidance of the Holy Spirit to choose a suitable pastor according to Your will for the blessing of Your Church in this place; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRELUDE

Organist

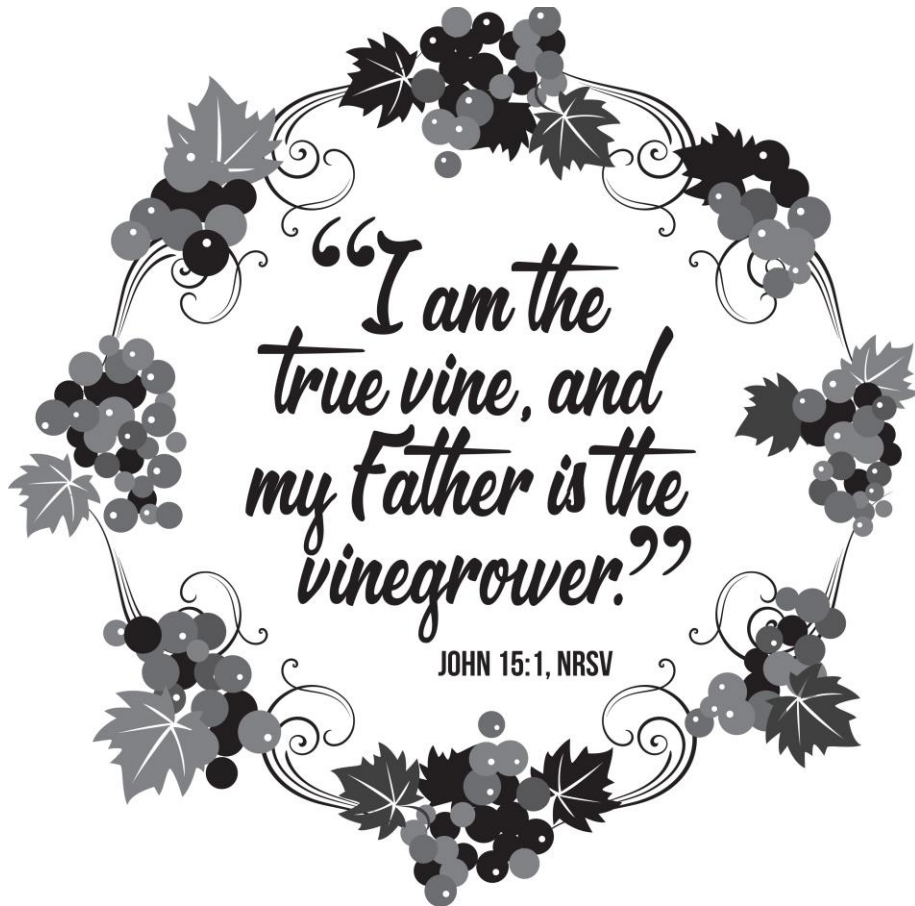
CALL TO WORSHIP

"Glorify Thy Name" – Adkins/Bettcher

OPENING HYMN

"Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain" LSB 487

- 1 Come, you faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness!
God has brought His Israel
Into joy from sadness,
Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters,
Led them with unmoistened foot
Through the Red Sea waters.



- 2 'Tis the spring of souls today:
 Christ has burst His prison
 And from three days' sleep in death
 As a sun has risen;
 All the winter of our sins,
 Long and dark, is flying
 From His light, to whom is giv'n
 Laud and praise undying.
- 3 Now the queen of seasons, bright
 With the day of splendor,
 With the royal feast of feasts
 Comes its joy to render;
 Comes to gladden faithful hearts
 Which with true affection
 Welcome in unwearied strain
 Jesus' resurrection!
- 4 For today among His own
 Christ appeared, bestowing
 His deep peace, which evermore
 Passes human knowing.
 Neither could the gates of death
 Nor the tomb's dark portal
 Nor the watchers nor the seal
 Hold Him as a mortal.
- 5 Alleluia! Now we cry
 To our King immortal,
 Who, triumphant, burst the bars
 Of the tomb's dark portal.
 Come, you faithful, raise the strain
 Of triumphant gladness!

God has brought His Israel
 Into joy from sadness!

Text: John of Damascus, c. 696–c. 754; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt. Text: Public domain

INVOCATION

- P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 66:1–4, 8–9; 40:5

- P Shout for joy to God, all the earth;
- C **sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise!**
- P Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds!
- C **All the earth worships You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to Your name."**
- P Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of His praise be heard,
- C **who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip.**
- P You have multiplied, O LORD my God, Your wondrous deeds and Your thoughts toward us; none can compare with You!
- C **I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.
- C **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.

P God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

C Amen.

P As you believe, so let it be. As a called and ordained servant 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.

C Amen.

PSALM

150

P Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens!

**C Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his excellent greatness!**

P Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!

**C Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!**

P Praise him with sounding cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

**C Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!**

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

KYRIE

L In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

L For the peace from above and for our salvation.
Let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

L 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.

C Lord, have mercy.

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

C Lord, have mercy.

L Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C Amen.

COLLECT

P 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.

C Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 8:26–40

²⁶An 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. ²⁷And 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 worship²⁸ and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah.²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.”³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.³² 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.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.³⁶ 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?”³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.³⁹ 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.⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

1 John 4:1–21

¹Beloved, 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.² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,³ 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.⁴ 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.⁵ They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.⁶ 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.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.⁹ 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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and

whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 15:1–8

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹[Jesus said:] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide 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. ⁵I 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. ⁶If 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. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish,

and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

MESSAGE HYMN

“Fruitful Trees, the Spirit’s Sowing” LSB 691 (Tune: LSB 427)

- 1 Fruitful trees, the Spirit’s sowing,
May we ripen and increase,
Fruit to life eternal growing,
Rich in love and joy and peace.
- 2 Laden branches freely bearing
Gifts the Giver loves to bless;
Here is fruit that grows by sharing,
Patience, kindness, gentleness.
- 3 Rooted deep in Christ our Master,
Christ our pattern and our goal,
Teach us, as the years fly faster,
Goodness, faith, and self-control.
- 4 Fruitful trees, the Spirit’s tending,
May we grow till harvests cease;
Till we taste, in life unending,
Heaven’s love and joy and peace.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926
Text: © 1984 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000368

MESSAGE

**“Life in the Vine”
St. John 15:1–8**

APOSTLES’ CREED

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.
From thence He will come 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.**

OFFERTORY *“He Is Arisen! Glorious Word” LSB 488*

1 He is arisen! Glorious Word!
Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
The gates of heav’n are open.
My Jesus did triumphant die,
And Satan’s arrows broken lie,
Destroyed hell’s fiercest weapon.
O hear what cheer!
Christ victorious,
Rising glorious,
Life is giving.
He was dead but now is living!

Text: Birgitte Katerine Boye, 1742–1824; tr. George A. T. Rygh, 1860–1942, alt. Text: Public domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Following the prayers, the people may greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, “Peace be with you,” as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matt. 5:22–24; Eph. 4:1–3).

LORD’S PRAYER

**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.**

HYMN *“Christ, the Word of God Incarnate” LSB 540*

1 Christ, the Word of God incarnate,
Lord and Son of Abraham;
Christ, the radiance of the Father,
Perfect God, the great I AM;
Christ, the light, You shine unvanquished,
Light and life You bring to all;
Light our path with Your own presence,
Grant us grace to heed Your call.

- 2 Christ, the living bread from heaven,
 Food for body, food for soul;
 Christ, the manna daily given,
 Nourish, strengthen, make us whole.
 Feed us with the food of heaven,
 Foretaste of the feast to be;
 Quench our thirst with living water
 Springing up eternally.
- 3 Christ, the shoot that springs triumphant
 From the stump of Jesse's tree;
 Christ, true vine, You nurture branches
 To bear fruit abundantly.
 Graft us into You, O Savior;
 Prune our hearts so we remain
 Fruitful branches in Your vineyard
 Till eternal life we gain.
- 4 Christ, our good and faithful shepherd,
 Watching all Your lambs and sheep;
 Christ, the gate that guards the sheepfold,
 Never-failing vigil keep.
 When we stray, Good Shepherd, seek us,
 Find us, lift us, bear us home;
 Lamb of God, our shepherd, keep us;
 Let us hear Your voice alone.
- 5 Christ, the way that leads unfailling
 To the Father's home on high,
 Christ, the truth that frees the captive,
 Christ, the life that cannot die.
 Mediator to the Father,
 Sacrifice and great High Priest:

Lead us to Your heav'nly mansions,
 There to share Your wedding feast.

- △ 6 Christ, the Alpha and Omega,
 Christ, the firstborn from the dead,
 Christ, the life and resurrection,
 Christ, the Church's glorious head:
 Praise and thanks and adoration
 And unending worship be
 To the Father and the Spirit
 And to You eternally.

Text: Steven P. Mueller, 1964 Text: © 2001 Steven P. Mueller. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000368

CLOSING PRAYER

P O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life,
 until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and
 the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and
 our work is done. Then, Lord, in Your mercy grant us a
 safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at the last;
 through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

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.

CLOSING HYMN *"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" LSB 469*

- 1 "Christ the Lord is ris'n today!"
 Saints on earth and angels say;
 Raise your joys and triumphs high;
 Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth, reply.

- 2 Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won;
Lo! Our Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! He sets in blood no more.
- 3 Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell.
Death in vain forbids His rise;
Christ has opened paradise.
- 4 Lives again our glorious King!
Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Once He died our souls to save;
Where thy victory, O grave?
- 5 Soar we now where Christ has led;
Foll'wing our exalted Head.
Made like Him, like Him we rise;
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.
- 6 Hail the Lord of earth and heav'n!
Praise to Thee by both be giv'n!
Thee we greet triumphant now:
Hail, the resurrection, Thou!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt. Text: Public domain

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

Organist