
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 28, 2024, at 8:30 and 11 am

*The St. Paul's family welcomes you as we worship God together.
We strive to be full, active, conscious participants in our liturgical life together.*

ENTRANCE AND PRAISE

VOLUNTARY

Prelude on "Allein Gott"

Johann Sebastian Bach

INTROIT (8:30 am service)

"If Ye Love Me"

Thomas Tallis

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father
And he will bring you another Comforter. Even the spirit of truth.

INTROIT (11 am service)

"Children's Prayer"
Wesley Singers

Arr. Robert Leaf

Oh Father, in heaven, be with us we pray. Thy word shall our hearts and our voices obey. Through darkness and danger abide on our way. Oh Father, in heaven, be with us we pray.
So softly, so gently, the dawn of the day, With beauty surrounds us while lighting our way. Oh Father, direct us in work and in play. In all our endeavor be faithful, we pray.
We welcome thy Spirit within us to dwell, Thy glory and honor our voices will tell. We thank thee, we praise thee, thy word we obey. Oh Father, in heaven, be with us we pray.

WELCOME

The congregation rises as the crucifer processes.

HYMN 89

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

HYMN TO JOY



1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
2. All thy works with joy sur - round thee, earth and heaven re - flect thy rays,
3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,
4. Mor - tals, join the might - y cho - rus which the morn - ing stars be - gan;



hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore thee, open - ing to the sun a - bove.
stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!
love di - vine is reign - ing o'er us, bind - ing all with - in its span.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way.
Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - ery mead - ow, flash - ing sea,
Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;
Ev - er sing - ing, march we on - ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day!
chant - ing bird and flow - ing foun - tain, call us to re - joice in thee.
teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di - vine.
joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun - ward, in the tri - umph song of life.

GREETING

Grace and peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace to you also.

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever.

COLLECT

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

All sit.

ANTHEM (*11 am service*)

"The Call"

Jessica French

St. Paul's Choristers and Treble Choir

Anabel Ramirez, Violin

Text: Hymnal 164

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Open our hearts and minds, O God, by the power of your Holy Spirit, so that, as the Word is read, sung, and proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us this day. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Acts 8:26-40

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.) 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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 22:24-30

My praise is of him in the great assembly; I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall praise him: "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 him.
For kingship belongs to the Lord; he rules over the nations.
To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust fall before him.
My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall serve him; 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 he has done.
Glory 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.

SECOND LESSON

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 Savior 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 judgment, 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.

The Word of the Lord.

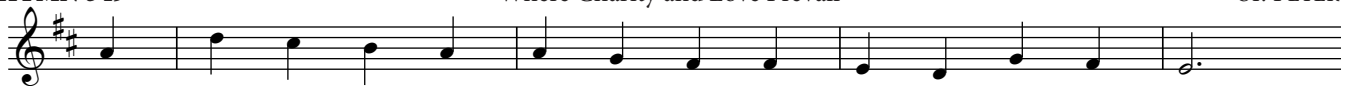
Thanks be to God.

All stand. During the hymn, children may come to the front of the sanctuary to be escorted to the Jones Building across the plaza for childcare (8:30 am service) or Children's Church (11 am service).

HYMN 549

"Where Charity and Love Prevail"

ST. PETER



- 1. Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
- 2. With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear true char - i - ty we learn;
- 3. For - give we now each oth - er's faults as we our faults con - fess;
- 4. Let strife a - mong us be un - known, let all con - ten - tion cease;
- 5. Let us re - call that in our midst dwells God's be - got - ten son;
- 6. Love can ex - clude no race or creed if hon - ored be God's name;



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound.
 let us with heart and mind and strength now love Christ in re - turn.
 and let us love each oth - er well in Chris - tian ho - li - ness.
 be Christ the glo - ry that we seek, be ours his ho - ly peace.
 as mem - bers of his bod - y joined, we are in him made one.
 our com - mon life em - brac - es all whose Mak - er is the same.

GOSPEL

John 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. 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."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All sit. You are invited to join in saying Psalm 19:14.

Let the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Amen.

SERMON

“Open and Relational”

Rev. Dr. Bill Kerley

RESPONSES AND OFFERINGS

All stand.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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, dead and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.

**universal*

All sit.

PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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, the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

All exchange signs and words of God's peace.

REGISTRATION OF ATTENDANCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We're glad you are worshipping with us today. Please complete the Connect card (in the pew rack in front of you or online at stpaulshouston.org/stream) to register your attendance and to share your prayer requests. If you wish to learn more about becoming a United Methodist Christian, one of our pastors will be glad to speak with you after today's service or indicate your interest on the Connect card or online.

Your faithful giving supports the ministries of St. Paul's throughout the year. You may make your offering using the QR code located on the back of this bulletin, in the pew rack in front of you, or at stpaulshouston.org/stream.

OFFERING (8:30 am service)

“My Eyes for Beauty Pine”

Herbert Howells

My eyes for beauty pine, my soul for God's grace, no other care nor hope is mine, to heaven I turn my face.
One splendor thence is shed from all the stars above:
'tis named when God's name is said, 'tis love, 'tis heavenly love.
And every gentle heart that burns with true desire is lit from eyes that mirror part of that celestial fire.

OFFERING (11 am service)

“It Is I!”

Carson Cooman

St. Paul's Choristers and Treble Choir

It is I, says Christ, I who have destroyed death, and triumphed over the enemy!
I have brought you to the heights of heaven.
It is I, says Christ. I, your purification, your life, your resurrection, your light, your salvation, your King! It is I!

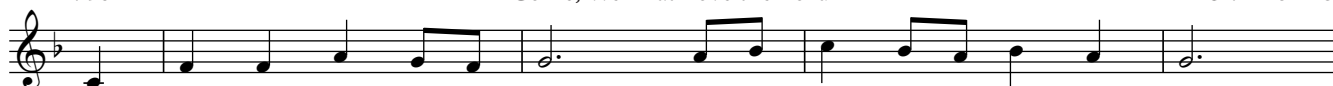
All stand when the ushers come forward to present the offering.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Praise God, the source of all our gifts. Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts. Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit;
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

HYMN 732

"Come, We That Love the Lord"

ST. THOMAS



1. Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known;
2. Let those re - fuse to sing who ne - ver knew our God;
3. The hill of Zi - on yields a thou - sand sa - cred sweets
4. Then let our songs a - bound, and ev - ery tear be dry;



join in a song with sweet ac - cord, and thus sur - round the throne.
 but chil - dren of the heaven - ly King may speak their joys ab - road.
 be - fore we reach the heaven - ly fields, or walk the gol - den streets
 we're march - ing through Em - man - uel's grounds, to fair - er worlds on high.

BENEDICTION AND SOUNDING OF THE CHIMES

VOLUNTARY

Prelude in A Major, BWV 536

Johann Sebastian Bach

Many thanks to Dr. Meg Harper who is conducting the St. Paul's Choristers and Treble Choir today at the 11 am service. Yesterday, Dr. Harper led the children in a day of music and singing as part of our annual end-of-year Chorister's Clinic.

LAY READERS: Brett Chiquet (8:30 am service) and Geralyn Smitherman (11 am service)

FLOWERS: The flowers in the Chancel are placed to the glory of God in loving memory of Bobbie and John E. Fellers by their grandchildren, Ainsley and Andrew Alley.

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TODAY & UPCOMING AT ST. PAUL'S

Discover & Connect: 3-Week Class for Those Considering Membership at St. Paul's - Today at 9:45 am in the Parlor. If you would like to join St. Paul's, this class offers an opportunity to get to know St. Paul's and for us to get to know you. St. Paul's is a place that helps you deepen your faith, discover your spiritual gifts, and allows you to grow in Christian life alongside a great community. For more information, contact Sarah Patlan at spatlan@stpaulshouston.org.

Midweek Communion - Wednesdays at Noon in the Chapel. All are invited to this weekly service of communion.

Foundation Grant Submission Deadline - Friday, May 3. The St. Paul's Foundation is accepting proposals from organizations that assist persons in our community struggling with homelessness, grief, food insecurity and other challenges. Non profit organizations associated with St. Paul's and St. Paul's members are encouraged to apply. For more information see stpaulshouston.org/foundation or contact foundation@stpaulshouston.org.

World Labyrinth Day - Saturday, May 4, at 1 pm on the Outdoor Labyrinth. All are invited to the World Labyrinth Day Walk at St. Paul's. Meet on the outdoor labyrinth to be a part of the global "moving meditation for world peace and celebration of the labyrinth experience." For more information, please email Helen Spaw at hspaw@stpaulshouston.org.

Confirmation Service - Sunday, May 5, at the 11am service. At 5 pm, we will celebrate our graduating seniors and today's confirmands at the annual **Youth Banquet** at Hotel Zaza.

Being in community with one another is an essential part of life at St. Paul's. To register your attendance, view and register for upcoming events, send a prayer request, or make a payment, donation, or offering, please scan the attached QR code or contact the church at 713-528-0527.



ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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 Rev. Dr. Jeff McDonald, Senior Minister