



April 28, 2024 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church, Washington, DC

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Prelude *Fugue in Three Voices* Charles Zeuner
David Yoder, Organist

Welcome Lee J. Schriber, Minister of Engagement and Discipleship

+Call to Worship Grace Rogers, Howard and Mary Martin Ministry Intern

One: Come to worship God whose love was revealed in Jesus.
Let all the ends of the earth turn to our God.

**All: We will worship the almighty and sing praises.
We will proclaim good news to others.**

One: Beloved, we are called to love as God loves us.
We are to love one another as siblings and friends.

**All: Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
We seek to let God's love be perfected in us.**

One: Remember you have been baptized.
God claims you and has high expectations of you.

**All: Christ is the vine; we are the branches.
We will bear fruit when we abide in the vine.**

Adapted from Lavon Baylor, Led by Love © 1996 United Church Press

+Hymn Timothy Nelson, Director of Music

Gather Us In

No. 2236, The Faith We Sing

Here in this place, new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away,
see in this space our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in the lost and forsaken,
gather us in the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face,
we have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in the rich and the haughty,
gather us in the proud and strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you should call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away, but
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the Kingdom, now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Blessing of the Children

Harold Kuhn

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

(unison)

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. Amen.

+Passing the Peace of Christ

My Peace

My peace I give unto you;
it's a peace that the world cannot give.
It's a peace that the world cannot understand;
peace to know, peace to live.
My peace I give unto you.

New Testament Reading

Acts 8:26-40

Caroline Anderson-Gray

(page 119 in the New Testament section of the Bible in the pews)

Gospel Reading

John 15:1-8

(page 103 in the New Testament section of the Bible in the pews)

One: Listen to what the Spirit is saying to you.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Searching for...Growth

Min. Lee J. Schriber

+Hymn

A Place at the Table

No. 3149, Worship and Song, Verses 1-3, 5

For everyone born, a place at the table,
for everyone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for everyone born, a star overhead.

Refrain:

And God will delight
when we are creators of justice and joy,
yes, God will delight
when we are creators of justice,
justice and joy!

For all humankind, a place at the table,
revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power,
for all humankind, a system that's fair. (Refrain)

For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong. (Refrain)

For everyone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
for everyone born, the right to be free. (Refrain)

MVP Moment

Erin Heard

Invitation to Give

Offertory

The Majesty and Glory of Your Name

T. Fetke

+Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

No. 94, The United Methodist Hymnal

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!

+Offertory Prayer

(unison)

We give, gracious God, because we are grateful. Your love has sustained us through many trials and temptations. We are thankful for those who have guided our attempts to understand the scriptures. Your loving judgement has provided the pruning our lives require in order to bear fruit. We give in order to extend to others the blessings we have received and to continue the ministry we need as we seek to abide together in your love. Amen.

From Lavon Baylor, *Led by Love* © 1996 United Church Press

+Hymn

Lord I Want to be a Christian

No. 402, The United Methodist Hymnal

Lord, I want to be a Christian
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.

Lord, I want to be more loving
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.

Lord, I want to be more holy
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.

+Benediction

+Postlude

Fanfare on Mit Freuden Zart

Brenda Portman

+Please rise in body or spirit.

Acts 8:26-40 (The New Revised Standard Updated Edition)

Then 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, the 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.

John 15:1-8 (The New Revised Standard Updated Edition)

"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.

One: Listen to what the Spirit is saying to you.

All: Thanks be to God.