

# May 2, 2021: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

*The Session and members of First Presbyterian Church, Fargo extend a sincere welcome to you. We are grateful for your presence today! We welcome all persons regardless of race, nationality, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and to serve as an officer of the church.*

## We Gather in Christ

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Wondrous Vinegrower, you make all things new in water and Word, feeding your people with love, joy, and peace. Lead us today and every day to the font of new beginnings. Teach us to love what you have commanded and to prune what does not nourish your creation, in the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### PRELUDE

*Variations on "How Firm a Foundation"*  
Sally Harmon, organ

arr. Linker

### WELCOME & CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

### CALL TO WORSHIP

In the wilderness, water brings life.

**Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.**

In the Word of God, the good news gives light.

**Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.**

In the bread and the wine, the body of our Savior  
nourishes everyone.

**Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.**

Here is the water of life, the word that feeds, the food of eternity.

Come and praise the vine that gives all goodness.

**Let us worship God!**

### HYMN 450: *Be Thou My Vision*

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art;  
thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true Word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;  
thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tower;  
raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.**

**Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise;  
thou, mine inheritance, now and always;  
thou and thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of Heaven, my treasure thou art.**

**High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.**

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Trusting in the mercy of God,  
let us confess to God and to one another our failure to love our neighbor.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of mercy, we confess that we have not borne the fruit of the Spirit. We have not loved others as you have loved us. We have denied the promises of baptism and cut ourselves off from you. Forgive us, restore us, that we may abide in your love and live out your mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

You have already been cleansed by the word that God has spoken to you.  
In baptism God claimed you and joined you to Christ, as branches to a vine.  
Believe the promise given to you: in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

## RESPONSE: *Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Give thanks to the ris - en Lord. Al - le -  
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Give praise to His \_\_\_ Name.

## The Word

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: Brian McClure

Come, Holy Spirit,  
that through your word we may be guided  
into the love of God for all the world. **Amen.**

### FIRST READING: 1 John 4:7-21(Whirl p. 510)

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 judgement, 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.

May God bless the reading and hearing of this portion of the holy Word.

**SECOND READING:** John 15:1-8

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. 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.**

**SERMON:** The Rev. Mary Jo E. Holtey

**HYMN 435:** *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*

**There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea.  
There's a kindness in God's justice,  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than up in heaven.  
There is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment given.  
  
For the love of God is broader  
than the measures of the mind.  
And the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more faithful,  
we would gladly trust God's Word,  
and our lives reflect thanksgiving  
for the goodness of our Lord.**

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** *Nicene Creed*

**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.**

## **Responding to the Word**

### **OFFERING**

#### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

### **INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE**

#### **THE GREAT PRAYER OF 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 truly right and our greatest joy...

...who forever sing to the glory of your name:

#### **RESPONSE 559: *Holy, Holy, Holy***

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord...

... Great is the Mystery of Faith;

#### **RESPONSE 560: *Christ Has Died; Christ Is Risen***

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine...

### **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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### **THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

### **THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE**

### **PRAYER**

## **Bearing the Word into the World**

#### **HYMN 463: *How Firm a Foundation***

**How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!**

**What more can be said than to you God hath said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,  
for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

## **BENEDICTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

*Finale on "How Firm a Foundation"*

arr. Linker