

Sunday, May 2, 2021 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

## Trinity's Weekly Connection

Join us for live streaming of our "Virtual Worship" service for the Fifth Sunday of Easter from Centennial Hall on Sunday, May 2 at 9:15 a.m. If you are unable to join us at that time, be welcome to access the service at your convenience via Trinity's YouTube channel. Instructions for that access are below.

### Trinity is live streaming worship – how do I find it?

We are streaming our 9:15 a.m. "Virtual Worship" service on YouTube. To find it, do the following:

- Follow the home page link to "Virtual Worship" on Trinity's website, select "video" and you will be connected to the stream.

OR

- Go to YouTube, either by opening the app on your phone or by visiting the webpage on your computer.
- Search for 'Trinity Lutheran Church Grand Rapids.' The first option should be one with a picture of our cross tower (that is our channel).
- When you click on it you will be brought to our channel. If the service is live (from about 9:10 to 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning) there will be a video with 'Live Now' on it.
- Simply click on the video and you will be connected to the stream.
- We also save past services in a play list called 'Rejoice Worship,' so you can view a past worship service at any time.

If you have a YouTube account please subscribe to the channel. This will allow our videos to show up in your video feed and when we reach enough subscriptions allow us to change our YouTube url.

### Prayer of the Day for the Fifth Sunday of Easter

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### Prayer for Health Care Providers

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick; give them courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when their efforts seem futile or when death prevails. Increase their trust in your power even to overcome death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Trinity Members in Our Prayers

We pray for Trinity members Emily Albaitis, Fran Anderson, Deb Bambini and family, George Bauer, Jim and Sue Boyse and family, Kim Bradbury and family, Pat Bruin, Judy Cisler, Barb and Bob Crossman and family, Mike Danielski, Jack Danielson, John Derbin, Ruth Ann Evans, Diane Field, Mary Frick, Jack Greiner, Elena Griewahn, Adam Guigue, Craig Gunderson, Mark Hahn, John Hall, Ruth Helzer, Jerry Hendricks, Sid and Carrie Hoeksema and family, Callan Hughes, Carol Huttenga, Austin, Meredith and Theodore Johnson, Patricia Johnson, Christopher Keller, Susan Knoll, Jen Knowles, Joni Korb, Roy Lamprich, Allison Landon and family, Greg Law, Marilyn Leese, Jane Legualt, Judy Mallen, Jessica Marks and Patti Patton and their families, Roger Marks, Mark and Rebecca Mattison and family, Jill McKinney, Marilyn Mellema, Johnny Mielock, John and Karin Moglia and family, Christophe and Benita Muganza, Kenny Muganza, Michael Mulligan, Karen Nagle and family, Tim Neilson, Tadas Norris, Jacqueline Riegling, Lynn Rose, Petra Rotzell and family, Thiago Saliba, Marian Schaible, Chas Schaner, Chris Schomberg, Vince Schumacher, Jim Searfoss, Joan Sellman, Neil and Sue Sandler and family, Matt and Kara Seyffert and family, Michael Smith, David and Mary Smoes and family, Joyce Snyder, Courtney Steketee and family, Gary and Pat Stevens and family, Shirley Tedford, Jeremiah (JD) Thamban, Dale and Gale Volkerding and family, Joanna Waite, John Walls, Fred Wilcox, Eric Wollen, Peyton Wollen, Rick and Michelle Wolner, Mark Youngren, and Kathryn Zielinski.

## Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021

*This Sunday's image of how the risen Christ shares his life with us is the image of the vine. Christ the vine and we the branches are alive in each other, in the mystery of mutual abiding described in the gospel and the first letter of John. Baptism makes us a part of Christ's living and life-giving self and makes us alive with Christ's life. As the vine brings food to the branches, Christ feeds us at his table. We are sent out to bear fruit for the life of the world.*

### FIRST READING: Acts 8:26-40

*Led by the Spirit, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official who is returning to his African home after having been to Jerusalem to worship. Philip uses their encounter to proclaim the gospel to him. Upon coming to faith in Jesus, he is baptized by Philip.*

<sup>26</sup>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.) <sup>27</sup>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 <sup>28</sup>and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." <sup>30</sup>So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup>He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup>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.

<sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

<sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>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?" <sup>38</sup>He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>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. <sup>40</sup>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.

### SECOND READING: 1 John 4:7-21

*We love God and others because God first loved us. We cannot say we love God, whom we have not seen, while hating fellow Christians, whom we regularly see. Love toward God is to be matched by love toward others because the essence of God is love.*

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

### GOSPEL: John 15:1-8

*On the night of his arrest, Jesus taught his disciples about the relationship they would have with him. Those who abide in his word and love bear fruit, for apart from him, they can do nothing.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>1</sup>"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup>He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

*A brief silence.*

God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love. Hear us,  
O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You call us to pray for those who share our ministry. We pray for Pastor Christopher Laughlin and the people of Messiah Lutheran Church in Constantine, synod partners with us in mission and ministry. Hear us,  
O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You invite us to cherish our commonalities with people of other faiths, including our three “Standing Together” partner congregations here in Grand Rapids, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Temple Emanuel and Masjid At-Tawheed. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depends on the earth for life. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence, that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You have loved us so that we can love others. We ask for your presence and support in the lives of those with special needs, including those lifted up in Trinity’s prayer ministry, published and announced. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you call on us to bear one another’s burdens. Touch the hearts of those you would lead to become Stephen Ministers through our training at Trinity Lutheran Church this fall. Fill them with faith, compassion, and the desire to be your healing presence in our midst. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**



## Prayer for this time of pandemic and social upheaval

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

# CONFIRMATION SUNDAY, MAY 2, 2021

## **Makenna Elizabeth Beckett**

*Galatians 6:9 "So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up."*

The daughter of Coreen and David Beckett, Makenna enjoys painting, reading, and equestrian activities in her free time. Makenna has a long-term goal to attend Michigan State University to pursue a career in veterinary medicine. She is very grateful for her family and friends and their unconditional support. Baptized on December 28, 2005, her baptismal sponsors are David and Natasha Robbins.

## **Kai Alice Adele Briggs Bredwell**

*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."*

Kai's parents are Brian and Kate Bredwell. Kai enjoys playing French horn in marching band and symphonic band. Kai is a member of the theater department, appearing in *A Delightful Quarantine*, *Christmas in the Land of the Oz*, *Sister Act*, and *Rideshare Overshare* this year. They are a member of the LHS Gender/Sexuality Association. Finally, they were a part of the homecoming court in the fall of 2020 at Lowell High School. Kai was baptized on April 23, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. Their sponsors are Tim Jahn and Laura Ketchum-Jahn.

## **Grace Mildred Cairns**

*Psalms 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God."*

Daughter of Laura and Steven Cairns, Grace enjoys riding her bike and reading. Her long-term goals include, among other things, working at a retirement home. She is most grateful for love because it started the world, it's always present and it keeps the world going. She was baptized on January 1, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. Her baptismal sponsor is James Iskra.

## **Lance William Childers**

*Deuteronomy 31:6 "Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the LORD YOUR God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you."*

Son of William and Erin Childers, Lance enjoys participating in soccer, baseball, futsal, boating and fishing. His long-term goal is to play sports in college. He is especially grateful for his family. Lance was baptized on August 3, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. His baptismal sponsors are Krista Hunt and Anna Momoh.

## **Kenneth Charles Fawcett**

*Philippians 3:14 "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus."*

Son of Allan and Laura Fawcett, KC enjoys playing guitar, video games, golf, watching football and has a special interest in cars. His long-term goals include attending college and becoming a pilot or an engineer. He is most grateful for the opportunities he has been presented. KC was baptized in April, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. His baptismal sponsor is Lance Markoski.

## **Grant William Ferguson**

*Psalms 37:5 "Commit your way to the LORD trust in him, and he will act."*

Son of Robert and Niki Ferguson, Grant enjoys traveling for soccer, playing basketball, and spending time with his family and friends. His long-term goals are to play Division 1 soccer, attend college, and find a career. He is most grateful for his family and his close friends. Grant was baptized on Mother's Day, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. His baptismal sponsors are Mike and Lisa Brown along with Dan and Kathi Petroelje.

### **Andrew David Fox**

*Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."*

Son of Amy and David Fox, Andrew enjoys playing football and basketball. He also enjoys hanging out with his friends. His long-term goals are to attend college. Andrew is most grateful for his family. He was baptized on May 28, 2006 at Bethel Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri. His baptismal sponsors are Suzan, Jeremy and Heather Flesch.

### **Nathaniel Joseph Hahn**

*Mathew 17:20 "For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."*

Son of Jill and Curtis Hahn, Nathaniel enjoys music, sailing, reading, cooking, crew, band, traveling, and playing board games with his friends. His long-term goal is to become an archaeologist. He is very grateful for his family. Nathaniel was baptized on February 4, 2007 at Grace Lutheran Church in Lansing, Michigan. His baptismal sponsors are Jennifer Kamper and Matthew Berns.

### **Hannah Susan Johnson**

*Ephesians 3:14 "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father."*

Daughter of Wendy and Joesy Johnson, Hannah enjoys hanging out with her friends and helping out in her community. Hannah's long-term goals include owning her own business and being a veterinarian that specializes in treating dogs. She is most grateful for her caring family and friends. She was baptized on September 3, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. Her sponsors are Darvin and Jessi Johnson.

### **Peter Thomas Larson**

*Psalms 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God."*

Son of Marcy and Eric Larson, Peter enjoys playing with his Legos, video games, golf, and watching sports. His long-term goals are to become an aerospace engineer and work for NASA or a formula one team. He is most grateful for his family and friends. Peter was baptized on September 3, 2006 at Trinity Lutheran Church. His baptismal sponsors are Craig and Michele Thorson.



MAY 2, 2021  
FIFTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER



*Perfect love casts out fear.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 15:1-8</b>	<b>Jesus the true vine</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Acts 8:26-40</b>	<b>Phillip and the eunuch</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>1 John 4:7-21</b>	<b>God is love</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Isaiah 41:8-10</b>	<b>The Lord's chosen servant</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1 Peter 5:6-11</b>	<b>Tending the flock of God</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 31:6-8</b>	<b>Joshua becomes Moses' successor</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 22:25-31</b>	<b>A vow of thanksgiving</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 15:9-17</b>	<b>Love one another</b>

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*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.*

**1 John 4:18 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

God of love, free us from fear so that we may love others as you have loved us through Christ Jesus. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for this gift of food. Help us to show care for others and remember that we love because you first loved us through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen. (1 John 4:19)

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May God who loves you dearly, free you from your fears so that you may love others.



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MAY 2, 2021

### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Where True Charity and  
Love Abide*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Talk or think about a time you were afraid.
- How is fear and feeling judged closely related?
- How does God's love for you free you from fear so that you can love others?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* 1 John 4:7-21.

It is so tempting to protect and defend one's own life by judging others. Christ's model of life and love is to defend the cause, the needs of others, not oneself or one's own group. The love of God in Christ is sacrificial, it gives itself for others. The God of love casts out fear so that we can truly see others and care for them, knowing that we have already been cared for and loved by God. This love is totally freeing, without fear, without anxiety. The God of the day of judgment has already judged us with love. This is love perfected and the love we are now free to bestow on others—all others. Love is our way to see and experience God in the world. Hating others and loving God does not go together. Where in your life and in the world do you see that this great love needs to be known and experienced?

*Pray:* **Loving God, help us to see with the eyes of faith and love that we may witness to your power and glory through our risen Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus' model for us is to care for others, especially the helpless. There are many who are in need of food, clothing, housing, and medical supplies. Can you think of ways you can help those in need?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In John 15:5, Jesus says, "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." It is by being joined to Jesus, the true vine, that we bear the fruit of Jesus. Draw a vine and branches. Add leaves and fruit to the end of each branch. In what ways do you show God's love and kindness to others? Write those ways on the fruit. Look at your drawing this week and pray that you will produce fruit and show God's love to others.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)