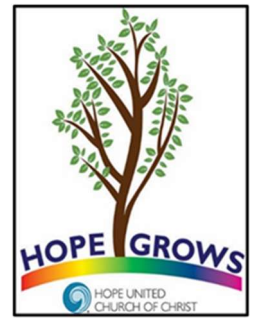




Hope United Church of Christ Moline, IL
Worship Bulletin May 2, 2021
Fifth Sunday of Easter

Thank you for joining us for worship today.
We are glad you are here!
No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome at Hope UCC!



Millet, Jean François, *In the Vineyard*
 From Art in the Christian Tradition,
 a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

Many: 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 sisters and brothers.

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

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

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

INVITING GOD INTO OUR MIDST

Open our senses to your direction, amazing God, so we may be alert to opportunities you give us. Fill us with good news to share with those who seek meaning for their lives. We are here because we need the good news ourselves. There is much in life that we do not understand. We seek to know your Word and to be led by it. Recall us to the vows of our baptism, reconfirming in us the covenant promises that link us to you and to one another. As we meet you here, our hearts are lifted up in praise. May our worship glorify your name and be pleasing to you. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, we have ignored our origin in you and denied your rule over the nations. We have pursued illusions of self-interest rather than abiding in your love. We have turned away from brothers and sisters as if they were enemies to be hated. We are afraid to love those who differ from us or who have the power to harm us. We hesitate to take the risks of caring for fear that we may be hurt. Discipleship seems too demanding. O God, release us from our fears and failures to trust your love and live with bold generosity. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND PASSING OF PEACE

We are created in the image of God and are blessed with the capacity to reflect God's will in our daily lives. God cares for us and invests us with responsibility. Thus God honors us with high expectations and confidence in our willingness to seek out life's best for all people. We are loved. We are forgiven. Our baptism is renewed.

Let us offer one another the gift of peace. May the Lord's peace be with you!

(If you are using this liturgy as a private devotion or participating in the live stream worship, please hold out your hands in blessing for all you are joined with in spirit. If you are participating in the live stream worship, please type in your peace greeting.)

SPECIAL MUSIC *Abide With Me* - Lyte

PASTORAL PRAYER/LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

One: May the Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Let us pray:...

With the assurance Jesus offers, together we pray the words Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS

Acts 8:26-40

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

³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

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

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

SERMON "Abide in Love and Grow in Faith"

SERMON HYMN #328 *Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed* (see end of bulletin)

INVITATION TO OFFERING

God loves us so much that Jesus was sent to be the atoning sacrifice for our sin. The balm of love was offered for our healing so we might be reconciled to God and one another. What will we offer in thanksgiving for so great a gift?

We are profoundly grateful for your continued support of Hope UCC as we stay connected as a faith community in this time of social distancing and spiritual connection. We are continuing the ministry of our church throughout this stay at home order and we thank you for making this possible. We now have two ways to make your offering. Hope UCC is now able to offer e-giving through Breeze Management System to make it safer and easier for you to give anytime. You are able to safely donate electronically using your credit card or ACH transfer. You can find the link on our church website (www.hopeuccqc.org). We also invite you to mail your offering to the church office – mail and messages are checked daily by Pastor Santana. Thank you for your generosity- your commitment is vital to continuing our congregation's ministries and commitments. Hope Grows! And there is nothing- not even a global pandemic - that can stop it! ☺

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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 judgment 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.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

WELCOME

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

Many: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

REMEMBER

CONSECRATION

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING THE CUP

SHARING HOLY COMMUNION

The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated through an open table at Hope UCC. All are invited to share this holy meal.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our savior. Amen

BENEDICTION

One: Live for God every moment of every day. Take time to bow down in gratitude for God's love.

Many: We seek to live as people who know God. Because we are loved, we dare to love others.

One: Do not be afraid to witness to your growing faith. Do not hesitate to show the fruits of abiding in Christ.

Many: We will turn to the perfect love that casts out fear. We will tell of that love to future generations.

One: You have been equipped and empowered by love. God is filling your life with purpose and energy.

Many: We love because God first loved us. We go out to serve as apostles of Jesus Christ.

POSTLUDE

Used by permission: One License # A-733028

Used by Permission. CCLI License #11387335

328

Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed

Jane Parker Huber, 1980

1 Won - der of won - ders, here re - vealed;
 2 Here in this sac - ra - ment we see
 3 This child of God, though young or old,
 4 Now we our vow of faith re - new,

God's cov - e - nant with us is sealed.
 God's grace un - bound, for all, for me!
 we wel - come now in - to Christ's fold,
 stretch wide our sights to glob - al view,

And long be - fore we know or pray,
 May we re - spond with joy - ful praise
 To know with us God's lov - ing care;
 And claim with Chris - tians far and near

God's love en - folds us ev - ery day.
 in lov - ing ser - vice all our days.
 here all our joys and sor - rows share.
 a larg - er fam - i - ly held dear.

Jane Parker Huber has noted two important ideas she addressed in this text: "The fact that God loves each of us before we know how to love in return, and . . . in baptism we become part of a worldwide family."

Tune: PENTECOST L.M.
 William Boyd, 1864