

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**



**5TH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

APRIL 28, 2024

MEDITATION BEFORE WORSHIP

*A life which is not my own, But another's life in me;
This, this is the message the Branch would speak, a message to thee and me.
Oh, struggle not to "abide," Nor labor to "bring forth fruit,
But let Jesus unite thee to Himself, As the Vine Branch to the root.
So simple, so deep, so strong That union with Him shall be;
His life shall forever replace thine own, And His love shall flow through thee.
For His Spirit's fruit is love, And love shall thy life become,
And forevermore on His heart of love, Thy spirit shall have her home.*

Andrew Murray, from *The True Vine: Meditations for a Month on John 15:1-16*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Melinda Veatch

PRELUDE *Sonata in G major, Bourree* (G. F. Handel) Kim Lundgren, flute; Mike Kristoffersen, double bass

CALL TO WORSHIP

Lisa Young

Leader: God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world that we might live through him.

People: In the vineyard of Jesus, the True Vine, love flows among the branches.

Leader: We are the branches of the True Vine. We love because he first loved us. As we, the branches, live in Him, the True Vine, we have abundant life.

People: As we stay connected to him, love is being perfected among us. We let love guide us, not fear. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

Leader: In the True Vine, we have a new kind of life, a life guided by the True Vine's perfect love that casts out fear. Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us worship God!

WELCOMING SONG* **Come to Me, the Master Said** (Timothy Dudley-Smith, words; English melody)

HYMN NO. 346

ALL VERSES

Congregation

PRAYER OF PRAISE

Lisa Young

Holy God, we gather this day to worship you and to celebrate the life we share in Jesus Christ, the True Vine. We praise you that by his sacrifice of great love, we are now branches in the of your Spirit. As we worship you this day, receive our gratitude for this and all your gifts to us. Draw us nearer to you that we may walk in the Ways of your Spirit and bear the fruit of your love in a hurting world. Amen.

My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love—so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.

My dear, dear friends, if God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other. No one has seen God, ever. But if we love one another, God dwells deeply within us, and his love becomes complete in us—perfect love!

This is how we know we're living steadily and deeply in him, and he in us: He's given us life from his life, from his very own Spirit. Also, we've seen for ourselves and continue to state openly that the Father sent his Son as Savior of the world. Everyone who confesses that Jesus is God's Son participates continuously in an intimate relationship with God. We know it so well, we've embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God.

God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love.

We, though, are going to love—love and be loved. First we were loved, now we love. He loved us first.

If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God, Amen.

ANTHEM: *ABBA FATHER* (Carey Landry) UCSJ Choir; Mike Kristoffersen, double bass

Abba, Abba, Father.
You are the potter,
We are the clay,
The work of your hands.

Mold us, mold us and fashion us
Into the image of Jesus, your Son, **Refrain**

Father, may we be one in you.
As He is in you and you are in Him. **Refrain**

SCRIPTURE READING **John 15:1-8** (*The Message* translation)

Pastor Melinda Veatch

“I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn’t bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.

“Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can’t bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can’t bear fruit unless you are joined with me.

“I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you’re joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can’t produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is—when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.”

SERMON

“LIFE IN THE VINE”

Pastor Melinda Veatch

RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

DOXOLOGY*

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lisa Young and Pastor Melinda Veatch

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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

CLOSING SONG* Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

(Fred Kaan, words; Jamaican folk tune)

Hymn No: 698

All Verses

Congregation

CLOSING PRAYER

Lisa Young

Holy God, we have gathered in this place to worship you and to celebrate our life in you. We give you thanks for the gift of being branches on the True Vine. Walk with us as we go from this place. Keep you ears open to your counsel, and keep our hearts open to the ways we can share your Love. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

POSTLUDE *Sonata in C major, Tempo di Gavotta* (G. F. Handel)

Kim Lundgren, flute; Mike Kristoffersen, double bass

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Pastor Melinda Veatch

SENDING SONG* *HYMN NO. 291 - ALLELUIA NO. 1, v.2*

Congregation

*Alleluia, alleluia! Give Thanks to the risen Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his name!
Spread the good news ore all the earth.
Jesus has died and has risen,
Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name!*

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OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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