

# The Holy Friendship

of

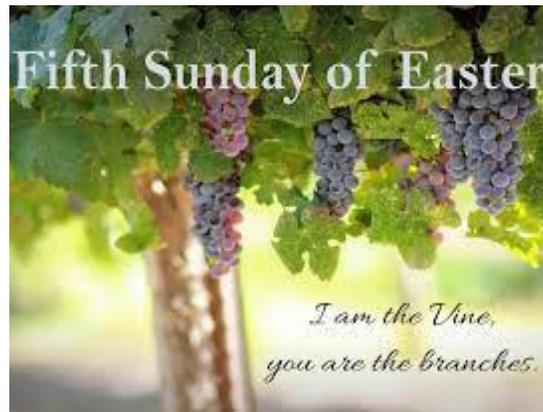
## St. James Episcopal Church

95 Route 2A | Preston, CT 06365  
860-889-0150 | email: [office@stjamespreston.org](mailto:office@stjamespreston.org)

&

## Grace Episcopal Church

4 Chapel Hill Road | Yantic, CT 06389  
860-887-2082



### The Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021 at 9:00 am

The Rev. Kim J. Litsey, Priest in Charge  
Mike LaFleur & Peter Liebert, Musicians

*Join us live on Facebook: St. James Episcopal Church Preston,  
Grace Episcopal Church Yantic, or on Zoom.  
Stay connected on Zoom after worship for our  
virtual Coffee Hour.*

## The Liturgy of the Word

Welcome

### Opening Hymn: This is My Father's World

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ is risen

People: **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

### The Gloria *(Spoken)*

Glory to god in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand  
of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father, **Amen.**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

### The Collect

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### The Lessons

#### Acts 8:26-40

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, 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.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

### **Psalm 22:24-30**

- 24 My praise is of him in the great assembly; \*  
I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him.
- 25 The poor shall eat and be satisfied,  
and those who seek the LORD shall praise him: \*  
"May your heart live forever!"
- 26 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, \*  
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
- 27 For kingship belongs to the LORD; \*  
he rules over the nations.
- 28 To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; \*  
all who go down to the dust fall before him.
- 29 My soul shall live for him;  
my descendants shall serve him; \*  
they shall be known as the LORD'S for ever.
- 30 They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn \*  
the saving deeds that he has done.

### **1 John 4:7-21**

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 judgment, 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.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to John.

**People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

**John 15:1-8**

Jesus said to his disciples, "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 Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**The Homily**

The Rev. Kim J. Litsey

*A short silence will be kept*

Celebrant: Let us affirm our faith with the Nicene Creed:

**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:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

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.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He 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.**

### **Prayers of the People**

Officiant: As we celebrate the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, let us give thanks for the Risen Lord and lift up those following the way of the cross and all people everywhere.

For the holy catholic church throughout the world, sharing the death and resurrection of Christ.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For Michael our presiding bishop, Ian and Laura our bishops, for presbyters and deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

We hold in prayer the communities of St. James and Grace: continue to guide and nurture, oh God, this Holy friendship.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For all nations, peoples, tribes, clans, and families, especially for the indigenous tribes of our region.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For all who are oppressed, afflicted, or in need.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For the dying and the dead.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For our families, friends, and companions, and for all those we love.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Are there others who need our prayers this day?  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Remembering the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.  
**To you, O Lord.**

Celebrant: Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

### **† THE HOLY COMMUNION †**

### **Offertory Hymn #652 O Dear Lord and Father of Mankind**

**The Presentation of the Gifts: The Doxology**  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,**  
**Praise Him all creatures here below,**  
**Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts.**  
**Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen**

## † THE GREAT THANKSGIVING †

### **Eucharistic Prayer A**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Celebrant:

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant:

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

Celebrant:

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

### **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 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,  
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,  
**People: Therefore let us keep the feast.**

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*Silence*

### **A Prayer for Spiritual Communion**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

**I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.**

### **The Prayer after Communion:**

Celebrant: Let us pray.  
**Almighty and everliving God,  
we thank you for feeding us with the  
spiritual food of the most precious  
Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,  
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.  
And now, Father, send us out  
to do the work you have given us to do,  
to love and serve you**

**as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.  
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Announcements**

#### **Easter Blessing †**

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

#### **Closing Hymn #367 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee**

#### **The Dismissal**

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### *Bishops' Statement on Chauvin Trial Verdict*

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23 April, 2021

Dear Companions in Christ,

This past Tuesday, former police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty of all charges in his murder trial in the killing of George Floyd. We suspect that many of you, like us, have been feeling several different emotions since the verdict was announced. Relief, that justice in the form of accountability has finally been served in a system that has repeatedly not held law enforcement officials accountable for the deaths of Black and brown people in their custody. Grief, that regardless of the outcome, it cannot give Mr. Floyd back his life or any other victim that has died from police violence. And perhaps hope that with this verdict our nation may take real steps towards the reconciliation that is so urgently needed if we are to become a genuinely beloved community.

Let this moment in time be a significant reminder that despite how challenging and seemingly insurmountable the work of justice seems to be, we are called, as followers of Jesus, to be about God' mission of restoration and reconciliation. Let us recommit to our baptismal vow to strive *always* for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Ian T. Douglas, Bishop Suffragan  
The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens, Bishop Diocesan

## **Announcements**

The **19th Annual Phil Ludlow Pro-Am Golf Classic** on June 4<sup>th</sup> sold out in 3 days! Twenty (20) teams have signed up to play the event which gives all proceeds to the LHCB "**Kid's to Camp**" program. St. James Church members Ed and Elaine Hess will be playing on the Ludlow team for the 2021 classic.

Troop 75 Life Scout Ben Forelli will be serving 75 turkey wraps, including an apple with cookie and water to the homeless from St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Norwich on Sunday, May 2 at 11am-2:30pm. Ben and troop members under the guidance of Scoutmaster Bob Peck will prepare all the meals on Saturday, May 1 here at St. James Church from 12-3:00 pm. Then on Sunday May 2 they will serve them out. This project will benefit the people of Norwich as Troop 75, St. Marks and Park Congregational Church lend helping hands to feed the hungry through the St. Vincent DePaul Center of Norwich.

**Pop-Up Drive-Thru Food Pantry:** Distribution on Friday, April 9 from 10 to 11am at the Preston Senior Center, 42 Long Society Road, Preston. (weather permitting)

**Free CT Food Bank Drive-Thru Food Distribution:** Every Monday in Norwich (until further notice) Address: 28 Stonington Road, Norwich, CT 06360 - in the parking lot across from Pistol Pete's Bar & Grill Hours: 9:30am - 12pm (Minimal wait)

**Guided Healing Prayers:** Fridays, 8am via Zoom.