

## First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

CCLI License # 2839486

April 28, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Here in this place of worship, with the congregation of the faithful,  
**we lay down our fears, to boldly sing God's praise.**

Here in the vineyard of the Lord, with our sisters and brothers in Christ,  
**grandparents tell stories of faith to little ones sitting on their laps.**

Here where God waits to serve us at the Table:

**we shall be so filled with love that we will run to serve others.**

## **GATHERING PRAYER**

Wondrous Vine Grower, 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.

**\*HYMN: "I Danced in the Morning" #157**

**LORD OF THE DANCE**

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

The seeds of grace, hope, joy, and love are planted deep with us, so they can bear fruit in our lives. But we resist staying connected to the Vine, thinking we can flourish on our own. Let us confess our sins, so we can once more feel God abiding deep within us. Please join me as we pray, saying,

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Mother of Compassion:**

**called to be one body,  
we fragment ourselves into a million selfish pieces;  
your children of love,  
we insist on the right to despise our sisters and brothers;  
though your Perfect Love was broken for us,  
we are afraid to give of ourselves to the world.**

**Abide in us, Vine Grower.**

**Forgive us of our sins,  
so we may live boldly,  
love fearlessly,  
and proclaim unceasingly that Jesus Christ  
is our Lord and Savior.**

*Silence is kept*

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Do you feel it—there, deep down in your hearts? God's love is alive, beating, breathing—in you!  
**Because God abides in us, we can live for others, allowing God's love to bear fruit in us. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.**

## **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

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

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

<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.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **ALL GOD'S CHILDREN**

### **RESPONSIVE PSALM: 22:25-31**

<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

**my vows I will pay before those who fear him.**

<sup>26</sup>The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD.

**May your hearts live forever!**

<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;

**and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.**

<sup>28</sup>For dominion belongs to the LORD,

**and he rules over the nations.**

<sup>29</sup>To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;

**before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.**

<sup>30</sup>Posterity will serve him;

**future generations will be told about the Lord,**

<sup>31</sup>and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,

**saying that he has done it.**

## **GOSPEL READING: John 15:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. <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.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON: “Created to Nurture”**

**Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee**

**SERMON HYMN: “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” #366**

**HYFRYDOL**

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**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.**

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

Offering what we have for the sake of others is a discipline of pruning—letting go of our possessions, our time, and even ourselves—to extend the gospel witness into the world. Be generous in your ministry of giving. You need not fear; you abide in the vine.

**THE OFFERTORY**

**DOXOLOGY: “Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks” #240 - chorus only**

**ALLELUIA NO. 1**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**From you comes every gift we need, every blessing we have. May we not hoard them for ourselves, but offer them back to you, that the poor might be fed, the lonely befriended, and the despairing be filled with hope. This we pray in Jesus’ name, Amen.**

**\*HYMN: “Let Us Build a House” #301**

**TWO OAKS**

**CHARGE**

Go now, in the love of our God.

**We will live for others through our God.**

Go now, in the grace of Jesus.

**We will forgive others, just as we have been forgiven.**

Go now, in the community of the Spirit.

**We will serve others in every need, in every place, in every heart.**

**BENEDICTION**

**Volunteers This Week:**

Liturgist: Sue Schurr  
Tech: Betsy Crocker  
Usher(s): Linda Barry  
Coffee Hour: Bonnie Sibley  
Greeter(s): Janet Schurr

**Volunteers Next Week 5/5:**

Liturgist: Janet Haacker  
Tech: Betsy Crocker  
Usher(s): Bonnie Zimmer  
Coffee Hour:  
Greeter(s): Bonnie Sibley  
Communion: Janet Haacker, Sue Schurr

**PRAYER CONCERNS**

The prayer concerns have recently been updated. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Pastor Rebecca at 315-317-6140 or the church office at 716-692-1319.**

**CALENDAR**

Sunday, April 28

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)  
10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)  
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, April 29

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Tuesday, April 30

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Wednesday, May 1

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours  
12:00pm-3:00pm UFO Group

Thursday, May 2

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours  
10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)  
6:00pm Hearts4Worship  
6:45pm Bell Choir  
7:15pm Choir

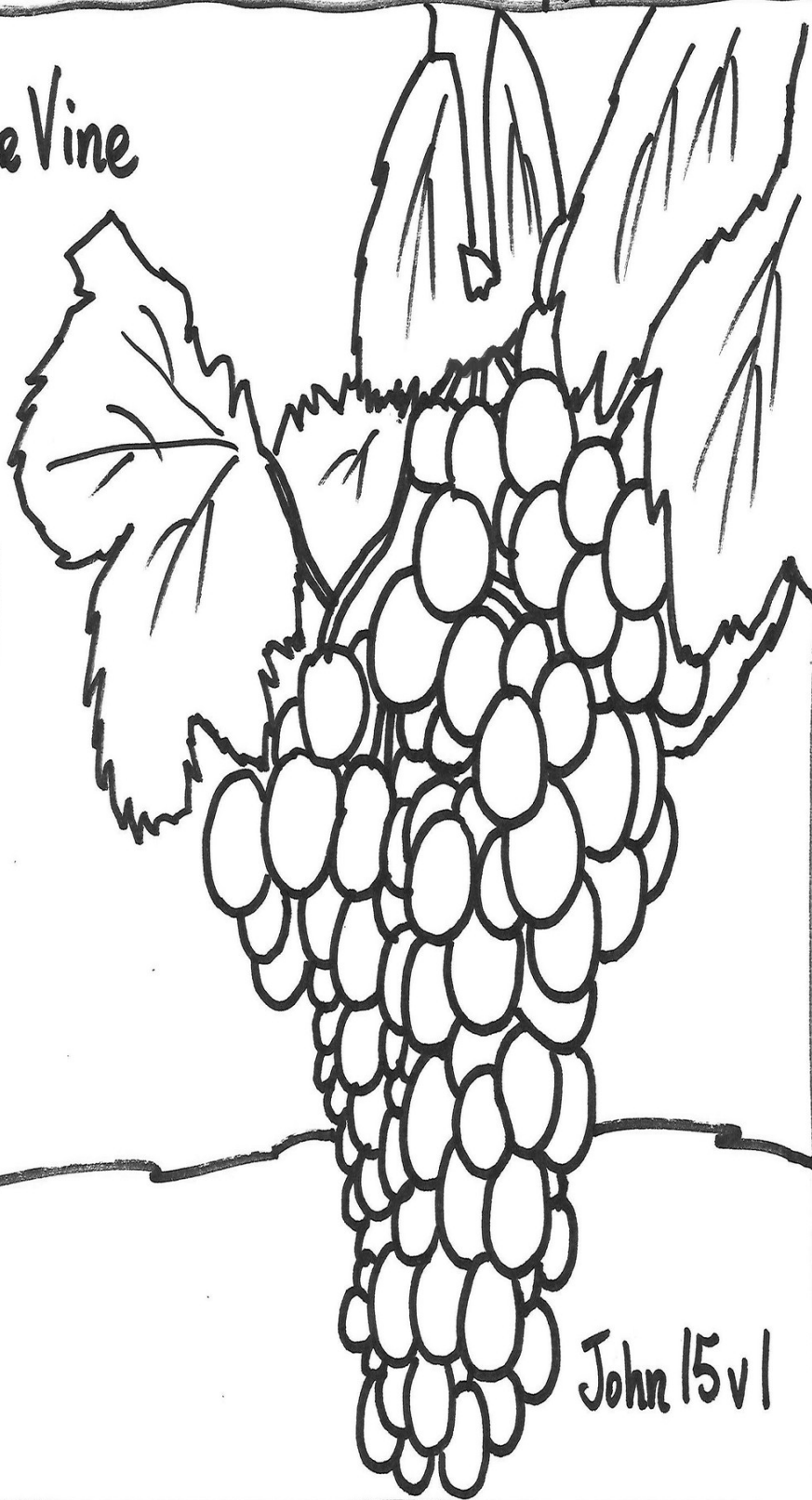
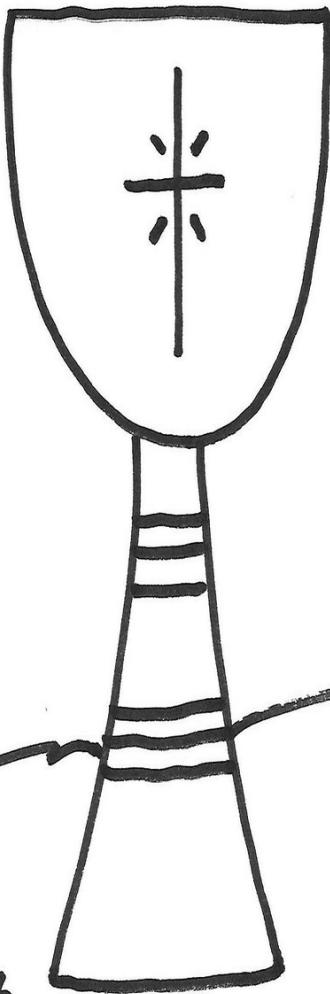
Saturday, May 4

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, May 5

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)  
10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)  
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

I am the True Vine



John 15 v 1

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