

**Sunday May 2, 2021  
Ever Branching Yet Linked Gift**

**Prelude**

**Words of Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

**Leader:** As we gather, may we open our hearts to receive newness of life.

**People:** *(Out loud, but muted)* **We come with hope for renewal.**

**Leader:** In our time of worship, may we be inspired by God's wisdom.

**People:** *(Out loud, but muted)* **We come seeking to learn and to draw closer to God.**

**Unison:** **Come, let us worship, as the beloved children of God.**

**Opening Prayer** **Unison** *(Out loud, but muted)*

**Cultivating God,  
we come as your children to grow and learn,  
because you are our divine vine grower.  
God, we desire for you to abide within us,  
and for your grace to be revealed anew daily.  
As your branches, we ask you to nourish us  
for continued growth.  
May you transform our hearts and minds  
as we hear your Word, sing your praises,  
and engage in holy dialogue through prayer.  
God you endlessly nurture us,  
help us to bear good fruit  
through the vine of Jesus Christ.  
We pray these things in your holy name, Amen.**

**Hymn # 402: Sing of Colors**

*(Please see separate attachment for the score)*

- 1) Sing of colors, sing of colors that over the hills in profusion are springing;  
Sing of colors, of the birds that fly outside my window their canticles singing;  
Sing of colors, in the rainbow's bright colors God's promise of hope we recall;

Sing of colors that make up the earth and give thanks to the God who created us all.

Sing of colors that make up the earth and give thanks to the God who created us all.

- 2) Sing, rejoicing! Every creature that breathes raise a song to the God of creation. Sing, rejoicing! Sing to God who so earnestly cares, who has offered salvation. Sing the good news! Sing the love of the Savior reflecting the colors of all. Many colors that shine from God's face, many colors that tell us God's love to recall. Many colors that shine from God's face, many colors that tell us God's love to recall.

### Prayer of Confession **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

**O God, giver of life,  
We confess the times when we fail to  
love our neighbors as we love ourselves.  
God, forgive us when we ignore or  
we fail to see our neighbors in need.  
Abiding God, also forgive us when we reject love  
from others, and shut down completely.  
As we confess the times when we did not  
tend to our own needs, and denied ourselves  
of your forgiveness, may we see and accept your abundant grace.  
In our failures, we have refused  
your invitation to grow closer to you.  
In our confession, O God, we pray your abiding love  
be shown through the ways we love more fully. Amen.**

*Moments for Reflection and Silence*

### **Assurance of Pardon**

O God, hear your beloved community  
as we repent and pray for your forgiveness.  
Give to us your grace and restore to us  
your love that is forgiven and fearless.  
God, we desire for your loving Spirit  
to renew and strengthen us daily. Amen.

## Passing of the Peace (unmute for Passing of the Peace)

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you  
People: And also with you!

### Reading

Jan Derry

#### 1 John 4:7-21 (NIV)

God's Love and Ours

<sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> This is how God showed God's love among us: God sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> This is love: not that we loved God, but that God loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

<sup>13</sup> This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. <sup>16</sup> And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. <sup>17</sup> This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

<sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup> And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

### Special Music

Susan Breon

### Gospel Reading

#### John 15:1-8 (NIV)

The Vine and the Branches

<sup>1</sup>“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup>He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes<sup>[a]</sup> so that it will be even more fruitful.<sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.  
<sup>5</sup>“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

## **Musical Interlude**

**Sermon:** Ever Branching Yet Linked Gift

## **Music for Meditation**

**Prayers of the People** (unmute yourself to offer a request, giving first names only, please)

**Hymn #508** Prayer Is the Soul’s Sincere Desire (verses 1 and 5)  
(sung muted but together)

**Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed;  
The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.  
O Christ, by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the Way,  
The path of prayer you too have trod: Christ, teach us how to pray.**

## **Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord’s Prayer** **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

## **Offering Invitation**

Today we are invited to become deeply attached, close,  
and loyal as branches who are connected with Jesus Christ, our vine.  
So, let our offering lift up one another in God’s abiding love.  
Now, let us offer ourselves in gratitude and with generosity,  
as fruit representing the abiding goodness of God.

Offering and Dedication **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

Generous God,

We offer you the fruits of our time, talents and resources  
in celebration of all that we have been given.

Loving God, we give you thanks for all that we have  
and ask a special blessing on the fruits we have given back  
to help meet the needs of your beloved community.

May the gifts nourish and strengthen the community to  
grow spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Service of Holy Communion

Invitation

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

Communion Prayer **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

As we eat this meal together and as we drink this juice of life in each other's  
presence grant unto us an emerging, fulfilling, and redeeming sense of life  
calling. In this holy meal of communion we feel the allure and enticement of  
fellowship enriching us and making us more able to serve you and your ends in  
life. With eternal gratitude we give you thanks. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction **Unison** (*Out loud, but muted*)

Let us go forth thankful that we have gathered with each other.

Let us go forth renewed in God's abiding love.

And let us go forth rejoicing in the Good News,  
of Jesus Christ, whose love will never let us go. Amen.