



April 28, 2024

5th Sunday of Eastertide

Service of Word

† Please stand in body or spirit

Prelude

Prelude on "Foundation"

David Kidwell

Greeting

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Welcome and Announcements

We thank God for these opportunities for fellowship and service.
Thanks be to God!

† Call to Worship

In the wilderness, water brings life.
Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.

In the Word of God, the good news gives light.
Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.

In the bread and the wine, the body of our Savior nourishes everyone.
Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.

Here is the water of life, the word that feeds, the food of eternity.
Come let us praise the vine that gives all goodness.

Let us worship God!

† Opening Hymn

The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done

VICTORY



1. The strife is o'er, the bat - tle done; the vic - to - ry of
 2. **The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their le - gions**
 3. The three sad days are quick - ly sped; he ris - es glo - rious
 4. **Lord, by the stripes which wound - ed thee, from death's dread sting thy**



life is won; the song of tri - umph has be - gun: Al-le - lu - ia!
hath dis - persed; let shouts of ho - ly joy out - burst; Al-le - lu - ia!
 from the dead; all glo - ry to our ris - en Head! Al-le - lu - ia!
ser - vants free, that we may live, and sing to thee: Al-le - lu - ia!

† Invocation

Wondrous Vinegrower, 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.**

Let us sing praise to God.
We will continually praise God's holy name.

† Gloria Patri

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

Paul M. Vasile



Glo - ry to God, whose good - ness shines on me, and to the
 World with - out end, with - out end. A - men. World with-out



Son, whose grace has par - doned me, and to the Spir - it, whose love has
 end, with - out end. A - men. World with-out end, with-out



set me free, As it was in the be - gin - ning, is now and ev - er shall be. A - men.
 end. A - men.

Reception Of New Member

We invite to come forward the one who wishes to affirm his baptism by uniting with us in this household of faith.

Andrew LaPane

Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. No one
stands a-lone, we'll stand side-by-side. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide!

Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the sacrament of baptism. This person has found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. Through prayer and study he has been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm his baptism and to claim in our presence his covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church. He is here for service to Jesus Christ, using the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestows.

God's message is near you, on your lips and in your heart, that is, the word of faith that we preach. If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved.

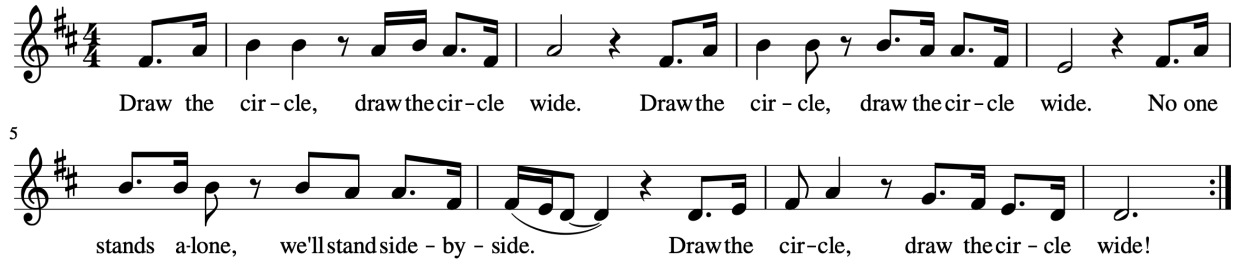
Andrew, do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?
I do.

Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?
I do.

Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?
I do.

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?
I promise, with the help of God.

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the United Church of Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?
I promise, with the help of God.



Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. No one
stands a-lone, we'll stand side-by-side. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide!

Let us unite with the church in all times and places
in confessing our faith in the triune God.

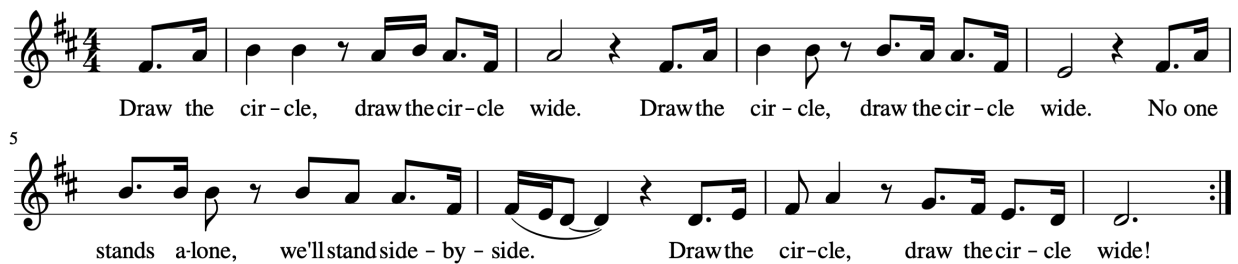
Do you believe in God?
I believe in God.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?
I believe in Jesus Christ.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
I believe in the Holy Spirit

By your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith.

Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?
I promise, with the help of God.



Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. No one
stands a-lone, we'll stand side-by-side. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide!

Let us, the members of, Enfield United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of, Enfield United Church of Christ, we extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this local church.

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we praise you for calling us to be your servant people and for gathering us into the body of Christ. We thank you for sending to us this believer that we may work together in serving the needs of others. Confirm in us the power of your covenant that we may live in your Spirit, share regularly in worship, and so love each other that we may have among us the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, to whom be all honor and glory. **Amen.**

Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. No one
stands a-lone, we'll stand side-by-side. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide! Draw the
cir-cle wide. Draw it wid-er still. Let this be our song, no one stands a-lone, stand-ing
side-by-side, draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide.

1. Je - sus loves me! This I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so.
Lit - tle ones to him be - long; they are weak, but he is strong.

Children's Moment

Yes, Je-sus loves me! Yes, Je-sus loves me! Yes, Je-sus loves me! The Bi-ble tells me so.

Then 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.

Hymn

O God, In Your Love

ST. DENIO

1. O God, in your love, you have made us u - nique: In gifts and tra -
 2. Lord Je - sus, you came to bring God's love on earth; You wel - comed the
 3. O Christ, with your wel - come your church feels un - ease: We stand at closed
 4. So may your church wel - come in lov - ing ac - cord All peo - ple who

6
 di - tions, in ser - vice we seek, In race and in cul - ture and fam - ily de -
 out - casts and showed us our worth. You reached out to peo - ple whom oth - ers de -
 doors tight - ly hold - ing the keys. Yet this is your bod - y, the church that you
 want to serve Je - sus our Lord. O Spir - it, u - nite us in Je - sus the

12
 sign Di - verse are the branch - es in Je - sus the Vine.
 spised You said all are pre - cious in God's lov - ing eyes.
 love O Lord, do you weep for your church from a - bove?
 Son In mis - sion, and min - is - try, God, make us one.

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.

† Hymn

The True Vine is Jesus

FOUNDATION

1. The true Vine is Je - sus, our Sav - ior and Lord, And God is the
 2. The true Vine is Je - sus, both faith - ful and sure, And we are the
 3. Re - main and a - bide in our on - ly true Vine And we will bear

6
 Vine - grow - er, faith - ful and true. That Vine God is prun - ing in
 bran - ches, now cleansed by his word. As bran - ches we dwell in the
 fruit that gives life to the soul. So Je - sus is blessed when by

11
 all good ac - cord; It bears faith - ful fruit that is fresh - 'ning and new.
 Vine strong and pure, And by that good nur - ture our ful - ness is stirred.
 God's good de - sign We are true dis - ci - ples, all fruit - ful and whole.

† Gospel Lesson

John 15:1-8

”I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. 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 word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

The Reverend Dr. Greg Gray

Sharing our Concerns

For all these persons and all who are in need.
Hold your people near, O God.

Sharing our Joys

We give thanks to God for these blessings.
Thanks be to God.

Pastoral Prayer

I Am the Vine

Paul D. Weber



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.

† Passing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you
And also with you.

Response to the Peace

May Peace Flow

Mark A. Miller

6 May peace flow through me as mu-sic through an in - strument, let it flow through me
12 like the warmth from the sun, may peace flow through me so that I may be a ves-
- sel of the love of God forev - 'ryone, forev - 'ryone.

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.

Offertory

Pastorale

Philip Hayes

† Doxology

Easter Doxology

OLD 100th

5 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, And sing to - day with one ac - cord. The
life laid down, the life re - stored; Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! A - men.

† Prayer of Dedication

As we offer our treasure and hearts to you, O God, may they be used to pass on the promise of hope, of peace, of life, of community to all in need of your gifts and presence in their lives. **Amen.**

† Closing Hymn

O Blessed Spring

O WALY WALY



1. O bless - ed spring, where Word and sign em - brace us
 2. **Through sum - mer heat and youth - ful years, un - cer - tain**
 3. When au - tumn cools and youth is cold, when limbs their
 4. **As win - ter comes, as win - ters must, we breathe our**
 5. Christ, ho - ly Vine, Christ, liv - ing Tree, be praised for



6 in to Christ the Vine: here Christ en - joins each one to
faith, re - bel - lious tears, sus - tained by Christ's in - fus - ing
 heav - y har - vest hold, then through us warm, the Christ will
last, re - turn to dust; still held in Christ, our souls take
 this blest mys - ter - y: that Word and wa - ter thus re -



12 be a branch of this life - giv - ing Tree.
rain, the boughs will shout for joy a - gain.
 move with gifts of beau - ty, wis - dom, love.
wing and trust the prom - ise of the spring.
 vive and join us to your Tree of Life.

† Benediction

Postlude

Immortal, Invisible

Lani Smith

WISE FOR MENTAL HEALTH COVENANT

We, Enfield UCC, commit ourselves to providing and promoting education, activities, and resources for individuals and families, as well as advocating for legislative action and collaborating with other mental health organizations. To that end, we joyously extend our church's compassionate welcome and love to members and non-members alike who experience mental illnesses or are touched by them.

WELCOME STATEMENT

We covenant with God and each other to live as Jesus has taught. Following God's example, we strive to be a Christian Community welcoming you no matter who you are. No matter your physical or mental ability, race, ethnicity, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, or economic status, you are truly welcome. We acknowledge past hurts individuals may have experienced and look to offer a safe, non-judgmental space for all who want to know God in Christ. This covenant includes the right to participate equally and fully in all aspects of the life and ministry of this congregation. In a spirit of understanding, we strive for collaboration as we seek to become the fully inclusive community of faith that God calls us to be.

ENFIELD UCC GUN POLICY

Gun violence continues to exist in the United States as a public health issue, one that requires reform in policy and culture. Enfield UCC is a gun-free zone, and no one may bring a firearm on the premises unless explicitly authorized by the pastor and/or moderator.

The United Church of Christ is a proponent of gun safety and gun control and supports policies including:

- strengthen the licensing and registration of handgun transfers
- restrict firearm possession by persons convicted of violent crimes and by juveniles
- limit handgun purchases to one per month
- strengthen regulation of gun dealers
- increase civil and criminal liability for misuse of firearms
- prohibit semiautomatic assault weapons, Saturday night specials, explosive ammunition and large capacity magazines
- require gun safety devices
- require training in the safe use of firearms as a condition of licensing

We encourage everyone to be in touch with legislators, urging them to pass legislation that restricts the sale of firearms.