

Order of Worship for Sunday, May 2, 2021

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 4 – Trinity Woodward Ladies Aide Meeting, 6:30pm

May 4 – Sprucetown Ad Council/Trustees Meeting 7pm

May 5 – St. James Trustees Meeting 6:30pm, Ad Council 7pm

May 6 – National Day of Prayer – St. James UMC open for prayer 8am-7:30pm and prayer resources will be made available at all churches May 2nd for anyone wishing to pray at work or at home.

CALL TO WORSHIP [Based on John 15:1-8, by Safiyah Fosua]

L: God is the True Vine,

P: And we are the branches.

L: Connected to God.

P: Connected to bear fruit!

L: Connected to God.

P: Or we wither away.

L: Connected to God.

P: Or useless!

L: We come to worship God, who is the True Vine.

P: God, teach us how to remain connected so that we might bear good fruit!

OPENING PRAYER

Divine Vinegrower, the soil of your love nurtures the roots of our lives each and every day. As we consecrate ourselves into your loving care, plant us in the soil of your love, that we may abide in Christ, our true vine, and bear the fruit of your love and grace. Give us rain in seasons of doubt and nourish our growth, that our harvest of love may bless the world. In your bountiful name, we pray. Amen.

HYMN Abide with Me UMH 700*

BLESSING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE As I Have Loved You

JOYS AND CONCERNS - (The Lord's Prayer "trespass")

SELECTED SCRIPTURE 1 John 4:7-21, John 15:1-8

MESSAGE Abide in Me

HYMN O Spirit of the Living God UMH 539*

SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Merciful God,

we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have failed to be an obedient church.

We have not done your will,

we have broken your law,

we have rebelled against your love,

we have not loved our neighbors,

and we have not heard the cry of the needy.

Forgive us, we pray.

Free us for joyful obedience,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All pray in silence.

Leader to people: Hear the good news:

Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;

that proves God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

People: **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!**

Glory to God. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere..*

*..we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ..*

*..in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,..*

*.. all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

HYMN: Sent Forth by God's Blessing UMH 664*

COMMISSION & BLESSING

PASTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor Theresa M. Heiser; theiser@susumc.org; 814-883-9510; PO Box 211, Centre Hall 16828

BIBLE STUDY: Abide in Me

Read: John 15:1-8

How does the image of Jesus as "true vine" illuminate who Jesus is? [Source of our fruitfulness.]

This image is both comforting and convicting. Jesus notes that pruning takes place (v. 2). Since the vine was an often-used metaphor for the people of Israel in the Old Testament, we know that Jesus' words are both for individuals and for the community. To truly abide, we all need pruning. Pruning is necessary for growth. Ask someone who is familiar with pruning to give insight into why and how pruning helps foster growth. [Some plants need pruning to grow.]

What activities might God be asking you to prune? Even during this time, we have many options clamoring for our attention – news, social media, entertainment, people, and so on. How might we prune some good things for the better activity of abiding in Christ?

How can this group help you abide in Christ?

What is a practice you'd be willing to try this week to help you abide in Christ? (Being still, silence, meditation, listening to inspiring music, practicing attentiveness, reading Scripture, prayer, journaling, fasting, or something else.)

CLOSING PRAYER

Covenant-keeping God, we are thankful that you are faithful, even when we are faithless. We confess that we are easily distracted, and like sheep, we wander due to our limited gaze. Give us your vision to see new, abundant fields of opportunity and new life that you are calling us toward. Empower us to let go of all that would hinder our growth. Amen.