

# TULLY UNITED COMMUNITY CHURCH

APRIL 28, 2024 9:30 AM

THE REV. RICHARD G. REED, PASTOR



## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

-WE GATHER TO WORSHIP THE LIVING GOD –

### **STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Tully United Community Church would like to acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, Fire-keepers of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands our buildings now stand.

### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Officiant: Grace and peace to you through God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. We welcome all who have come to worship our God – those who are here in person, and those who have joined us via social media. Are there any announcements to come before us?

### **PRELUDE**

**“Green Cathedral”**

**Carl Hahn/Gordon Johnstone**

**Soloist- Pamela Poulin**

### **GREETING**

Celebrant: We gather in the name of the risen Christ to worship God who calls us to worship in spirit and in truth. God's love is for you and me and for all people everywhere. So may we share God's love and life and be renewed in the refreshing Spirit of the living Christ.

## CENTERING SONG

"You Are Risen"

Jim Kerr-Whitt

You are risen, and in you I am changed.  
You are with us, and You promise to remain!  
You are Life to me, Lord!

## MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION

### CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Liturgist: Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches. Abide in me as I abide in you."

**People: We come to reaffirm and renew our connection with the life-giving Vine.**

Liturgist: Jesus said, "I appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last."

**People: We want to be fruitful, productive people whose lives make a difference.**

Liturgist: Jesus said, "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you."

**People: Christ, you are the Vine; we are the branches, rooted in faith and love. We will bear your fruit, abide in your love, and share the faith!**

Liturgist: Let us pray:

**O God who holds us all as one, you have given us Christ, your true vine, from which we draw our life and strength. Send to us a new assurance of your ongoing love and care for us as we gather to praise your name, and open our hearts to receive a fresh surge of your life-giving Spirit that we may be fruitful branches of him who gives himself to us always. This we pray through Jesus Christ, the Risen One. Amen.**

### \*\*HYMN

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

#384

**1. Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of Heav'n to earth come down;  
Fix in us thy humble dwelling; All thy faithful mercies crown!  
Jesus, Thou art all compassion, Pure unbounded love Thou art;  
Visit us with Thy salvation, Enter every trembling heart.**

**2. Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit Into every troubled breast!  
Let us all in Thee inherit; Let us find that second rest.  
Take away our bent to sinning; Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith, as its beginning, Set our hearts at liberty.**

**3. Come, Almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive;  
suddenly return and never, nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,**

pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.  
4. Finish, then, Thy new creation; Pure and spotless let us be;  
Let us see Thy great salvation Perfectly restored in Thee;  
Changed from glory into glory, Till in Heav'n we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee, Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

## **PASSING THE PEACE**

Officiant: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **-WE REJOICE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS-**

### **FIRST LESSON**

**Acts 8:26-40**

**Liturgist: Philip leads the Ethiopian eunuch to belief and baptism in Christ Jesus.**

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.

**Here ends the reading.**

**PSALTER**

**Psalm 22:25-31**

**Resp. 2**

**#752**

**R**     ♪ **All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.** ♪

Liturgist: From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

**People:       my vows I will pay before those who worship the Lord.**

L: The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

**P:       those who seek the Lord shall praise the LORD.**

**May your hearts live for ever!**

L: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;

**P:       and all the families of the nations shall worship before the Lord.**

L: For dominion belongs to the LORD,  
who rules over the nations.

**P: All who sleep in the earth shall bow down to the Lord;**

L: All who go down to the dust shall bow before the Lord,  
and I shall live for God.

**P: Posterity shall serve the Lord;**

L: each generation shall tell of the Lord,  
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn.

**P: Surely the Lord has done it.    R**

**SECOND LESSON**

**First John 4:7-21**

**Liturgist: In this first letter, John speaks of the blessedness of God's love for us and of our love for God and one another.**

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. They that loveth not knoweth not 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.

**Here ends the reading.**

**\*\*GLORIA PATRI**

**#70**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

**\*\*THE GOSPEL**

**+John 15:1-8+**

"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."

SERMON

The Rev. Richard G. Reed

CHORAL ANTHEM

"I Am the Vine"  
LAURA CURRIE CHANCEL CHOIR

Allen Pote

-WE BOW BEFORE THE LORD IN PRAYER-

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (using "sins")

#894

Bidding: *O God, our God, do not forsake us:*

**Response: Hear us and answer us.**

Celebrant: Gracious and loving God, you have taught us to love one another even as Christ loves us. Manifest your love in us as we bring before you the prayers of your people, saying: *O God, our God, do not forsake us: **Hear us and answer us.***

Liturgist: Christ is the vine, Lord; make us the branches, rooted in faith and love. Bless your Church universal with the boldness to speak the truth of the Gospel to the principalities and powers of the world. Bless our congregation as we seek to do your will in serving one another, our community, and the world around us.

*O God, our God, do not forsake us: **Hear us and answer us.***

L: Yours is the love, Lord, that changes the world, inside and out. Make clean those unclean in the world's eyes. Make humble those who think themselves mighty in the world's eyes. Cause the leaders of the world to serve their people with justice, equity, and grace.

*O God, our God, do not forsake us: **Hear us and answer us.***

L: You have promised to dwell on the earth, O God. Make us better stewards of the earth you have given us. Help us to see that your justice, your grace, and your salvation are not for people alone, but for the whole of your Creation.

*O God, our God, do not forsake us: **Hear us and answer us.***

L: You bring the comfort of your presence to all people, O Gracious One, wiping away our tears and satisfying the needs of those who thirst: Guide us to the springs of the water of life as we bring to you in prayer those who are ill or suffering from any need or affliction, especially those whom we have named aloud and those who we now bring to you in silence.

O God, our God, do not forsake us: **Hear us and answer us.**

L: Accept our grateful thanksgiving for all the gifts you have given us and receive into your presence those who have come through the great ordeal of life, and passed on to eternal life.

O God, our God, do not forsake us: **Hear us and answer us.**

*Celebrant: Bring us now into your vineyard, Lord. Prune us and tend us, that we may bear good fruit. We offer you all that we are; press us into the wine of the new covenant, that the cup of the new kingdom may be filled to overflowing. And now as Jesus Christ our Savior taught us, we are bold to pray, saying:*

**“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 sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.”**

**-WE OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD-**

### **OFFERTORY INVITATION**

*Celebrant: The bounty of God's grace has blessed us in so many ways. God's love was manifested in the ultimate gift of Jesus, the Christ. Let us demonstrate our love through the sharing of our time, talent, and treasure that God may be glorified.*

### **\*\*DOXOLOGY, PRESENTATION, AND OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**#95**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God, above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Word, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Officiant: Everything we are and everything we have are gifts from You most gracious Giver, whose provisions are sure, unending, and generous. Receive the gifts we bring as part of our life of service, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**-WE ARE SENT TO PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS-**

**\*\*HYMN**

**"Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service"**

**#581**

**1. Lord, whose love through humble service  
Bore the weight of human need,  
Who upon the cross, forsaken,  
Offered mercy's perfect deed,  
We, Your servants, bring the worship  
Not of voice alone, but heart,  
Consecrating to Your purpose  
Ev'ry gift that you impart.**

**2. Still Your children wander homeless  
Still the hungry cry for bread  
Still the captives long for freedom  
Still in grief we mourn our dead  
As O Lord in deep compassion  
Healed the sick and freed the soul  
use the love your Spirit kindles  
still to save and make us whole**

**3. As we worship grant us vision  
Till Your love's revealing light  
In its height and depth and greatness  
Dawns upon our quicken sight  
Making known the needs and burdens  
Your compassion bids us bear  
Stirring us to tireless striving  
Your abundant life to share**

**4. Called by worship to your service  
forth in your dear name we go  
to the child the youth the aged  
love in living deeds to show  
hope and health good will and comfort  
counsel aid and peace we give  
that you servants Lord in freedom  
may your mercy know and live**



## **BENEDICTION**

Officiant: May God the Father, who raised Christ Jesus from the dead, continually show loving-kindness toward us.

May God the Son, Victor over sin and death, grant us a share in the joy of his resurrection.

May God the Spirit, giver of light and peace, renew our hearts in God's love. And Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you, now and always.

**People: Amen. Alleluia!**

## **POSTLUDE**

**“Amazing Grace”**

**arr. Jack Schrader**

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**\*\*Indicates to rise if you are able**

### **Thoughts to Ponder After Worship:**

- How would you feel if you were talking with someone about your faith in Jesus and they asked to be baptized? What would you do?
- What are your memories of ways the faith was communicated to you? Who do you remember as those who influenced you in the faith?
- If our task is to love one another, then is our task also to counter hate? What is the church's responsibility to root out and end hate?
- We are branches in the True Vine, Jesus. As such, what fruit are we bearing in this congregation? What fruit is God leading each of us to bear in this time and place?