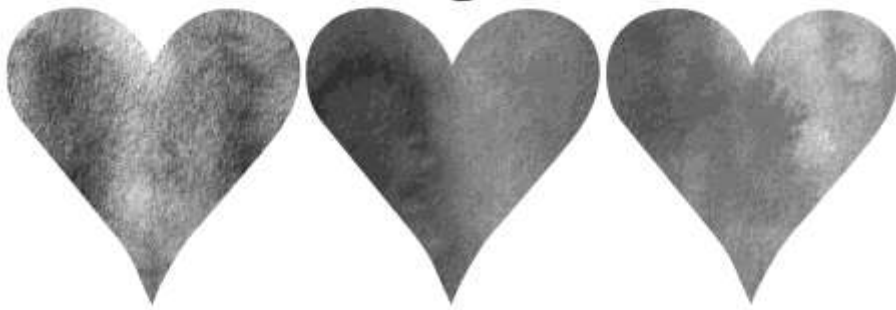


*“Love
each other
as I have
loved you.”*

JOHN 15:12, NIV



Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 5, 2024

Zion Lutheran Church

212 South Front Street

(513) 863-5774

Hamilton, Ohio 45011

www.zionhamilton.org

Patti Eaton, Vicar

Rev. John Mittermaier, Pastor-in-Residence

Bill Seale, Music Minister

Julia Hilbert, Office Administrator

WELCOME IN THE LORD'S NAME! We are glad you joined us for worship today and hope that you will find this time of worship an inspiration and that you will feel renewed in the Holy Spirit, at one with God the Father and newly committed to Jesus.

IF YOU DESIRE PRAYERS for yourself or others, prayer cards are located in the pew racks. Simply complete the card and place it in the offering plate. You may also email zionlutheranoffice@gmail.com or call the church office.

As Lutherans, we believe in the Real Presence of our Lord in the communion bread and wine. All Baptized Christians are encouraged to receive the **SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**. Please approach the kneeling rail picking up an empty cup or cup of grape juice on the way. Then go either direction to receive the bread (wafer) and blood (wine or grape juice). Leave your empty cup in the holder on your way back to your seat.

Please take a moment to sign an **ATTENDANCE CARD** found in the pews.

A **NURSERY** is located in room 208/209 in the upper level of the education building and is available for children ages five and under but is unstaffed at this time. You may take your child and stay with them. There is also a "quiet" room in room 201.

RESTROOMS can be located by following The Great Hall to the elevator or going up the stairwell to the Fourth Floor. They are located just past the drinking fountain on the right of the hallway.

For more information about **PROGRAMS** offered at Zion, or general information, please review your bulletin, visit our website at zionhamilton.org and "like" Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church on Facebook.

If you have **QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE**, please reach out to our ushers who are available at the back of the sanctuary.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS TIME WITH US! May God's blessings be with you this week and we look forward to your joining us again.

Reaching out with God's love.

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 5, 2024

Setting Two, LBW

Introduction (for silent meditation)

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Morning Has Broken* - Trad. Gaelic Melody, Arr. Mark Looney

(Please use the prelude as quiet preparation for worship.)

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

*P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ~~+~~ one God,
the wellspring of grace,
our Easter and our joy.*

C Amen.

P Look, here is water!

C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

*P Immersed in the promises of baptism,
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.*

*P We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning
your voice thundered over the deep
and water became the essence of life.
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.
The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea
into freedom's land.
In a desert pool the Ethiopian official
entered your boundless baptismal life.*

P Look, here is water!

C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

*P At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.
By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,
freeing us to live as Easter people.*

*We rejoice with glad hearts,
giving all honor and praise to you,
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.*

C Amen.

P Look, here is water!

C Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

Stand

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Stand

HYMN *In Christ There Is No East or West*

650



1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - 'ry - where their high com - mu - nion find;
3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what - e'er your race may be.
4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com - mu - ni - ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser - vice is the gold - en cord close bind - ing hu - man - kind.
All chil - dren of the liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
all Christ - ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852–1941, alt.

Music: MCKEE, African American spiritual; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1866–1949

Stand

GREETING

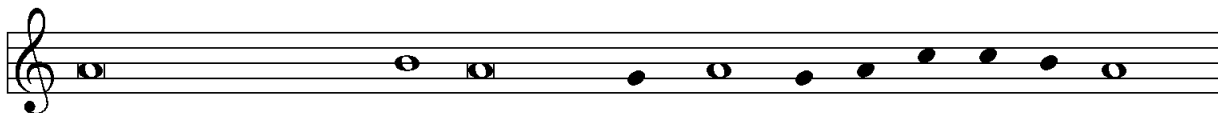
*P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

C And also with you.

KYRIE



A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



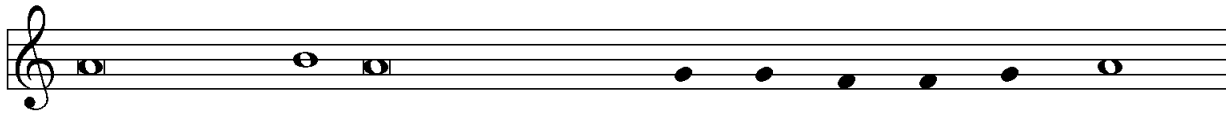
☩ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



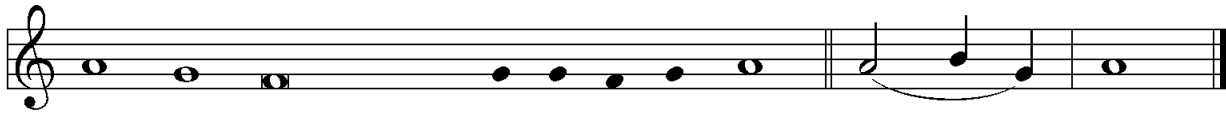
☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



☩ For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **☩ Lord, have mer - cy.**



☩ Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. **☩ A - men**

HYMN OF PRAISE



☩ This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



☩ Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-tor-y for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.



This is the feast of vic-tor-y for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray: O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

THE WORD OF THE LORD

Sit

FIRST LESSON

Acts 10:44-48

While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days. ⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

L Word of God. Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 98

(read responsively)

¹*Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things,*
whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.

²*O LORD, you have made known your victory,*
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³*You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel;*
all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

⁴*Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands;*
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

⁵*Sing to the LORD with the harp,*
with the harp and the voice of song.

⁶*With trumpets and the sound of the horn*
shout with joy before the king, the LORD.

⁷*Let the sea roar, and all that fills it,*
the world and those who dwell therein.

⁸*Let the rivers clap their hands,*
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to judge the earth.

⁹*The LORD will judge the world with righteousness*
and the peoples with equity.

SECOND LESSON

1 John 5:1-6

God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments.

And his commandments are not burdensome, ⁴for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

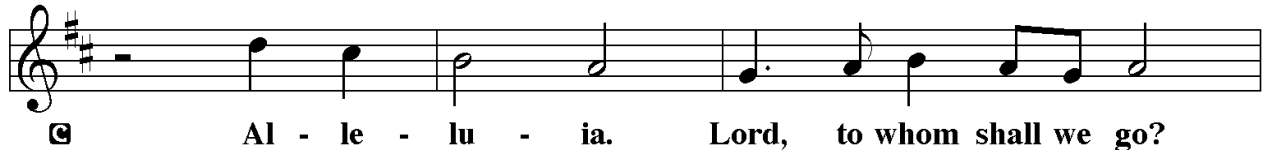
⁶This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

L Word of God. Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

John 15:9-17

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.

[Jesus said:] ⁹“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

After the reading:

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

YOUTH MESSAGE

SERMON

What a Friend



1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
 2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
 3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—
 Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - row share?
 Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
 Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.
 In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820–1886

Music: CONVERSE, Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918

NICENE CREED

P With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C We believe in one God,
 the Father, the Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth,
 of all that is, seen and unseen.
 We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 the only Son of God,
 eternally begotten of the Father,
 God from God, Light from Light,
 true God from true God,
 begotten, not made,
 of one Being with the Father.
 Through him all things were made.
 For us and for our salvation
 he came down from heaven;

**by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and
was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

Kneel as you are able.

THE PRAYERS

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

A brief silence.

*Your Holy Spirit falls upon all who hear the word. Fill your church with the gifts of your Spirit and give understanding hearts to those who strengthen our commitments with our ecumenical and interreligious partners, especially Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Middletown and Front Street First Church of God in Hamilton. God of grace,
hear our prayer.*

*You speak and the face of the earth is renewed. Revive your creation, that habitats and every kind of living thing might flourish. Protect endangered species and help us to care for all your creatures. God of grace,
hear our prayer.*

*Your world is divided and the nations rage. Grant wisdom and vision to world leaders, that they may seek justice, peace, and the good of all. Strengthen international partnerships and cooperation. God of grace,
hear our prayer.*

Your children are in need. Comfort all those who suffer, especially those afflicted by anxiety, depression, mental illness, and physical illness. Help us to be conduits of your love in our care for one another. We pray especially for:

Patrice Huston	Libby Brice	Bob Campbell
Maggie Brice	Donna Wolfe	Wayne Huston
Gayle Ford	Wanda Melford	Patti Sroufe
Glen French	Dennis Steele	Elmira Peterson
Clay Calihan	Minnette Bunnell	Sonya Solomon
Joyce Edler	Pam Tipton Davis	Jim Piatt
Hilary Campbell	Levi	Rob Keelor
Joni Copas	Jim Scheibling	Ed Fredian
Mike Ford	Barbara Shearer	Courtney McKee
Michael Frye (son)	Tonya Tobin	Brynn
Irene Graham	Don Boling	Patsy Kreidler
Ron Hill	Larry Jones	Earl Robinson
Pat Barnhorst	Ralph Estes	Bob Niederman
Matt Schamp	Sheryl Engel	Ron House
Tom Hole	Greg Gault	Shirley Johnson

Joan Cunningham

Our friends at home: Elaine Wilson, 4921 Pleasant Ave, Fairfield, OH 45014

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your work is done in this place with our hands. Bless the ministries of this congregation (ministries may be named), that we may embody your love for the world. Inspire those who plan and lead worship, council members, committee members, and volunteers. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Your blessed saints now rest in you. Give us thankful hearts for those who have gone before us (especially). At the last, bring us all together around your heavenly banquet table. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

Amen.

Stand

PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you

R: Peace be with you.

HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERING

The offering is received.

CHORAL VOLUNTARY

The Servant Song - Richard Gilliard

Arranged by David Haas, Kathy Chambers, soprano soloist

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the plates are presented, the appointed Offertory is sung.



C Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

P Let us pray. Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

C Amen

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

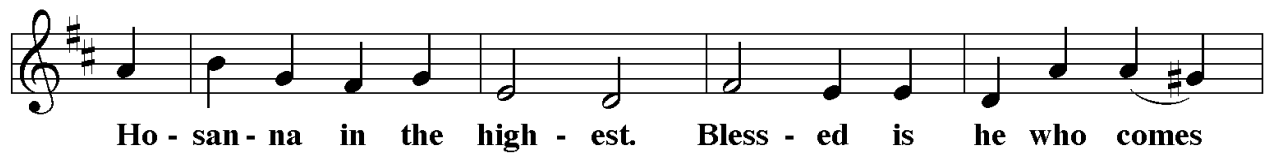
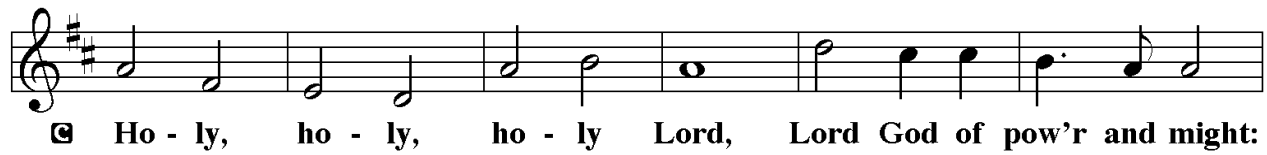
P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, living, and loving God,

we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood,

for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,

and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus

who, living among us,

healed the sick,

fed the hungry,

and with a love stronger than death,

gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

*Remembering, therefore,
 his life-giving death and glorious resurrection,
 we await your promised life for all this dying world.
 Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup:
 carry us in your arms from death to life,
 that we may live as your chosen ones,
 clothed in the righteousness of Christ.
 Through him all glory and honor is yours,
 Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
 in your holy Church,
 both now and forever.*

Amen

LORD’S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C 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 trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

*P The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread.
 Come and eat at God’s table.*

Sit

COMMUNION



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;

grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN *Jesus Loves Me!*

595

1 Je - sus loves me! this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so;
 2 Je - sus loves me! he who died heav - en's gates to o - pen wide;
 3 Je - sus loves me! he will stay close be - side me all the way;

lit - tle ones to him be - long, they are weak, but he is strong.
 he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
 when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

Refrain

Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me,

yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820–1915, alt.
 Music: JESUS LOVES ME, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

*As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:
 The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.
 The communicant may say: **Amen***

*Stand
 P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
 strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

C Amen

CANTICLE

☩ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

P Let us pray. Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend.

C Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

*P The God of resurrection power,
the Christ of unending joy,
and the Spirit of Easter hope
✠ bless you now and always.*

C Amen

FLOWERS

The flowers this morning are given to the glory of God:

Altar Flowers: by Anita Snyder.

Last week's attendance (4/28/2024): 75 in person, **158** including Facebook & YouTube views, and known radio listeners

Last week's offering (4/28/2024): \$3,430.00

Thank you for continuing your offering and stewardship commitments. Offering may be put in the offering plate or mailed to the church office. Additionally, Zion has a digital option. We have equipped the website (www.zionhamilton.org) with a digital offering portal. This function allows you to make a one-time or recurring offering gift to Zion. All gifts are recorded to ensure proper tax reporting.



Attention Zion Members: We are sending cards again, not only to our shut ins but every member of Zion. We would like them signed by as many people as are here each week. So, each week you'll find a card to sign in the great hall. This is our way of sending out our Christian love to fellow members. Everyone loves to get something besides bills in the mail!

The Unconditional Love of Disciple-Friends

Friend requests are a common feature of Facebook and similar digital platforms. When it comes to social media, “friends” are just a click away. But there is no automatic guarantee of accountability, warmth, relationship, or true belonging in a virtual community. In stark contrast, Jesus invites the disciples to become part of a community where selfless, sacrificial, unconditional *agape* love is the core criterion. The kingdom, or “kin-dom,” of God is present wherever God’s people are affirmed as children of God and siblings in Christ. But Jesus gives his disciples an additional identity: that of “friends.”

In the new status Jesus confers on his disciples, the single most important criterion is love, including the readiness to lay down one’s life for another. Jesus has just taught this lesson by example when he washed the feet of his disciples, including Judas Iscariot. The new commandment to love one another as Jesus loved us summarizes the whole of the gospel mandate. It is not an easy commandment by any human standards, but it is possible because Jesus himself showed us the way and forgives us when we fall short. The status of “disciple-friends” is not a request for the church, but a faith mandate.

How can we live as disciple-friends of Jesus in this world? When we believe, trust, obey, and follow the word, and the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples, a real new community is born. When we learn to embrace the other—those who are marginalized and “othered”—we partner with God in enabling the image of God to blossom to its fullest.