

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
May 03, 2015 EASTER 5



Gathering: *As the weak realize their strength; as the poor eat and are satisfied, **God's love abides in us.** As the stranger finds a friend; as the family offers forgiveness, **God's love abides in us.** As the ends of the earth know of Christ's grace, **God's love abides in us.***

Prayer: *How deeply you have loved us, Jesus; how willingly you stepped into our experience, how completely you empathised with all that we endure.*

Teach us to love as you have loved us. *How sacrificially you have loved us, Jesus; how completely you gave yourself for us, how courageously you suffered for our sakes. **Teach us to love as you have loved us.** How restoratively you have loved us, Jesus; how generously you share your life, how extravagantly you make yourself available to us. **Teach us to love as you have loved us.** We praise you for your love which is given so freely and so unconditionally. **And we thank you for believing that we could learn to offer such love to each other. Amen.** ~ written by John van de Laar*

Hymn: God is love (1) 227

Confession: *Almighty God, Creator of the heavens and earth, we confess that we do not always live into the message of hope and salvation, the promise of eternal life. **We live in ways that make the here and now more important than the future.** We live in ways that put ourselves and our own success first over the needs of others and the long-term needs of the world. **Forgive us for our selfish ways and call us into the path of Christ, who humbled himself and gave himself up for us on the cross, so that death might be no more and that all can share in the joy of salvation and eternal life, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.***

Hymn: God is love (2) 227
Assurance of Pardon *Words of Assurance In Christ Jesus we are a radically renewed community. **Thanks be to God!** Old things are done away with, all things become new. **Thanks be to God!** We are agents of grace and reconciliation. **Thanks be to God!** With every step or stumble, Christ will be with us. **Thanks be to God!***

Hymn: God is love (3) 227

1 John 4:7-21 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.

Hymn: Where charity and love prevail (1-2) **692**

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: Where charity and love prevail (3-4) **692**

To consider: "God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us."

Westboro Baptist Church describes itself as a hate church – hates gays and promotes hate at every opportunity.... 'homosexuality should be a capital crime, ... all such individuals are destined for Hell'. William Sloane Coffin preaching on this text said: "The opposite of love is not hate; the opposite of love is fear."

~ What fears keep you from fulfilling the great commandment (Love God, others, self). ~How have you experienced love, divine and human, in your own experience recently? Reflecting on that love might be a wonderful way to begin your own meditations in preparation for living this coming week. ~In what sense is it that if we love one another God's love is made complete in us?

"Whoever does not love does not know God". Discuss this rather blunt statement.

Hymn: Where charity and love prevail (5-6) **692**

Invitation: *Sisters and brothers in Christ, take your places here today in celebration and in awe. What you have heard has the capacity to change the world. Your very presence attests to the rising up of life from the tomb of despair, and to the uncontrollable power of God. **We live on this side of resurrection and everything is made new!***

Hymn: God is love, come heaven adoring **314**

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. **God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.***

(Continue in thanksgiving) O God, giver of all that is good,

We thank you for this bread and this fruit of the vine, symbols of the harvest of your good earth, and we look to the day when we will all eat together as your holy people. Amen.

Communion

Prayer following communion: Most gracious God, source of all blessing, we give you thanks for inviting us to share this meal as your people. Strengthen us to be a blessing to one another and to all people, glorifying you in everything we do and say, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: Now let us from this table rise (1-2) **556**

Sending: *Christ sends us: Keep my commandments, abide in my love.*

We will go in peace and justice! *Love one another, go forth to serve:*

We will go in love! *Share in my mission, bear fruit that will last:*

We will go as your friends, rejoicing!

Let us go in peace to witness to our community and world, that Christ is alive!

