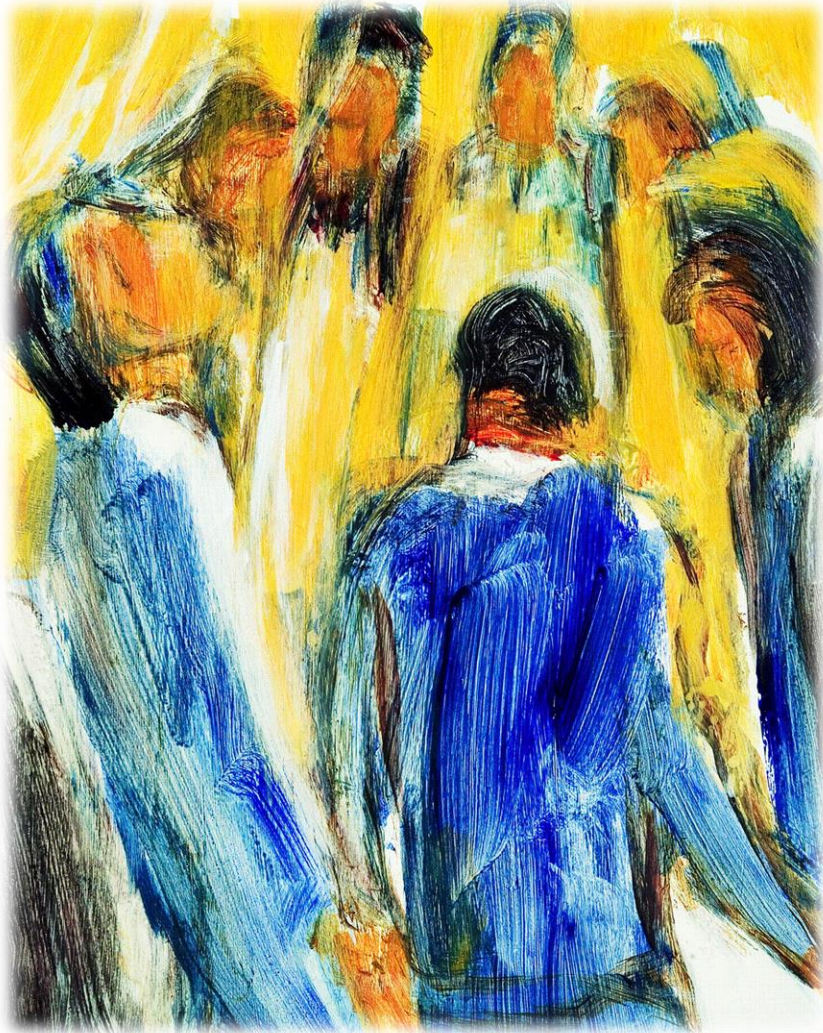




FAIRLAWN

Connect with what matters in life.



**Fairlawn Avenue United Church
Fifth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 18, 2025 10:30am**

**Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts
Eleanor Daley, Director of Music
Fairlawn Avenue Senior Choir**

2.

*Indicates when the congregation is to stand, as able.

Congregational responses, singing and readings in unison are indicated in **bold text**.

Welcome and Acknowledgement

Invitation to Worship[1]

Be in love with life
and so become friends and partners of the Creator.

***Now is the time to live a new life
in balance with Life and with the Earth.***

Marvel at life!
Strive to know its ways!
Seek wisdom and truth,
the gateways
to life's mysteries!

Wondrous indeed is life!

***Opening Hymn** Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

VU #333

**Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in me 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.**

**Come, almighty to deliver;
let us all thy grace 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.**

**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 heaven we take our place,
 till we cast our crowns before thee,
 lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving[2]

Spirit of Life, we gather grateful for
 the companionship of hearts and minds
 seeking to speak the truth in love.
 We gather grateful for our heritage,
 for the women and men before us
 whose prophetic words and deeds
 make possible our dreams and our insight.
 And we gather grateful for the gift of life itself,
 mindful that to respect life
 means both to celebrate what life is
 and to insist on what it can become.

Introit

Let Your Love, O Lord

E. Daley

Let your love, O Lord, be upon us,
 even as we hope in you.
 (Psalm 33:22)

Scripture

Acts 11:1-18

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, 'Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?' Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying,

'I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air.

4.

I also heard a voice saying to me, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But I replied, "By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth." But a second time the voice answered from heaven, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven.

At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, "Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved."

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?

When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, 'Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.'

Anthem As a Fire is Meant For Burning

As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,
so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God's name.
Not to preach our creeds and customs, but to build a bridge of care,
we join hands across the nations, finding neighbours everywhere.

We are learners, we are teachers, we are pilgrims on the way.
We are seekers, we are givers, we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle, loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.
In a humble, listening Spirit, we would live to God's delight.

As a green bud in the springtime is a sign of life renewed,
so may we be signs of oneness mid earth's peoples, many-hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,
may our lives reflect the radiance of God's new and glorious dawn.
(VU #578)

Reflection Coincidence? I Think Not!

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts

Passing the Peace

Introduction of Offering

Offertory Anthem O How Amiable

E. Daley

O how amiable are thy dwellings, O Lord of hosts;
 my soul hath a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord,
 my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God,
 my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
 Blessèd are they who dwell in thy house, O Lord,
 ever singing thy praise.
 Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,
 and establish thou the work of our hands upon us;
 from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

*Presentation of the Offering

**In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today,
 to serve your cause and share your love with all along life's way.
 O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ, your Son,
 teach us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.**

Prayers of the People[3]

We bring you,
 Holy Friend,
 the concerns we hold in our minds,
 and the heartaches we carry deep within our being.
 Please sift out these prayers,
 and let all that is good align itself with your love for humanity.

We bring before you those unfortunate people featured in the news:
 the victims of accident, war, disease, violence, greed and natural disasters.
 Let there be hope;

Let there be love, let there be peace.

6.

We bring before you those who are ignored by the mass media:
the forgotten minorities suffering oppression,
the humble people who suffer constantly and die obscurely.
Let there be hope;

Let there be love, let there be peace.

We bring before you the political parties we don't vote for,
leaders we do not trust,
high profile people we dislike, and work colleagues who exasperate us.
Let there be hope;

Let there be love, let there be peace.

We bring before you neighbours whose sorrows we don't know about,
friends with secret wounds and sorrows,
relatives with temptations and anxieties that they hide from us.
Let there be hope;

Let there be love, let there be peace.

We bring before church members whom we do not really know,
those we can't understand, some who annoy us,
and others whose beliefs and values dismay us.
Let there be hope;

Let there be love, let there be peace.

Through Christ, for Christ, and with Christ,

***May love deepen, spread and rule through all things.
Amen!***

***Closing Hymn** Draw the Circle Wide

***Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
draw the circle wide.***

**God the stillpoint of the circle,
'round whom all creation turns;
nothing lost, but held forever,
in God's gracious arms.**

**Let our hearts touch far horizons,
so encompass great and small;
let our loving know no borders,
faithful to God's call.**

**Let the dreams we dream be larger,
than we've ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us,
open every door.**

***Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
draw the circle wide.***

***Sending Out^[4]**

**May our faith be not in our words but in our lives,
not in what we say but in who we are,
passing on your love like an infectious laugh:
not worried,
not threatening,
just shining
like the sun, like a starry night
like a lamp on a stand,
light for life.**

***Choral Commissioning**

E. Daley

(The choir will sing through once, and then the congregation is invited to join in.)

**May God's love surround you,
may God's wisdom guide you,
may God's light shine upon you,
until we meet again.**

Postlude

[1] Rabbi Rami M Shapiro, adapted, with permission

[2] M S Milner, adapted, with permission.

[3] Bruce Prewer, adapted, with permission

[4] K. Galloway, with permission

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