

# Celebrate

The Freedom to Love

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 18, 2025

First  
Church



**Celebrate May 18, 2025**

## **We Gather**

### **PRELUDE AND LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

"The Gift of Love" Arr. John Carter

### **GOSPEL LESSON**

John 13: 34-35

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

### **CENTERING WORDS**

Leader: The joy of Easter is for everyone! Whether you are a frequent visitor or just dropping in, you are welcome here. During this season, we are exploring the many ways that Jesus worked for the freedom and liberation of all people. Today is about the simplest and most powerful kind of freedom: the freedom to love. Love is a gift from God, and today we celebrate that gift as a community.

*[sung by song leaders]*

I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God. I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.

Leader: This Sunday we lift up, as the scriptures do, that God's promise of a new covenant is with all who seek it—all are gifted with the Spirit. There is no distinction of gender, age, or background. We are all given the freedom to follow Christ's new commandment, to love one another. Let us sing together!

*[sung by congregation]*

**ALL: I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God. I will take the cup of freedom and call on the name of God.**

### **HYMN**

"They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" see insert

### **PRAYER**

Leader: Let us pray together

**All: God of Freedom, our hearts are full because of your presence and compassion. Let us reach far and wide with the hands of love so that all may know freedom in you. We come to you in this moment, cups running over with thanksgiving. Amen!**

## **We Proclaim**

### **THE MESSAGE TO YOUNG DISCIPLES**

## THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Acts 11: 1-18

Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters 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. 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."

Leader: The Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### MESSAGE

"The Freedom to Love"  
by Pastor Duane Carlisle

### MESSAGE IN MUSIC

Aldersgate Bell Choir  
"Rocka-my-Soul"  
African American spiritual  
Arr. by Valerie W. Stephenson

## We Respond

### PASTORAL PRAYER

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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. Amen.**

### INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

<https://onrealm.org/FUMCWL/-/form/give/now>

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

### We Go Forth

#### CLOSING HYMN

"All You Need is Love"

All you need is love  
All you need is love  
All you need is love love  
Love is all you need

#### THE BENEDICTION

#### POSTLUDE

"All You Need is Love" Reprise

Scan QR code to check in and give information



### Prayers

#### Those Who Have Lost a Loved One

Friends and family of Margaret Williamson

#### Concerns Shared

Tom Clark                      All in need of prayer

#### Those In Rehab & Extended Care

Jack Gaunt

#### Those in Memory Care

Pat Staver

#### Our Military

CDR James Beaty	Sman Kevin Clute
AWR1 Isaiah Hale	LTC Kevin Field
HM2 Kim Fountain	Sman Ben Ridings
TSgt Gerald Welker	LCDR Alex Turco
MSG Anthony Mauro	

Announcements are sent out via email each week. If you are not receiving them, contact Ronda at 765-743-1285 or [rkroeschen@fumcwl.org](mailto:rkroeschen@fumcwl.org)

#### Helping with worship today:

##### Audio/Visual

Audio 1 - Evora Schellingerhout  
Audio 2 - Riley Schellingerhout  
CG Creation - Charis Vander Plaats  
CG Operator - Todd Pickard

##### Musicians

Alto - Gail Polles	Bass - John Jones
Soprano - Karen Hull	Tenor - Brad Pickett
Piano/Organ - Scott Hines	

##### Pastors

Lead Pastor Duane Carlisle  
Assistant Pastor Kory Pritchett

##### Song Leader/Worship Leader

Charis Vander Plaats

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