

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 7, 2023

Order of Worship: Holy Communion, Setting Four

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PRELUDE & BELLS *We observe a moment of silence for prayer and meditation.*

WELCOME *congregation responds* and unto ages of ages. **Amen.**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

We stand OPENING HYMN

#389

“Christ Is Alive”

✠BRIEF RITE FOR CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS OF SINS✠

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thought of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8-9

Silence is kept for reflection and personal confession.

Most merciful God... **we confess that we are born captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you- who believe and repent- of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

✠HOLY COMMUNION✠

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

LITANY

Kyrie Eleison- Lord, Have Mercy!



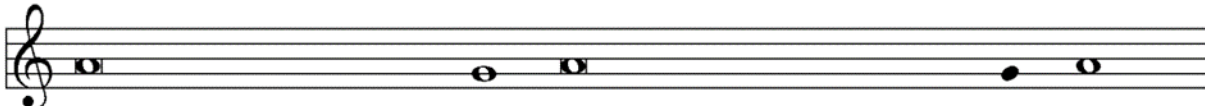
A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **☩** Lord, have mer - cy.



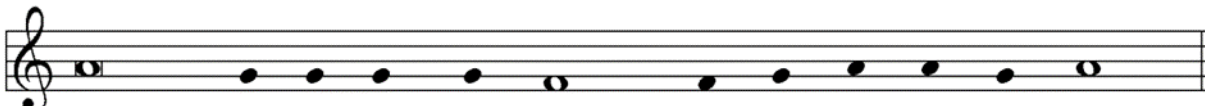
A For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



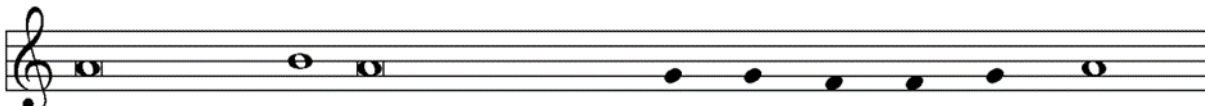
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



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



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



A 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.



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



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



B 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-to-ry 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-to-ry 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

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray... Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

Next Steps Weekly Memory Verse: JOHN 14:6

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

We sit FIRST READING: ACTS 6:1-9; 7:2A, 51-60

¹Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. ²And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, ⁴while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." ⁵What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

⁸Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. ²And Stephen replied: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, ⁵¹You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵²Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it." ⁵⁴When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶Look, he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSE & MEDITATION: PSALM 31:1-5, 15-16

¹In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

²**Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

⁴**Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me,
for you are my tower of strength.**

⁵Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, O God of truth.

¹⁵**My times are in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

¹⁶Make your face to shine upon your servant,
and in your loving-kindness save me.

SECOND READING: 1 PETER 2:2-10

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”⁷To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” ⁸and “A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

We stand. GOSPEL VERSE: JOHN 6:68

p151

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL READING: JOHN 14:1-14

Glory to You, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” ⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The Gospel of the Lord **Praise to You, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

#500

“Now We Remain”

We sit. SERMON

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Forged by the Spirit
Witness unto Death

We stand. PROFESSION OF FAITH Nicene Creed

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.

*means whole, entire Christian

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray to our risen Savior on behalf of the Church, the world, and all people according to their need.

A brief silence

Thank you, Jesus, for being the Way to your Father's house, the Truth that sets us free, and the Life which raises us out of sin and death. Thank you for being the Love that never lets us go. Give us grace to share your love with everyone we meet, especially those who have lost their way, strayed from the truth, and are haunted by death.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make the whole Church your house of living stones: holy, precious, your prized possession and beloved Body. Let its words and deeds proclaim the excellence of your salvation. Use it to call many people out of darkness into your marvelous light.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Like Stephen, there are many even today who are persecuted and tortured for proclaiming you as Lord. Give them the grace and strength that you gave Stephen: to fearlessly speak your truth in love; to forgive and pray for their enemies; and to remain faithful to the end.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, we want to be your disciples! But we're afraid of ridicule, rejection, or persecution. Give us grace to be like Stephen, always praying for others to repent and believe in you. Let us always build up faith in you alone, our Head and Cornerstone.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for everyone in this congregation who supports the ministry of Word and Sacrament through their faithful work. We pray for our mission to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus, to support Solid Rock our mission in action, and that you send us adults for baptism. Fill them with your Holy Spirit. Prosper all they do to share the Gospel. Give them joy in serving you and your people. Thank you for the humbling we received with our broken elevator and thank you for providing its repair.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, there are so many who have lost their way in life. There are so many who insist there's no such thing as real truth. There are so many who are dying without knowing your love. Please help us to notice them, to walk with them, and to find ways of slipping their hand into yours.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Remind the rulers of the nations that you alone are *King* of the nations. Teach them to use their authority and power to care for the poor and needy, to do justice and love mercy; and to walk humbly before you. Frustrate the way of the wicked. Make us all beautiful with your righteousness and compassion.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Guide, protect, and strengthen all who defend life and liberty here and abroad. May they always walk in pathways of integrity and justice. When they are wounded, bring healing, hope, and peace to them and to their loved ones. When their task is done, bring them home in honor.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless, heal, comfort, and sustain everyone who cries out to you for help, including: {List}. With the Psalmist, cause them to say, "Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help; whose hope is in the LORD their God; who keeps his promise forever."

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus, we hear your promise at funerals: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." Therefore we entrust into your keeping our beloved dead. We pray for the families of {List}. Give us grace to believe your promise. Help us grow in holiness. Strengthen us in compassion and service. Be for us, and for all whom you love, the Way to your Father's house; the Truth which sets us free from bondage to sin, evil and death; and the Life which eternally transforms us into your likeness.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We praise and magnify you, most holy Father; we entrust our prayers and petitions to you in the strong name and for the dear sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also, with you.**

We briefly greet those in our row with the words "Peace be with you."

We sit. OFFERING, OFFERTORY SONG & PRAYER- *Giving back to God*



First- and second-time guests are not expected to give a monetary offering; your Connection Card and your presence this morning are your gifts. Safe, secure & easy electronic giving is available on our website stpeterhallettsville.org/giving or by scanning this code.

We stand #884

“Praise God from Whom”

tune #883



Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be - low;

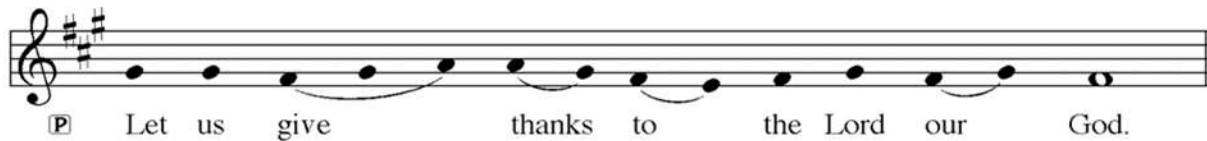


praise him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711
Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510-1561

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, king of the universe. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right and salutary . . . and join their unending hymn:



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven & earth . . .

As he comes to us in his holy supper. **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

In the night in which he was betrayed, . . . Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

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.

We sit. INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Communion is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ present and received in, with, and under the bread and wine. All who are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and who believe the Lord's words "This is my body given for you" and "This is my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins" may receive Communion. Young children, not yet receiving Communion, may receive a blessing.

(Matt 26:26ff, Mark 14:22ff, Luke 22:19ff, 1 Cor. 11:24ff)

Communion administration occurs in a continuous fashion at the Communion rail. The ushers will guide you to the rail. To receive the elements, extend your hand, palm up, to the ministers. White grape juice is available in the center of the trays. For those unable to consume either bread or wine, the Church affirms the Lord's full presence in each element alone. Once you have received the elements, return to your seat by the side aisles. If you do not desire to receive Holy Communion, you may remain seated.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Lamb of God"

p154 John 1:29



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.

We stand POST-COMMUNION BLESSING, SONG, & PRAYER
May the true body and blood...keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

“Lord Now You Let Your Servant”

Luke 2:29-32



Lord, now you let your ser- vant go in peace; your word has been ful -
filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre -
pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re - veal you to the
na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it,
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now,
and will be for - ev - er. A - men

Let us pray... Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

#857

“Lord I Lift Your Name on High”

ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Our mission is Christ's mission – "I will build my church"
by developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Opening Hymn; "Christ Is Alive" (#389)

Text by Brian A. Wren; Music by T Williams

**1 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.**

**2 Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching ev'ry place and time.**

**3 In ev'ry insult, rift, and war,
where color, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.**

**4 Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.**

**5 Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.**

Hymn of the Day: “Now We Remain” (#500)

Text & Music by David Haas

Refrain

**We hold the death of the Lord deep in our hearts.
Living, now we remain with Jesus, the Christ.**

**1 Once we were people afraid, lost in the night.
Then by your cross we were saved.
Dead became living, life from your giving. *Refrain***

**2 Something which we have known,
something we've touched, what we have seen with our eyes:
this we have heard, life giving Word. *Refrain***

**3 He chose to give of himself, became our bread.
Broken that we might live. Love beyond love, pain for our pain. *Refrain***

**4 We are in the presence of God. This is our call.
Now to become bread and wine: food for the hungry,
life for the weary, for to live with the Lord, we must die with the Lord. *Refrain***

Closing Hymn: “Lord, I Lift Your Name on High”(#857)

Words & music by Rick Founds. © 1989 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)Verse

**Lord, I lift Your name on high
Lord I love to sing Your praises
I'm so glad You're in my life
I'm so glad You came to save us**

Chorus

**You came from heaven to earth
To show the way
From the earth to the cross
My debt to pay
From the cross to the grave
From the grave to the sky
Lord I lift Your name on high**