

**Service of Word for the Home and for ZOOM
Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2020
10:00 a.m.**

Are you online? Join Zoom Worship! Please email Caitlyn in the office at officefelc@zoominternet.net to be added to the email list for a link to the service

NOT ONLINE? JOIN US OVER THE PHONE!

+1 301 715 8592 US
Meeting ID: 956 305 5281
Password: 408299

GATHERING

If you are not online and worshipping at home with more than one person, the parts may be divided up responsively or may be prayed in unison.

The image of a rock comes back again and again in today's readings. Consider finding a rock and making it part of your worship space today.

WELCOME

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of baptism:

In the name of the Father and of the Son + of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

O Lord our God, we give you thanks

For the new life you raise up in us.

Through the mystery of our baptism—

The sorrow of the empty cross,

The surprise of the empty tomb,

The love that death could not destroy.

By the power of your Holy Spirit,

Poured out upon us in baptism,
 Fill us with the joy of the resurrection,
 So that we may be a living sign
 Of your new heaven and new earth;
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

HYMN sing any song that praises God and makes your heart glad. In worship wee will sing:

Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing



1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands
 2 Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant
 3 In ev - 'ry in - sult, rift, and war, where col - or,
 4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the
 5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to



emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
 years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet
 Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the
 this and ev - 'ry age, till earth and sky and



prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.
 here and now, and touch - ing ev - 'ry place and time.
 loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.
 life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.
 o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.



Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936
 Music: TRURO, T. Williams, *Psalmody Evangelica*, 1789
 Text © 1975, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

THE WORD

FIRST READING Acts 7:55-60

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

⁵⁵Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶"Look," 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.

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, God of truth.

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

¹⁶Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love."

SECOND READING 1 Peter 2:2-10

Christ is the cornerstone of God's saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God's chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.

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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We welcome the gospel:

Alleluia! Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me! Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 14: 1-14

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, the fourteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.

[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.

HOMILY online

REFLECTION

The images in our first and second readings and psalm highlight the image of the rock. In the first reading, a rock is a weapon, used to stone one of the first preachers. In the psalm, the rock is more like a castle—a sheltering rock that can keep us safe from a storm. In the second reading, the image of the stone conveys a good material for a building. Jesus is our cornerstone and we are living stones, built together in the household of God.

The images rocks can convey many things. Rocks are solid and sturdy. When we say that a person is a rock, we mean that they are dependable, strong, trustworthy. They can also make you trip: a rocky path is hard going.

Many of us have experienced this time of quarantine to be a rocky time. Some of us are isolated, lonely, bored, and sad. Some of us are overwhelmed by the needs of those in our households. It is hard to know what the future will be like. The coronavirus is real. In the face of these pressures, thinking of ourselves as “rocks”—strong, sturdy, dependable—can feel almost impossible. It is hard to be lonely, afraid, and overwhelmed.

God, however, does not demand that we find our strength on our own. Rather, God gives us Christ to be our rock, to be our foundation. He promises to shelter us through the storm, and he promises to support us in being his people, no matter what our outward circumstances. Even when our way is rocky, we can take comfort that Jesus is our rock.

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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

God of all mercies, we praise you that you have brought us to this new day,
Brightening our lives with the dawn of promise and hope in Jesus Christ.

Especially we thank you:

- For ministries of discernment and governance, especially our congregational council and safety and worship committees, as they begin to think about the task of re-opening....
- For those in our lives who have shown us motherly love and care...
- For the community of faith in your church...
- For reconciliation in our relationships...
- For all gifts of healing and forgiveness...

Merciful God, strengthen us in prayer, that we may lift up the brokenness of this world for your healing, and share in the saving love of Christ.

Especially we pray for:

- The church where it is persecuted....
- For wisdom throughout our land, and the will to use our freedom to serve and care for our neighbors....
- For all those who are lonely, or feel unheard, unseen, or unloved...
- For those for whom quarantine is difficult in ways we do not know how to name...
- For those for whom this Mother's Day is difficult...
- For those who grieve the deaths of family and friends...

Eternal God, all these things, and whatever else you see that we need, grant through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Finally, let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us:

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.

THE SENDING

BLESSING

May God, who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, continually show us lovingkindness, grant us a share in the Son's victory over death, and renew our hearts in love.

The blessing of Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit be upon us now and forever.

Amen.

Let us go in peace.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are you or anyone you know suffering particular stress with the quarantine? There is a listening ear available. Please call Pr. Kimberly on her cell phone or at the church office (724-283-2378) to arrange an appointment.

If you are willing to participate in a Zoom worship service, please let Pr. Kimberly or the office know.

PRAYERS

The family of Nancy, Jean Purvis, Judy Wadding, Joyce Hall, Bruni Bilowich, Karen Vavro, The family of Daniel Meggs, Doug Horner, the family of Anthony Rieder, Sandy, Randy, the family of Chris Matthews, the family of Marsha Codispot, the family of Barb Schneidmiller, Lisa, Wendy, the family of Gary Cooper, Rhonda, Judy M., the family of Jean Wiles, Mary Ellen, Claudia, Karen, Aryl Bashline, Kitty Walker, Hope & Bruce Keeler, the family of Dennis Steighner, Gina Ambrosio, Elizabeth, Jena Wright, Tad Sellers, the family of Sam Egan, Ralph D'Antonio.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession adapted from Book of Common Worship c 2018 Westminster John Knox Press. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

“Christ is Alive, Let Christians Sing” reprinted with permission under OneLicense.net A-734698.