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May 3, 2026

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

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Rev. Ken Bersche

Maggie Kent, Secretary

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## Prelude

### Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

“Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”

- ♪ Stand up, stand up for Jesus, Ye soldiers of the cross. Lift high His royal banner;  
It must not suffer loss. From vict'ry unto vict'ry His army He shall lead  
Till ev'ry foe is vanquished, And Christ is Lord indeed.
- ♪ Stand up, stand up for Jesus; The trumpet call obey; Stand forth in mighty conflict  
In this His glorious day. Let all His faithful serve Him Against unnumbered foes;  
Let courage rise with danger And strength to strength oppose.
- ♪ Stand up, stand up for Jesus; Stand in His strength alone. The arm of flesh will fail you,  
Ye dare not trust your own. Put on the Gospel armor; Each piece put on with prayer.  
Where duty calls or danger, Be never wanting there.
- ♪ Stand up, stand up for Jesus; The strife will not be long; This day the din of battle,  
The next the victor's song. The soldiers, overcoming, Their crown of life shall see  
And with the King of Glory Shall reign eternally.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 660—Text: George Duffield, Jr., 1818–88, alt.; Text: Public domain*

## Invocation

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

*Matthew 28:19b*

**Amen.**

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

**The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

*Psalm 27:1*

The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him,

**In those who hope in His steadfast love.**

*Psalm 147:11*

O Lord, how manifold are Your works!

**In wisdom have You made them all.**

May the glory of the Lord endure forever.

*Psalm 104:24a, 31a*

**Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

*Isaiah 2:5b*

## Confession and Absolution

Humble yourselves then before God, confess your sins to Him, and implore His forgiveness.

**O almighty God, most merciful Father, I, a repentant sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended You. By nature, I am a sinful creature. In thought, word, and deed I have continually transgressed Your law. For this I justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a penitent and contrite being. Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of Your Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful life and bear fruit in keeping with true repentance.** *A Time of Silence*

God be gracious to you and strengthen your faith.

**Amen.**

As you believe, so let it be. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Prayer**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

**O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**Hymn of Praise** *Please Be Seated Music: "Onward, Christian Soldiers", Hymn 662*

"Welcome"

♪ "Welcome, happy morning!" Age to age shall say;  
"Hell today is vanquished, Heav'n is won today!" Christ, once dead, is living,  
God forevermore! Him, their true creator, All His works adore.

~"Welcome, happy morning!" Age to age shall say,  
"Hell today is vanquished, Heav'n is won today!"

♪ Maker and redeemer, Life and health of all,  
God from heav'n beholding Human nature's fall,  
You, the true and only Son of God above,  
Died as mortal man to Save us by Your love. ~Welcome...

♪ Source of all things living, You came down to die,  
Plumbed the depths of hell to Raise us up on high.  
Come, then, true and faithful; Come, fulfill Your Word;  
This is Your third morning: Rise, O buried Lord! ~Welcome...

♪ Free the souls long prisoned, Bound with Satan's chain;  
All that once had fallen Raise to life again;  
Show Your face in brightness, Shine in ev'ry land  
As in Eden's garden When the world began. ~Welcome....

*Lutheran Worship, Hymn 135-Text: Venantius Honorius Fortunatus 530-609; tr. John Ellerton 1826-93; Public domain.*

## **First Reading**

Acts 6:1–9, 7:2a, 51–60

<sup>1</sup>Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. <sup>2</sup>And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. <sup>3</sup>Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. <sup>4</sup>But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." <sup>5</sup>And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. <sup>6</sup>These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

<sup>7</sup>And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

<sup>8</sup>And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup>Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen.

<sup>2</sup>And Stephen said: <sup>51</sup>“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. <sup>52</sup>Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, <sup>53</sup>you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

<sup>54</sup>Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup>But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup>And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” <sup>57</sup>But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. <sup>58</sup>Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup>And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” <sup>60</sup>And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## The Epistle

1 Peter 2:2–10

<sup>2</sup>Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— <sup>3</sup>if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

<sup>4</sup>As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, <sup>5</sup>you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup>For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

<sup>7</sup>So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”

<sup>8</sup>and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gradual Hymn

“Jerusalem the Golden”

♪ Jerusalem the golden, With milk and honey blest— The promise of salvation,

The place of peace and rest— We know not, oh, we know not What joys await us there:

The radiancy of glory, The bliss beyond compare!

♪ Within those walls of Zion Sounds forth the joyful song, As saints join with the angels  
And all the martyr throng. The Prince is ever with them; The daylight is serene;  
The city of the blessed Shines bright with glorious sheen.

♪ Around the throne of David, The saints, from care released, Raise loud their songs of triumph  
To celebrate the feast. They sing to Christ their leader, Who conquered in the fight,  
Who won for them forever Their gleaming robes of white.

*Please Stand*

♪ O sweet and blessed country, The home of God's elect! O sweet and blessed country  
That faithful hearts expect! In mercy, Jesus, bring us To that eternal rest  
With You and God the Father And Spirit, ever blest.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 672—Text: Bernard of Cluny, 12th cent.;  
tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.; Text: Public domain

## **The Holy Gospel**

John 14:1–14

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourteenth chapter.

### **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And 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. <sup>4</sup>And you know the way to where I am going.” <sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup>If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup>Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup>Do 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 authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup>Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

<sup>12</sup>“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup>Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

### **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **Confirmation Essay** *Please Be Seated*

Addyson Dembowski

The Lord's Supper

## **Nicene Creed**

## **Children's Message**

## **Reception of New Members**

Ryan and Tara Reibeinstein & Family

## The Hymn

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

♪ Precious Lord, take my hand, Lead me on, let me stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.  
Through the storm, through the night, Lead me on to the light.  
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

♪ When my way grows drear, Precious Lord, linger near, When my life is almost gone,  
Hear my cry, hear my call; Hold my hand lest I fall.  
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

♪ When the darkness appears And the night draws near And the day is almost gone,  
At the river I stand; Guide my feet, hold my hand,  
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 739—Text: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1899–1993; Text: © 1938 (renewed) Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., admin. Alfred Music. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005255*

## Proclamation of the Word

“How Hard Can You Throw?”

Acts 7:51–60

## Rite of Confirmation

### Offering and Musical Offering

#### Preface *Please Stand*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

*2 Timothy 4:22*

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

*Colossians 3:1*

Let us give thanks to Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

*Psalms 136*

## Proper Preface

## Words of Our Lord

### Proclamation of Christ

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

*1 Corinthians 11:26 & Revelation 22:20*

O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## Lord’s Prayer

### The Peace of the Lord

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

## **Distribution Hymn** *Please Be Seated*

“I Know that My Redeemer Lives”

- ♪ I know that my Redeemer lives; What comfort this sweet sentence gives!  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead; He lives, my ever-living head.
- ♪ He lives triumphant from the grave; He lives eternally to save;  
He lives all-glorious in the sky; He lives exalted there on high.
- ♪ He lives to bless me with His love; He lives to plead for me above;  
He lives my hungry soul to feed; He lives to help in time of need.
- ♪ He lives to grant me rich supply; He lives to guide me with His eye;  
He lives to comfort me when faint; He lives to hear my soul’s complaint.
- ♪ He lives to silence all my fears; He lives to wipe away my tears;  
He lives to calm my troubled heart; He lives all blessings to impart.
- ♪ He lives, my kind, wise, heav’nly friend; He lives and loves me to the end;  
He lives, and while He lives, I’ll sing; He lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.
- ♪ He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives, and I shall conquer death;  
He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there.
- ♪ He lives, all glory to His name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same;  
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 461–Text: Samuel Medley, 1738–99, abr.; Text: Public domain

## **Prayer of the Church** *Please Stand Each petition is concluded with the following:*

Lord, in Your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

## **Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on You with favor and + give You peace.

*Numbers 6:24–26*

**Amen.**

## **Recessional Hymn** *Please Be Seated*

“Christ Be My Leader”

- ♪ Christ be my Leader by night as by day; Safe through the darkness, for He is the way.  
Gladly I follow, my future His care, Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.
- ♪ Christ be my Teacher in age as in youth, Drifting or doubting, for He is the truth,  
Grant me to trust Him; though shifting as sand, Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.
- ♪ Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife; Death cannot hold me, for He is the life.  
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 861–Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926–2024

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## **Postlude**