

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Christ Is Our Cornerstone

May 6 & 7, 2023

AS WE GATHER

We see who Jesus is and who we are because of Him. Jesus is the cornerstone, the foundation upon which God's people are built. We are His newborn, chosen, priestly people. We are called to proclaim His excellencies to the world around us, always firm and secure, knowing that Christ is an unshakable foundation.

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

WELCOME

If in Christ we have hope in this life only,
we are of all people most to be pitied.
But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead,
the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
For as by a man came death,
by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.
1 Corinthians 15:19-21

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #912 "Christ Is Our Cornerstone"

Christ is our cornerstone, On Him alone we build;
With His true saints alone The courts of heav'n are filled.
On His great love Our hopes we place Of present grace And joys above.
Here may we gain from heav'n The grace which we implore,
And may that grace, once giv'n, Be with us evermore
Until that day When all the blest To endless rest Are called away.

(Rise) Oh, then, with hymns of praise These hallowed courts shall ring;
Our voices we will raise The Three in One to sing
And thus proclaim In joyful song, Both loud and long, That glorious name.

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor: Christ is our cornerstone;

People: on Him alone we build.

Pastor: In Him we are a newborn, chosen, priestly people.

People: We are called to proclaim His excellencies to the world.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Though Christ is our cornerstone and has changed our identity to be His chosen people, we often build upon things other than Jesus. Such building crumbles to the ground, for unless we build on Christ, we labor in vain. Still, our heavenly Father is merciful, and He invites us to draw near to His throne in confidence to ask for forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: though we are your chosen people, we have acted in accordance with the world rather than your Word. Forgive us, renew us, and restore as your newborn, chosen, priestly people, on account of Jesus. Amen.

Pastor: Though Jesus Christ was rejected and killed, God raised Him from the dead, and for His sake forgives you all your sins. 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.

People: Amen. We are forgiven. We are a newborn, chosen, priestly people.

Refrain: *This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God. *Refrain*

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are His. *Refrain*

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen. *Refrain*
For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, you are the cornerstone and foundation upon which your Church is built. Tear down all that we have built that was built apart from you, and tether us upon yourself, our Rock and our Redeemer, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

(Be seated)

✠ WORD ✠

FIRST READING *Acts 6:1–9; 7:2a, 51–60* (Stephen remains faithful in the midst of death.) 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. ²And 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. ³Therefore, 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. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” ⁵And 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. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples

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multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. ⁸And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then 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. ²And Stephen said: ⁵¹“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. ⁵²Which 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, ⁵³you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.” ⁵⁴Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. ⁵⁵But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” ⁵⁷But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. ⁵⁸Then 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. ⁵⁹And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰And 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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE *1 Peter 2:2–10* (Built on Jesus, we are a chosen people.)

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you 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. ⁶For 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.” ⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” ⁸and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” 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, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies 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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 14:1–14* (Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.)

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

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In 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? ³And 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. ⁴And you know the way to 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 had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” ⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹Jesus 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’? 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 authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. ¹²“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. ¹³Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN’S SONG & CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

“Do You Know Who Died for Me?”

Do you know who died for me? Jesus did, Jesus did
Lovingly He died for me, Yes, He really did.

Do you know who rose for me? Jesus did, Jesus did,
Lovingly He rose for me, Yes, He really did!

Do you know who lives for me? Jesus does, Jesus does,
Lovingly He lives for me, Yes, He really does!

Do you know who cares for me? Jesus does, Jesus does,
Lovingly He cares for me, Yes, He really does.

SERMON HYMN #645 “Built on the Rock”

Built on the Rock the Church shall stand Even when steeples are falling.
Crumbled have spiers in ev’ry land; Bells still are chiming and calling,
Calling the young and old to rest, But above all the souls distressed,
Longing for rest everlasting.

Surely in temples made with hands God, the Most High, is not dwelling;
High above earth His temple stands, All earthly temples excelling,
Yet He who dwells in heav’n above Chooses to live with us in love,
Making our bodies His temple.

We are God’s house of living stones, Built for His own habitation.
He through baptismal grace us owns Heirs of His wondrous salvation.
Were we but two His name to tell, Yet He would deign with us to dwell
With all His grace and His favor.

Here stands the font before our eyes, Telling how God has received us.
The altar recalls Christ’s sacrifice And what His Supper here gives us.
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim Christ yesterday, today, the same,
And evermore, our Redeemer.

Grant, then, O God, Your will be done, That, when the church bells are ringing,
Many in saving faith may come Where Christ His message is bringing;
“I know My own; My own know me. You, not the world, My face shall see.
My peace I leave with you. Amen.”

SERMON

(Rise)

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

(Be seated)

OFFERINGS As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
Heavenly Father, through the power of Christ's resurrection you adopt all who believe in Him. Receive us as your newborn children and nourish our faith through the pure spiritual milk of your Word, that we may dwell in your presence forever. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord God, you have promised to build up your Church to be a holy priesthood, that your people might offer spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving acceptable to you. Bless your Church, and bring all congregations together. Bless all pastors who proclaim Christ to us. Bless church workers and those preparing for full-time church vocations, that we may be supplied with faithful leaders and servants of your Word. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, build up the households of your people, that your holy children, begotten in Baptism, may grow in your grace and share together in your forgiveness and life. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Holy God, your power brought all things into being and still preserves what you have made. Bless Joseph, our president; the Congress of these United States; Tony, our governor; and all elected and appointed civil servants. Lead them to honor you and your purpose, establishing order and justice, encouraging virtue, and protecting all life. Give them wisdom and moderation to lead for the well-being of the nation. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Merciful heavenly Father, for the sake of your dear Son, who has restored all things by His cross, grant healing, comfort, deliverance and peace to those in need. Bless the sick, the sorrowing, the anxious, the fearful, the homebound, the homeless, the dying and all who have requested our prayers including Chris, Ardis, Noah, Joyce, Guy, Marga, Cheryl, Mike, Don, Pat, Shirley, Tom, Jill, Paulette, Janet, Norma, Vern, Amy, Cathy, Cindy, Dorothy, Helga, Carol, June, Jerry, Shirley and Sarah. At the last, give them entrance into your heavenly kingdom. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord of Joy, be with us as we celebrate Anniversaries and Farewells this weekend. We thank you for all those who have been dedicated to church work and to their marriages. Be with those who retire especially Barb Heimsoth and Amy Puechner. Let their retirement be a time of rest, trusting that you have been at work through them. Lord in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Father of the risen Christ, you give us the crucified and risen body and blood of our Lord in this Holy Supper. Let us taste that the Lord is good and continually grow up unto salvation. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, we thank and praise you for your servant St. Stephen, whom your Son has received into His glory. May we imitate him in faith and love to speak your truth with boldness, forgiving those who sin against us as Christ forgave His persecutors from the cross. When our last hour comes, let us fall asleep in Him and be born into eternal life; for the sake of Him who was born into our flesh to redeem it, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: **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.**

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

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Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

HYMN #633 "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing"

At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to our victorious King.

Who has washed us in the tide Flowing from His pierced side. Alleluia!

Praise we Him, whose love divine Gives His sacred blood for wine,
Gives His body for the feast-Christ the victim, Christ the priest. Alleluia!

Where the paschal blood is poured, Death's dread angel sheathes the sword:
Israel's hosts triumphant go Through the wave that drowns the foe. Alleluia!

Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Pas'chal victim, paschal bread; with
sincerity and love Eat we manna from above. Alleluia!

Mighty Victim from the sky, Hell's fierce pow'rs beneath You lie;
You have conquered in the fight, You have brought us life and light. Alleluia!

Now no more can death appall, Now no more the grave enthrall;
You have opened paradise, And Your saints in You shall rise. Alleluia!

Easter triumph, Easter joy! This alone can sin destroy;
From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free, Newborn souls in You to be. Alleluia!

Father, who the crown shall give, Savior, by whose death we live,
Spirit, guide through all our days; Three in One, Your name we praise. Alleluia!

HYMN #752

"Be Still, My Soul"

Be still, my soul; the Lord is on your side;

Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;

Leave to your God to order and provide;

In ev'ry change He faithful will remain.

Be still, my soul; your best, your heav'nly Friend

Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul; your God will undertake

To guide the future as He has the past.

Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;

All now mysterious shall be bright at last.

Be still, my soul; the waves and winds still know

His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.

Be still, my soul; though dearest friends depart
And all is darkened in this vale of tears;
Then you will better know His love, His heart,
Who comes to soothe your sorrows and your fears.
Be still, my soul; your Jesus can repay
From His own fullness all He takes away.

Be still, my soul; the hour is hast'ning on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul; when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

HYMN #618 "I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table"

I come, O Savior, to Thy table, For weak and weary is my soul;
Thou, Bread of Life, alone art able To satisfy and make me whole:

Refrain: Lord, May Thy body and Thy blood Be for my soul the highest good!

Thy heart is filled with fervent yearning That sinners may salvation see
Who, Lord, to Thee in faith are turning; So I, a sinner, come to Thee. *Refrain*

Unworthy though I am, O Savior, Because I have a sinful heart,
Yet Thou Thy lamb wilt banish never, For Thou my faithful shepherd art: *Refrain*

Weary am I and heavy laden; With sin my soul is sore oppressed;
Receive me graciously and gladden my heart, for I am now Thy guest. *Refrain*

What higher gift can we inherit? It is faith's bond and solid base;
It is the strength of heart and Spirit, The covenant of hope and grace. *Refrain*

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to you, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore you that of your mercy you would strengthen us through the same in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #761 "Rock of Ages, Cleft For Me"

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood, From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly: Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown, See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee.

Preacher

Liturgist

Lectors

Organist

Pastor Josh Grotelueschen

Pastor Harold Bender

Jodi Drew, Katie Scepaniski, Debbie Nier

Olivia Kukor