

**Holy Communion**  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
**Sunday, May 3, 2026**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 94)**

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 thoughts 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.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are 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 therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG**

**Lord God, We Praise You**

**(ELW 558)**

1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is over, active and watchful, standing here before you; singing, we offer prayer and meditation; thus we adore you.

2 Monarch of all things, fit us for your mansions; banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending; bring us to heaven, where your saints united joy without ending.

3 All-holy Father, Son, and equal Spirit, Trinity blessed, send us your salvation; yours is the glory, gleaming and resounding through all creation.

## **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.**

## **KYRIE (ELW p. 138)**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above,  
and for our salvation,  
let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world,  
for the well-being of the Church of God,  
and for the unity of all,  
let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house,  
and for all who offer here their worship and praise,  
let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

## **CANTICLE OF PRAISE SETTING 4 (ELW p. 139)**

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

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

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

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

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

**Blessing and honor and glory and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God,  
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

## **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.**

## **(Bethel) Blessing of Graduates**

All-wise and loving God, we give thanks for your gifts to us: for creating us, for saving us in Christ, for calling us in baptism as your people. Look with love on these graduates and bless them as they complete this season of their studies. By your Spirit, help them to use their gifts for your glory and for the good of all people. In your loving kindness, guide them in their journey. We ask these blessings through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60**

A reading from Acts.

*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.*

<sup>55</sup> Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" <sup>57</sup> But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. <sup>58</sup> Then 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. <sup>59</sup> While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." <sup>60</sup> Then 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: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16**

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

<sup>2</sup> **Incline your | ear to me;**  
**make haste to de- | liver me.**

<sup>3</sup> Be 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.

<sup>4</sup> **Take me out of the net that they have secretly | set for me,**  
**for you are my tow- | er of strength.**

<sup>5</sup> Into your hands I com- | mend my spirit,  
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, | God of truth.

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

<sup>16</sup> Let your face shine up- | on your servant;  
save me in your | steadfast love."

## SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10

A reading from 1 Peter.

*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.*

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

<sup>4</sup> Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and <sup>5</sup> like 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. <sup>6</sup> For 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."

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

"The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,"

<sup>8</sup> and "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.

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence 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.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 142)

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

## GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

The holy gospel according to John.

**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:] <sup>1</sup> "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

<sup>2</sup> In 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? <sup>3</sup> And 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. <sup>4</sup> And you know the way to the place 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 know me, you will know 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 we will be satisfied." <sup>9</sup> Jesus 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'?" <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, 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, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup> Very 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. <sup>13</sup> I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

The gospel of the Lord.  
Praise to you, O Christ.

## SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY

### You Are the Way

(ELW 758)

1 You are the way; to you alone from sin and death we flee;  
all those who search for God, you find and by your grace set free.

2 You are the truth; your word alone true wisdom can impart;  
you only can inform the mind and purify the heart.

3 You are the life; the rending tomb proclaims your conqu'ring arm;  
and those who put their trust in you not death nor hell shall harm.

4 You are the way, the truth, the life; grant us that way to know,  
that truth to keep, that life to win, whose joys eternal flow.

## APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation. God of glory, you have built your church on Christ the cornerstone. Inspire lay leaders, deacons, pastors, and bishops to proclaim forgiveness and your steadfast love to all whom they encounter. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of majesty, you bring forth plants and animals, skies and seas, mountains and valleys. Protect all you have made from the ravages of pollution and climate disaster. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of mercy, you intend governments and social service agencies to be instruments of peace and justice. Guide political leaders and organizations to be agents of compassion, and raise up advocates for those who seek refuge and assistance. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of well-being, you soothe those in distress, console all who grieve, provide for any in need, and comfort those who are sick (*especially*). Instill caregivers with a sense of purpose to be your healing hands in this world. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of community, you call us together as your people for mutual support and to witness to your love in the world. Make your presence known among those unable to attend worship today. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of eternal life, you have prepared dwelling places for your people, so that we are never separated from you. We give you thanks for the faithful departed who witnessed to your mighty acts in word and deed. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

**Amen.**

### PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

### OFFERING

### Create in Me a Clean Heart

(ELW 186)

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

## **PREFACE (ELW p. 144)**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,  
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;  
who in dying has destroyed death,  
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,  
with earth and sea and all their creatures,  
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 144)**

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of pow'r and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 145)**

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting

and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.  
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.  
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.  
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness  
to the land of milk and honey.  
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.  
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.  
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup  
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast.  
Grace our table with your presence.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.  
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.  
Breathe new life into us.  
Send us forth,  
burning with justice, peace, and love.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places,  
with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,  
we praise you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as 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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

### **COMMUNION**

The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
Amen.

### **COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 146)**

**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.**

### **COMMUNION (ELW p. 146)**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**Amen.**

## BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing

(ELW 389)

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.

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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