

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 14, 2017

Note: No Audio for this service

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

AS WE GATHER.....Only after Easter were the disciples able to understand Jesus' words. Now they knew that He was and is God in the flesh, our way to the Father. So sure were they that Stephen could echo Jesus' last words as he faced death. Peter, in the Epistle, was able to review prophetic words of Scripture that they now knew spoke of Jesus. Today it is our turn to proclaim Jesus as the way, truth, and life, so that our friends will also know who He is and join us to live in His marvelous light.

RINGING OF THE BELL

After the ringing of the bell, we take a moment *in silence* to prepare our hearts and minds for today's worship.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING BLESSING

Pastor: We make our beginning in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING UP TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: who made heaven and earth.

Pastor: If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

People: But with You there is forgiveness that You may be feared.

Pastor: Let us now confess our sins, confident of God's grace, mercy and forgiveness.

Silent Reflection

Pastor: We give thanks, Lord Jesus, for those who have been faithful to you and have gone before us.

People: We confess that we have not always made a clear witness to the salvation You won for us in Your death and resurrection. Forgive us and give us opportunities to witness to You the way, the truth, and the life.

Pastor: God has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. You are His own people thanks to the grace and mercy that is ours through Jesus. As a called and ordained servant of Jesus, I declare the forgiveness of your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Morning Has Broken"

Morning has broken like the first morning.

Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.

Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!

Praise for them springing, fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where his feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning.
Born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation! Praise ev'ry morning!
God's recreation of the new day.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Pastor: 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, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 6:1-9; 7:2a, 51-60 *The first martyr is executed.*

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. 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. 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. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 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. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

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.

And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. 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.

And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me....

"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 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, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. 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. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. 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. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 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.

EPISTLE 1 Peter 2:2-10 *You are living stones in God's house.*

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation-- if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 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. 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."

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,"

and

"A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. "

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL [John 14:1-14](#) *Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.*

[Jesus said] "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 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? 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. And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 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'? 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. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

"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. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

SERMON

["Releasing our Members"](#)

SERMON HYMN Green Book 390 "I Love to Tell the Story"

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story, because I know it's true;
It satisfies my longings as nothing else would do
I love to tell the story; I'll sing this theme in glory
And tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story; how pleasant to repeat
What seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet!
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
The message of salvation from God's own holy Word.
I love to tell the story; I'll sing this theme in glory
And tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
I'll sing the old, old story that I have loved so long.
I love to tell the story; I'll sing this theme in glory
And tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

APOSTLE'S CREED

People: I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and was born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.

OFFERING

(We offer our thanksgiving for what God has first given us—ourselves, our time, our possessions.)

OFFERTORY

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

CHOIR ANTHEM "Go Out With Joy" By Dave and Jean Perry

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.