



FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Bethel and Hemnes Lutheran Churches
May 10, 2020

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that He goes to prepare a place for His followers in His Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As First Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

✠GATHERING✠

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the ✠Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

P. Rejoicing in the resurrection, let us seek God's forgiveness, that dying to sin, we may walk in newness of life.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P. Loving God,

C. we fear, we doubt, we do not trust You; we do not love our neighbors as ourselves; we have failed to recognize You in the poor and needy; we sin against You in thought, word, and deed. We pray for Your mercy, forgiveness, and grace. We hope in the gift of Your Spirit and we rejoice in the resurrection promise of Jesus Christ, our living Savior. Amen.

P. God, Who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin and made us alive with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins. May you be strengthened daily with the power to walk in God's light and love.

C. Amen.

GREETING

P. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C. Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P. The grace of our risen Savior, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE *This is the Feast of Victory for Our God*

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

C. 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

P. 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.

C. Amen

✠ 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.

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

In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in Your righteousness.

²Incline 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.

⁴Take 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, O God of truth.

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

¹⁶Make Your face to shine upon Your servant,
and in Your lovingkindness save me.”

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

Hallelujah! Jesus lives! He is now the Living One;
From the gloomy halls of death Christ, the Conqueror, has gone,
Bright forerunner to the skies of His people, yet to rise.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 14:1–14

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.

C. (spoken) Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “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.”

P. The Gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL RESPONSE

Hallelujah! Jesus lives! Praise Him, ransomed of the earth.
Praise Him in a nobler song, Cherubim of heav’nly birth.
Praise the victor King, Whose sway sin and death and hell obey

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *You Are the Way*



1 You are the way; to you a - lone from sin and death we flee;
2 You are the truth; Your word a - lone true wis - dom can im - part;
3 You are the life; the rend - ing tomb pro - claims Your con - qu'ring arm;
4 You are the way, the truth, the life; grant us that way to know,



all those who search for God, You find and by Your grace set free.
You on - ly can in - form the mind and pur - i - fy the heart.
and those who put their trust in You not death nor hell shall harm.
that truth to keep, that life to win, who - se joys e - ter - nal flow.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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 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 catholic Church, the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen

† PRAYER †

OFFERING

If you have not signed up for electronic giving, you can mail your offering in to Bethel (P.O. Box 126, Porter, 56280), you may drop it in the offering box at the church, or you may make your offering online at our website (www.bethelofporter.com).

OFFERTORY *He Is Arisen, Glorious Word*

He is arisen! Glorious Word! Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
the gates of heav'n are open. My Jesus rose triumphantly,
and Satan's arrows broken lie, destroyed hell's fiercest weapon.

Oh, hear, what cheer! Christ victorious, rising glorious,
life is giving. He was dead, but now is living!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P. Blessed are You, O God, ruler of heaven and earth.

C. Day by day You shower us with blessings. As You 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 Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Still worshiping from our homes, but with our hearts bonded into one and uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the earth, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Build us up, O God, that like living stones we embody the strength that only You can give. Feed all the baptized with Your word. Strengthen Your church as we proclaim Your love to a world in desperate need. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Form us to be humble participants in Your complex creation. We praise Your power in evolving a magnificent earth, from flowering trees to tropical rainstorms, from black holes to beloved pets. Lead us to respect Your wondrous earth. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Assist the leaders of nations to find and follow Your ways of justice. Guide their way through the challenges of pandemic and poverty. Protect governors and legislators from sickness and burn-out. Despite our own considerable needs, keep us mindful of the needs of others, especially refugees and prisoners. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Accompany those who are sick, sorrowful, or confused. Comfort them in suffering, ease their distress, and carry their burdens, we pray especially for the family and friends of Bea Heise. We beg You to protect us from the coronavirus, and we pray especially for Merv, Emily, Dick, Angie, Shirley, and Lynette. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Sustain those who mother infants and children. Uphold the parents and grandparents who now must school their children. Provide enough food and resources for families. Bless the countless relatives, medical workers, and hospice volunteers who give to others mothering care. Embrace all for whom today's cultural celebration of mothers is difficult. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

You call into Your brilliant light all who have died. We remember before You those like Stephen martyred for the faith, those struck down by the coronavirus, and especially Bea. Give us faith to take hold of Your promises and at the end, bring us all to You, who are our way, our truth, and our life. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Almighty God, You give us the joy of celebrating our Lord's resurrection. With bold confidence in Your love we place all for whom we pray into Your eternal care. Give us the joys of life in Your service, and bring us at last to the full joy of life eternal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

✠ SENDING ✠

BLESSING

P. The God of all grace, Who has called you to eternal glory in Christ, restore, support, strengthen, and ✠ bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN *I Know that My Redeemer Lives*



1. I know that my Re - deem - er lives! What com - fort



this sweet sen - tence gives! He lives, He lives, Who



once was dead; He lives, my ev - er - liv - ing head!

2. He lives triumphant from the grave; He lives eternally to save;
He lives exalted, throned above; He lives to rule His church in love.

3. He lives to silence all my fears; He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart; He lives all blessing to impart.
4. 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.
5. He lives, all glory to His name! He lives, my Savior, still the same;
what joy this blest assurance gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

DISMISSAL

P. Christ is Risen!

C. **He is Risen indeed!**

P. Go in peace. Share the good news.

C. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia**

Those who Serve:

Ministers: All the People of God

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Offering: During this period of suspended in-person worship services, Bethel and Hemnes continue to have recurring expenses. Please remember to give financially to support the ministry of our congregations. For Bethel, you may mail your offering to the church office or give online at <http://bit.ly/givebethel>

May 3, 2020

General: \$9,294.63 (\$999.50 received through electronic giving)

Includes: \$1,625.13 from Hemnes Lutheran Church.



Merv Anderson Emily Morton,
Angie Denelsbeck Anderson
Shirlee Gabbert Lynette Christie
The family and friends of Bea Heise

Our prayers are with the family and friends of Bea Heise who passed away on Monday. Bea's graveside service was held on Friday at Wergeland Cemetery . Bea was Bonnie Merritt's mother. Our sympathy to the Bonnie, Bob and family.

Cover art by Andrea Krooks.

Explanation of the symbolism: The path leading to His throne, represents "the way." "Truth" is written on His clothing. The skull represents death. His foot over the skull, showing He has conquered death, represents "the life." The arrows all point to Him, indicating the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They can also function as a modern looking aureole, symbolizing His divinity. Ego Sum via, Veritas et Vita is Greek for "I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Acknowledgements

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