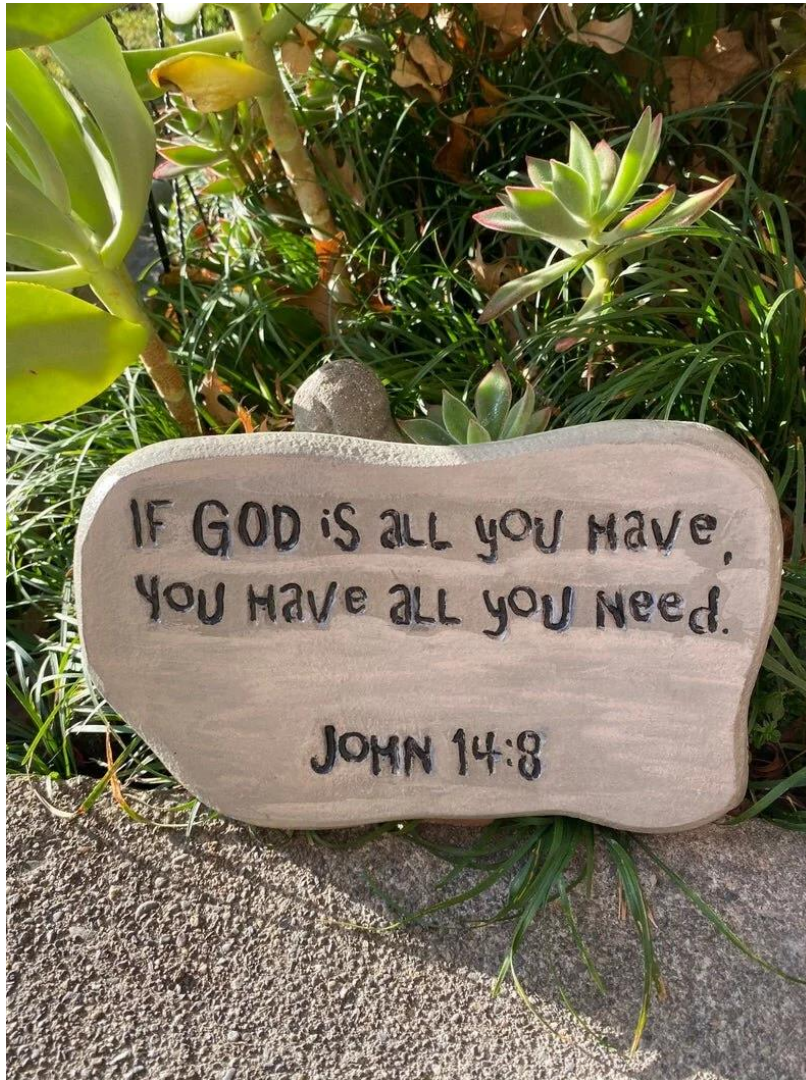


FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

+ May 3, 2026 +
10:00 am



Redeemer Lutheran Church

*300 O'Neal Road
Greer, South Carolina
Office (864) 877-5876*

WHAT HEAVEN WILL BE LIKE

The words of today's Gospel are most often heard during a funeral service. It is a popular choice of scripture for that occasion because the words provide wonderful assurance that the one who has died in Christ has now taken up residence in their heavenly home. The Gospel begins by Jesus saying that he will prepare a place for each one of us. But as the text continues, we can see that our place is not an isolated room of our own in a giant heavenly mansion. Jesus' words are less about a place than a relationship: our relationship with Jesus and God the Father. They tell us that in Jesus we know all we need to know about God, and just as we can have a relationship with another human person, we can also have a relationship with God that will one day be as real and obvious as are our relationships with one another. The hope of one day being with Christ fully and forever is as real as the works we are called to do in his name today. This text allows us the opportunity to contemplate what is ultimately unknowable, yet is also a central part of our faith: what heaven will be like.

Acts 7:55-60 introduces the character of Saul, persecutor of Christians. Attentive listeners may know that he will become a great leader of the faith, later referred to as Paul. His appearance in this story is subtle, simply noting that "the witnesses [to the stoning of Stephen] laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul" (v. 58). If you are following the story of Acts through the season of Easter, you may wish to consider how the journey to faith can involve resistance, anger, and reversals. Given this complexity, what might be pathways to repentance and reconciliation when we're wrong about God and about each other?



Ministers
Pastor
Parish Administrator
Director of Music Ministries

The People of Redeemer
The Rev. Elise T. Stringer
Mrs. Jackie Pitts
Mrs. Donna Cotter

Welcome to Redeemer Lutheran Church in the name of Christ our Lord.

WE WARMLY WELCOME ALL WHO WORSHIP WITH US this Fifth Sunday of Easter. It is our hope and prayer that the God who destroyed death and made new life possible on this day will touch and transform your life for all the days to come. If you are a guest, please sign the Guest Register in the Narthex. If you have any questions, our ushers will be happy to help you.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A CHURCH HOME, we invite you to consider making Redeemer that home. For more information about Redeemer Lutheran Church, becoming a member, and sharing your gifts in ministry, please speak with Pastor Elise or contact Jackie Pitts at (864) 877-5876. **We will receive new members again on Pentecost Sunday, May 24, and we invite you to join us! By the grace and love of God, this commitment will change your life and ours.**

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 1 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.

**WE ENTER THIS SANCTUARY WITH REVERENCE FOR GOD
AND RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO MAY BE IN PRAYER.
PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

The prelude is a time for QUIET reflection and prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE DAY

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the People of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at Baptism.

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✙ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

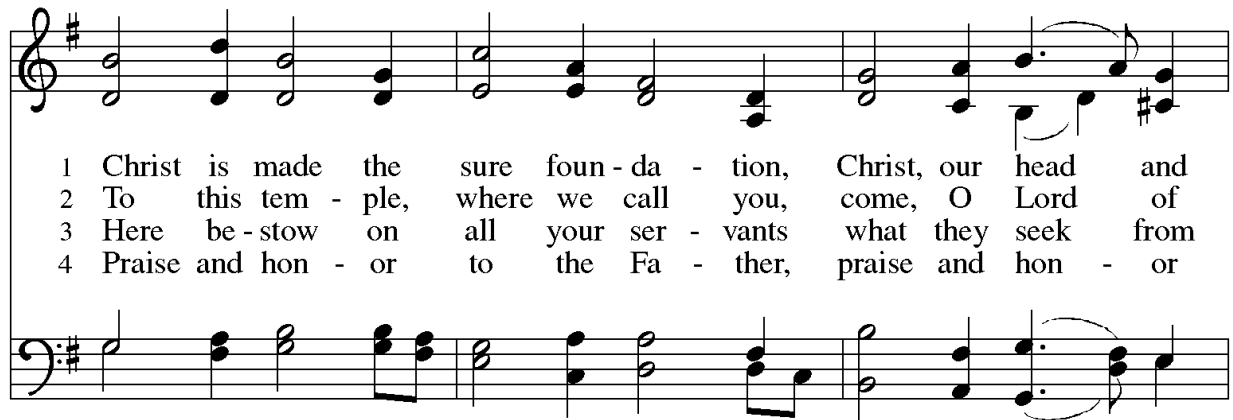
Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

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.**



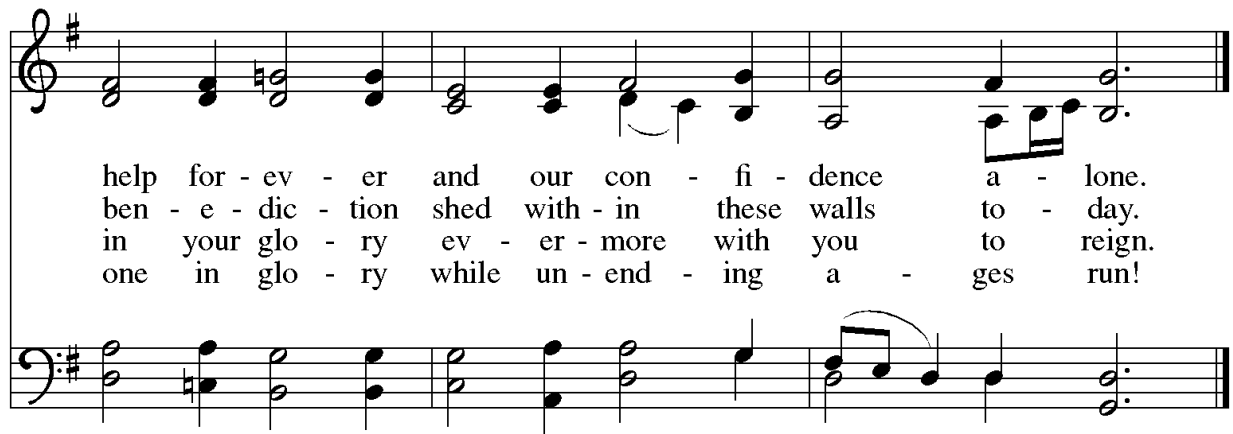
1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ, our head and
 2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O Lord of
 3 Here be - stow on all your ser - vants what they seek from
 4 Praise and hon - or to the Fa - ther, praise and hon - or



cor - ner - stone, cho - sen of the Lord and pre - cious,
 hosts, and stay; come with all your lov - ing - kind - ness,
 you to gain; what they gain from you, for - ev - er
 to the Son, praise and hon - or to the Spir - it,



bind - ing all the church in one; ho - ly Zi - on's
 hear your peo - ple as they pray; and your full - est
 with the bless - ed to re - tain; and here - af - ter
 ev - er three and ev - er one: one in might and



help for - ev - er and our con - fi - dence a - lone.
 ben - e - dic - tion shed with - in these walls to - day.
 in your glo - ry ev - er - more with you to reign.
 one in glo - ry while un - end - ing a - ges run!

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. 203



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!



Evergreen Group is always up for a good time and good food.



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



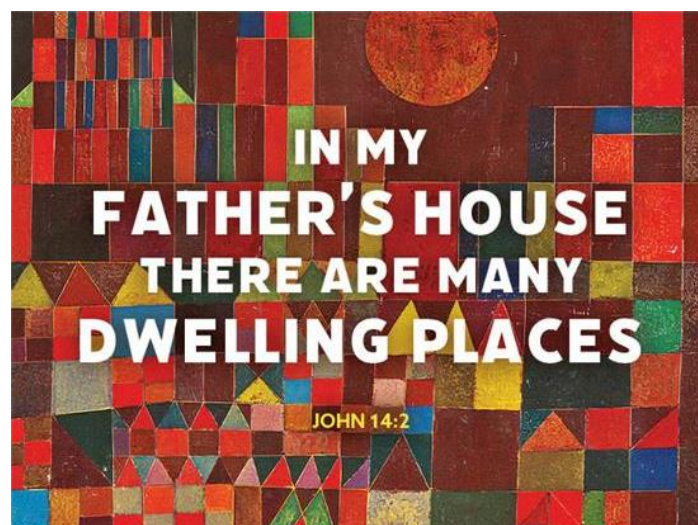
Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
 Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
 Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
 on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
 Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
 Hear our prayer; re - store, for-give us; in your prom-ise firm we stand.
 For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!



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.**

We Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Elise Stringer

WORD

God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.

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. (not read aloud)

A reading from Acts Chapter 7:

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

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. (Ps. 31:5)

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

² **Incline your | ear to me;**
make haste to de- | liver me.

- ³ 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.
- ⁴ **Take me out of the net that they have secretly | set for me,
for you are my tow- | er of strength.**
- ⁵ Into your hands I com- | mend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, | God of truth.
- ¹⁵ **My times are | in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who | persecute me.**
- ¹⁶ Let your face shine up- | on your servant;
save me in your | steadfast love.”

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. (not read aloud)

A reading from 1 Peter Chapter 2:

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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.” ⁷ 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,” 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. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.**



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

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.

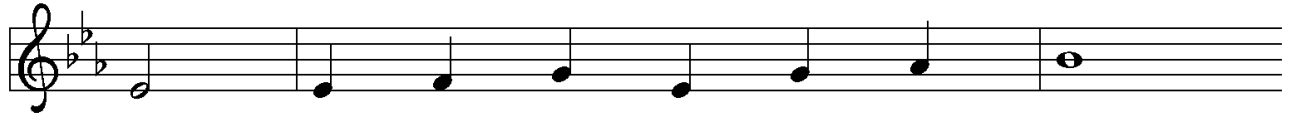
The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 14th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“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 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.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY *NOW ALL THE VAULT OF HEAVEN RESOUNDS* ELW# 367



1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings,
 3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love;
 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring



in praise of love that still a - bounds: "Christ has
 there - fore our heart with rap - ture sings: "Christ has
 set heart and will on things a - bove that we
 and with the heav'n - ly bless - ed sing: "Christ has



tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Sing, choirs of
 tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Now still he
 con - quer through your tri - umph; grant grace suf -
 tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!" Be to the



an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song of glo - ry
 comes to give us life and by his pres - ence stills all
 fi - cient for life's day that by our lives we tru - ly
 Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest, most ho - ly



here: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 strife. "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 say: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith with the words of the 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

Offered by the Assisting Minister

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silence.

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 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 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 those on our prayer board and those we name before you now. 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.**

We share a sign of peace with others as we are comfortable. We sit.



Ladies Luncheon at Fried Green Tomatoes in April.
Our next luncheon is Tuesday, May 5 at Mario's on
S. Buncombe Road at 11:30. JOIN US!

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

MUSICAL OFFERING *CHRIST IS MADE THE SURE FOUNDATION*

Redeemer Choir

OFFERING HYMN

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

Offered by the Assisting minister and congregation.

Let us pray: Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Presiding Minister greets the congregation and invites all present to give thanks.

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

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,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW#207

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below each staff. The first staff ends with a double bar line. The second and third staves end with a fermata over the final note. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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 the 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

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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 table of new life. Receive the risen Lord. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN:

LAMB OF GOD

ELW p. 208



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

Congregation is encouraged to sing.

YOU ARE THE WAY
COME, MY WAY, MY TRUTH, MY LIFE

ELW #758

ELW #816

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Offered by Assisting Minister.

Let us pray: Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

<h2>SENDING</h2>

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

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.

REDEEMER'S MISSION

Redeemers Mission is: **A lifelong family ministry of God's love!**

SENDING HYMN *CHRIST IS ALIVE, LET CHRISTIANS SING*
(printed on next page)

ELW #389

DISMISSAL

Offered by Assisting Minister.

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE

Donna Cotter, Organ

Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands
 2 Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant
 3 In ev - 'ry in - sult, rift, and war, where col - or,
 4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the
 5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
 years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet
 Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the
 this and ev - 'ry age, till earth and sky and

prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.
 here and now, and touch - ing ev - 'ry place and time.
 loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.
 life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.
 o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: TRURO, T. Williams, *Psalmodia Evangelica*, 1789

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Serving Today

Ushers:	Tom Stires and Marc Karrmann
Greeters:	Wade and Barbara Tate
Assisting Minister:	Phil Rhoads
Lector 1:	Nancy Stires
Lector 2:	Cindy Martin
Acolyte:	Poppy Lanning
Crucifer:	Brooks Snyder
Cantor:	Nancy Stires
Counters:	Rev. Kevin Koger and Harold Neel
Altar Guild:	Tom and Joyce Frid
Flowers:	Given by Bob and Donna Cotter in honor of Kaci's birthday
Sheepdog:	BJ King, Chris Felicia, and JJ Johnson 2-4 JJ Johnson 4-6 Chris Felicia
Nursery:	Jenny Wiggers and Rose Lanning

Serving Next Week - May 10, 2026

Ushers:	Brad Van Putten and Chuck Pegram
Greeters:	John and Sharon Fouke
Assisting Minister:	Harold Neel
Lector 1:	Renee Phillips
Lector 2:	Kathy Mieczkowski
Acolyte:	Tyndall Stringer
Crucifer:	Jones Stringer
Cantor:	Jeffrey Stringer
Counters:	Rev. Kevin Koger and Harold Neel
Altar Guild:	Sharon Fouke and Janet Kelk
Flowers:	Given by Catharine Kirby in memory of her father, John Kirby, whose birthday was May 8, for all mothers on Mothers' Day, and in memory of Jennifer Melegari
Sheepdog:	BJ King, Chris Felicia, and JJ Johnson No Youth Today
Nursery:	Jennifer Tierce and Heather Hester

NOTES