

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 6:1–9; 7:2a, 51–60

1 Peter 2:2–10

John 14:1–14

The Lord Jesus Christ Is the Way, the Truth, and the Life

The risen Lord Jesus alone is “*the way, the truth, and the life,*” and we “*come to the Father*” only through Him (John 14:6). God is thus “*glorified in the Son,*” and those who believe in Him will do the works of Christ, because He goes to the Father for us (John 14:12–14). Stephen, “*a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 6:5) and “*doing great wonders and signs among the people*” (Acts 6:8), did the works of Christ. When he was falsely accused and put to death, he “*gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*” (Acts 7:55). Fixing his hope there, he commended his spirit to the Lord Jesus and prayed for his murderers. In the same way, all the baptized are called to follow the example of Christ Jesus by faith. Though He was “*rejected by men,*” in the sight of God He is “*chosen and precious*” (1 Peter 2:4). He is the Chief Cornerstone of the Father’s “*spiritual house,*” and we are built upon Him as “*living stones*” (1 Peter 2:4–5).

Next Week’s Readings from God’s Word:

May 14: The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:16-31; Psalm 68:8-20 (v.8); 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 7, 2023

INTROIT

Psalm 30:1-5; Antiphon: Psalm 149:1

*Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the godly!
I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.
O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.
O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.
Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.
For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.*

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the godly!*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *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 Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

C *♪[Amen]♪*

GRADUAL

adapt. From Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

*Christ has risen from the dead.
[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor,
He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
he has put all things under his feet.*

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P Lord, in Your mercy
C hear our prayer.

Acts 6:1-9; 7:2; 7:51-60 (ESV)

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. ² 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. ³ 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. ⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵ 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. ⁶ These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ 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.

⁸ And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ 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.

^{7:2a} And Stephen said:

"Brothers and fathers, hear me. ⁵¹ "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your

fathers did, so do you. ⁵² 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, ⁵³ you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

⁵⁴ Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ 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. ⁵⁶ And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. ⁵⁸ 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. ⁵⁹ And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ 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.



1 Peter 2:2-10 (ESV)

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

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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.”

⁷ 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,”

⁸ and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.”

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

⁹ 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. 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.

John 14:1-14 (ESV)

¹[Jesus said:] “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? ³ 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. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ 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’? ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ Believe 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. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.