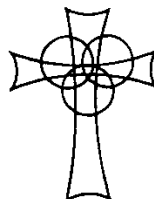


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*A Member Congregation of
 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*



Midweek Devotions and Bible Study
Wednesday in the Fifth Week of Easter
May 13, 2020

Service of the Word in Eastertide

✠ *Christ Jesus, Victor! Christ Jesus, Ruler! Christ Jesus, Lord and Redeemer!* ✠

The Opening Versicles:

*Psalms 70:1 and 139:7
 and Liturgical Text*

- P** Make haste, O God, to deliver me.
- C** O Lord, make haste to help me!

- P** If I ascend to heaven, You are there!
- C** If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there!

- P** In Your resurrection, O Christ,
- C** let heaven and earth rejoice. Alleluia!

- P** ¹Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
- C** ²**I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**
- P** ³Put not your trust in princes,
in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.
- C** ⁴**When his breath departs he returns to the earth;
on that very day his plans perish.**
- P** ⁵Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD his God,
- C** ⁶**who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;**
- P** ⁷who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.
- C** **The LORD sets the prisoners free; ⁸the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**
- P** ⁹The LORD watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.
- C** ¹⁰**The LORD will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!**
- C** **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.**



⁵¹[Stephen said,] You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. ⁵²Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, ⁵³you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

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

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Study 5

Saint Paul and the Risen Lord

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

¹ Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Acts 1:21-22

²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

Acts 9:1-18

See also Acts 22:1-16 (Paul speaks to the crowd in Jerusalem at his arrest); Acts 26:1-23 (Paul before Herod Agrippa); and Galatians 2:11-17

¹ But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. ⁴ And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” ⁵ And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. ⁸ Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.” ¹¹ And the Lord said to him, “Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” ¹³ But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.” ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.” ¹⁷ So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; ¹⁹ and taking food, he was strengthened.

Romans 6:1-11

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

See also Galatians 2:20 and 3:27

1 Corinthians 15:12-20 (21-58)

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

The Prayers:

P On this day that the Lord has made, let us pray for all the people He has redeemed.

Let us pray that we may live as those who believe in the triumph of Christ's cross:

C **O Lord, hear us.**

P Let us pray that all people everywhere may receive the Good News of His victory:

C **O Lord, hear us.**

P Let us pray that all those born to new life in the waters of Baptism may know the power of the Lord's resurrection:

C **O Lord, hear us.**

P Let us pray that those who suffer any pain or anguish may find healing and peace in the risen wounds of Christ:

C **O Lord, hear us.**

P Let us rejoice in the lives of all of God's saints, and let us pray that in the undying love of Christ we may be at last united with all who have died in the faith of Christ in the joys of God's eternal kingdom:

C **O Lord, hear us.**

P Let us commend the world, for which Christ died and rose again from the dead, to the mercy and protection of God.

Open prayer may be offered and silence is kept.

The Lord's Prayer:

P Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **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.**

The Collect of the Day:

- P** Let us pray.
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.**

The Collect for the Easter Season:

- P** O God, for our redemption You gave Your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross and by His glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of the enemy. Grant that all our sin may be drowned through daily repentance and that day by day we may arise to live before You in righteousness and purity forever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

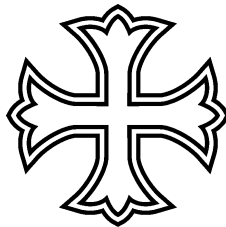
The Closing Prayer:

after Richard of Chichester (1253)

- P** We pray:
- C** **Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You**
for all the benefits that You have won for us,
for all the pains and insults that You bore for us.
Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
may we know You more clearly,
love You more dearly,
and follow You more nearly,
day by day.
Amen.

The Benediction:

- P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.
- C** **Amen.**



Acknowledgments

Brief Service of the Word from Lutheran Service Book Agenda and from Common Worship: Daily Prayer.

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