

CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH—NALC
PIGEON, MI Phone (989) 453-3330
www.crosslutheranpigeon.org

May 10, 2020
The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Reverend Glenn Sokolowski

pastorglenns@gmail.com

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray...

P: O God, you make the minds of the faithful to be of one will. Grant that your people would love what you command and desire what you promise, that, among the manifold changes of this world, our hearts may be fixed where true joys are to be found; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Acts 6:1-9; 7:2a, 51-60

¹Now 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. ²And 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. ³Therefore, 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. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” ⁵And 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. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷And 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.

² 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.

P: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 146

¹Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

²Put not your trust in princes, in the son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

³When his breath departs, he returns to the earth,
on that very day his plans perish.

**⁴Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord his God;**

⁵Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;

**⁶Who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.**

⁷The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;

the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

⁸The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord watches over the sojourners;

he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

⁹The Lord will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.

Praise the Lord!

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 2:2-10

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.

P: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING

John 14:1-14

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 14th chapter.

G: Glory to you, O Lord!

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? ³And 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. ⁴And you know the way to 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 had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

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

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G: Praise to you, O Christ!

THE NICENE CREED

[P]: Let us confess our faith with the words of the Nicene Creed...

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

And together let us pray the prayer our Lord and Savior taught us...

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

Listening for the Promise
WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL
Fifth Sunday of Easter – May 10, 2020

“Jesus said (to Thomas), ‘I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” - John 14:6 -

Growing up in the suburb of a small city there were a lot of one-way streets. I lived on a one-way street. Over the years it was not uncommon for a car to travel the wrong direction on this one-way street. Whenever I mentioned that I saw a car driving the wrong way someone would sarcastically point out that the driver was only going one way.

The ramifications of going the wrong way can be disastrous. Going the wrong way can leave us lost, far from our destination. In the worst-case scenario, traveling the wrong direction may cause injury or death. Likewise, straying from the one who is “the way, the truth and the life” is eternally damning. This may seem like a hard line for some. We deal with perceptions from neighbors, family and friends that such an unyielding guideline is unloving. Such perceptions get real when we put faces on the people we know who do not believe in God or hold to an entirely different religious belief. The world says it is unloving to offer such a judgment.

And yet, quite the opposite is true. For there to be life, a life in the here and now that is filled with genuine love as well as the gift of eternal life, the path is clear. The way is Jesus. The first Christians (and their enemies) understood this as they were known as belonging to “the Way” (Acts 9:2). The only option for peace, the only option for entrance into the room that Jesus has prepared in the Father’s house, the only means by which we can come to the place where the multitude of saints of every nation sing praise to God, is through the Lamb of God, Jesus.

In following Jesus we follow together as the body of Christ, not independent of each other, but as a people whom God made us to be: “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.” (1 Peter 2:9-10)

We boldly follow Jesus. He is the way. He is the truth. He is the life. As disciples, we trust in him. Amen.

A Spiritual House

Find the 38 **bold** words from 1 Peter 2:2–5, 8–10 (ESV)

E Y E B O S I D T A S T E D K
L L I V I N G P V T E X F R L
B I B L F N E S O H C W R O I
M G L A O C V N J E I X O W M
U H N L T D E P L O F F E R K
T T D S O P O L R N I B C D G
S M U P U R E O G O R U A M O
S U A I Y N D C H I C I R X O
E N O R C C Q T C T A L A J D
N C A I V V R Q H A S T A C G
K D E T C E J E R V C E H I H
R S X U I E L H M L B R I O M
A J L A Y O R O F A I L U R L
D E L L A C N P U S U S E J P
Y L O H D E N I T S E D V I X

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**... 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**.

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