

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Baccalaureate and Eighth Grade Graduation
Christ is Our Cornerstone
Traditional Worship Service
May 7, 2023

AS WE GATHER

We continue to focus our attention on Jesus' resurrection. We see that Jesus is the stone that was rejected by the religious leaders. He was crucified and killed by them. Yet God raised Jesus from the dead, making Him the cornerstone, the foundational stone upon which all the other stones in the building are aligned and built. As we build upon the foundation and cornerstone of Jesus, we are conformed and aligned to Him.

GRADUATION PROCESSIONAL

“Pomp & Circumstance”

⌘ **PREPARATION** ⌘

OPENING HYMN

“Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty”

#901

1 Open now thy gates of beauty; Zion, let me enter there, Where my soul in joyful duty Waits for Him who answers prayer. Oh, how blessed is this place, Filled with solace, light, and grace!

2 Gracious God, I come before Thee; Come Thou also unto me. Where we find Thee and adore Thee, There a heav'n on earth must be. To my heart, O enter Thou; Let it be Thy temple now!

3 Here Thy praise is gladly chanted; Here Thy seed is duly sown. Let my soul, where it is planted, Bring forth precious sheaves alone, So that all I hear may be Fruitful unto life in me.

4 Thou my faith increase and quicken; Let me keep Thy gift divine, Howsoe'er temptations thicken; May Thy Word still o'er me shine As my guiding star through life, As my comfort in the strife.

5 **Speak, O God, and I will hear Thee; Let Thy will be done indeed.
May I undisturbed draw near Thee While Thou dost Thy people feed.
Here of life the fountain flows; Here is balm for all our woes.**

INVOCATION

Vicar: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: **(sing) Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Vicar: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
People: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Vicar: Christ is our cornerstone;
People: **on Him alone we build.**

Vicar: In Him we are a newborn, chosen, priestly people.
People: **We are called to proclaim His excellencies to the world.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Vicar: Though Christ is our cornerstone and has changed our identity to be His chosen people, we often build upon things other than Jesus. Such building crumbles to the ground, for unless we build on Christ, we labor in vain. Still, our heavenly Father is merciful, and He invites us to draw near to His throne in confidence to ask for forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

Vicar: Heavenly Father,
People: **though we are Your chosen people, we have acted in accordance with the world rather than Your Word. We have proclaimed hatred and violence rather than Your excellencies. Forgive us, renew us, and restore as Your newborn, chosen, priestly people, on account of Jesus. Amen.**

Vicar: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

People: Amen. We are forgiven. We are a newborn, chosen, priestly people.

SALUTATION

Vicar: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Vicar: 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.

People: (sing) Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 6:1–9; 7:2a, 51–60

² And Stephen said: “Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, 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^[a] 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.

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

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,”^[a] 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.

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 14:1–14

Vicar: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourteenth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God;^[a] believe also in me. ² In 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?^[b] 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.”^[c] 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.^[d] 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^[e] anything in my name, I will do it.

Vicar: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Christ Be My Leader”

#861

1 Christ be my Leader by night as by day; Safe through the darkness,
for He is the way. Gladly I follow, my future His care, Darkness is daylight
when Jesus is there.

2. Christ be my Teacher in age as in youth, Drifting or doubting, for He
is the truth. Grant me to trust Him; though shifting as sand, Doubt cannot
daunt me; in Jesus I stand.

3. Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife; Death cannot hold me, for He
is the life. Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain Can touch
my salvation; with Jesus I reign.

SERMON

*“Stay Connected”
Rev. Gordon W. Bruce*

John 15:1-8

THE OFFERING (*baskets will be passed*)

PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING

“We Give Thee But Thine Own”

#781vs1,6

We give Thee but Thine own, What e'er the gift may be; All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee. And we believe Thy Word, Though dim our faith may be: What e'er for Thine we do, O Lord, We do it unto Thee.

EIGHTH GRADE DIPLOMA PRESENTATION

*Brandon Hamilton, Chairman of the Board of Education
Lavonne Fler, Head Teacher
Miss Sierra Hansen, 7/8 Grade Teacher
Rev. Gordon W. Bruce*

PRESENTATION OF THE SENIOR CLASS OF 2023

*Rev. Gordon W. Bruce
Vicar Justin Brockman
Brandon Hamilton
Mrs. Lavonne Fler*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Vicar: Petitions heard... (*ending with...*) Lord, in Your mercy,
People: **hear our prayer.**

LORD'S PRAYER (*found inside back cover of the hymnal*)

BENEDICTION

Vicar: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
People: **(sing) Amen. Amen. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Go, My Children, With My Blessing”

#922

1 Go, My Children with My blessing, Never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you; You are My own. In my love's baptismal river I have made you Mine forever. Go, My children, with My blessing- You are My own.

2 Go, My children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure. Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure. Here you heard My dear Son's story; Here you touched Him, saw His glory. Go, My children, sins forgiven, At peace and pure.

3 Go, My children, fed and nourished, Closer to Me; Grow in love and love by serving, Joyful and free. Here My Spirit's power filled you; Here His tender comfort stilled you. Go, My children, fed and nourished, Joyful and free.

4. I the Lord will bless and keep you And give you peace; I the Lord will smile upon you And give you peace: I the Lord will be your Father, Savior, Comforter, and Brother

SILENT PRAYER