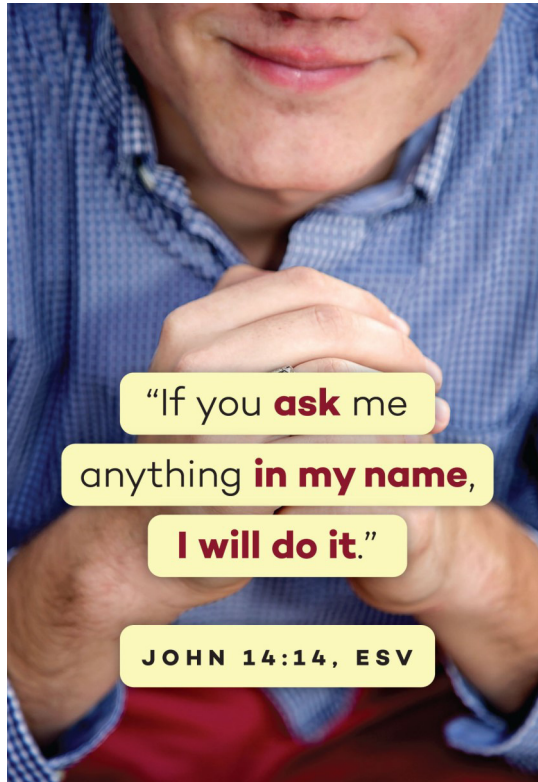


The Fifth Sunday of Easter  
May 3, 2026  
Worship Service with Holy Communion  
9:30 a.m.



"If you **ask** me

anything **in my name**,

**I will do it."**

**JOHN 14:14, ESV**

*"Be and Make Disciples of Jesus Christ"*

Grace Lutheran Church

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937.456.6258

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Pastor Dwight Hanson

## WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

In Holy Communion our Lord Jesus graciously invites those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to repent of all that separates us from God, and to receive his sacred and real presence for the forgiveness of sins.

**In addition to wine, grape juice is also offered.**

*Children who do not yet receive Communion may come for a blessing.*

Please take a moment this morning to fill out the “Attendance & Communion” Registration Cards (located in the pew racks). Pass your card to the end of your pew.

P - Presiding Minister; A - Assisting minister; **C - Congregation;**

\* - PLEASE STAND

LBW - Green Hymnal

WOV - Blue Hymnal

+ + +

**PRELUDE:**            *“Now the Green Blade Rises”*            *(arr. by: Page)*

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

P        In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C        **Amen.**

P        Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:

C        **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.**

P        If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C        **But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*(Kneeling or sitting; silence for self-reflection and examination)*

P        Most merciful God,

C        **we confess that we are in bondage 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.**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, 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.  
C **Amen.**

**THE SHARING OF GOD’S PEACE:**

P The peace of the Lord be with you, always.

C **And also with you.**

*(We share the peace)*

**\*GATHERING HYMN: “Hallelujah! Jesus Lives” VS. 1,3,5 (LBW 147)**

**\*GREETING:**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P Living God, your Son, Jesus Christ, is the way, the truth, and the life. Grant us the grace to follow him and live lives of servanthood and truth;

C **through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**FIRST LESSON: Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a, 51-60**

A A reading from Acts:

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders

and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup>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.

<sup>2a</sup> And Stephen said:

<sup>51</sup>“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. <sup>52</sup>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, <sup>53</sup>you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.” <sup>54</sup>Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup>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. <sup>56</sup>And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” <sup>57</sup>But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. <sup>58</sup>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. <sup>59</sup>And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” <sup>60</sup>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.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM 146

A <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! 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.

C **<sup>2</sup>Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, for there is no help in them.**

A <sup>3</sup>When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.

C **<sup>4</sup>Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! whose hope is in the LORD their God;**

A <sup>5</sup>Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps his promise forever;

C **<sup>6</sup>Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.**

A <sup>7</sup>The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the

LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

**C** **8The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.**

**A** **9The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

**SECOND LESSON: 1 Peter 2:2-10**

**A** A reading from First Peter.

**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.

**A** The Word of the Lord.

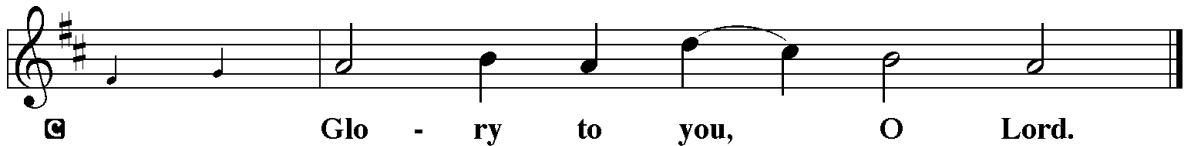
**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**\*VERSE:**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

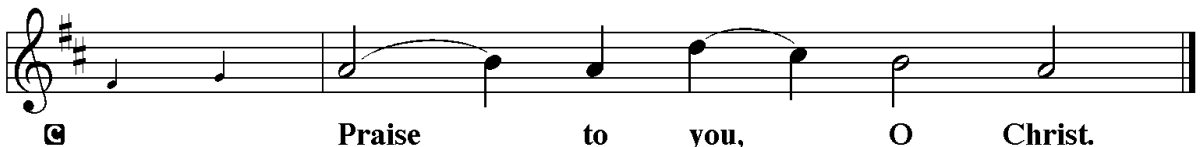
**\*HOLY GOSPEL: John 14:1-14**

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



<sup>1</sup>{Jesus said,} “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>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? <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>And you know the way to where I am going.” <sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup>If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” <sup>8</sup>Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” <sup>9</sup>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’? <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.



**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

**SERMON: Pastor Dwight Hanson — Vision Beyond the Horizon**

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, 5/3/2026; Grace Lutheran Church, Pastor Dwight Hanson  
 Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a, 51-60; Psalm 146; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

Children's message: Have any of you seen any baby animals this spring? If you look at the cattle in the fields, there may be calves. Or with sheep, lambs. I even saw a deer, a doe, and right beside it was a little fawn, not very strong on its feet. How will it get strong? Milk. We all need milk for strong bones and teeth. But that's our bodies. How about our hearts and minds? These get strong by coming to church, praying, studying the Bible, singing, and taking care of each other in Christ. Then we grow up as God's children. That's just what you're doing. Let's pray...

### **Vision Beyond the Horizon**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Let's get right to the "vision" that inspired the sermon title: "*But [Stephen], full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:55). Are there not key moments when children of the Heavenly Father have got to focus, with everything we've got, on the reality of the risen Lord Jesus? And if that's the case for plain-old us, how much more so for Stephen back in the day? If his focus landed only on what was around him, surely he would have lost his faithful footing. The world that so badly needed the very Gospel which Stephen carried, turned violently against him, just as it had done to Jesus. The risen Lord helped Stephen through the crisis. And it was the inspired vision that made the difference.

To understand just how important this vision was, it might be helpful to note and clarify what did *not* occupy the center of his attention, all that the first Christian martyr *overlooked*. By doing this, we're reminded that we, too, have much around us that cries out to occupy the center of our attention. But if that central territory in our hearts and minds is given over to something peripheral, what happens to the peace found only in Christ?

So, let's consider a few aspects of what Stephen faced on the ground. First, if it seemed like there was a lot of Bible background in that reading from Acts, it's because there was. Much of it had to do with *cultural* differences within the Jerusalem crowds. For example, even among the Christians, it says that there was a "complaint" from the "Hellenist" believers toward the "Hebrew" ones. As I understand it, in those days, widows, who weren't represented by husbands or sons, were often in need. Collections were taken for their assistance. But there was a sense that the non-locals were getting the short end of the stick.

Standing back from the passage, one might ask: Hadn't the Christian Church *just* begun? And only two chapters earlier, didn't Scripture say that they had all things together, and were quite happy? That's exactly what it said. How on earth could they have fallen so quickly into controversy? Well, were early Christians so very different from the saints on earth today? The sin nature still lurks, as surely as we have a pulse. They needed, and we need, Jesus every day. Veer from the center in Christ, even for a moment, and there's trouble. How many car accidents occur because of a brief break in focus?

Back then, what could bring distraction more quickly than an obvious cultural difference standing between believers? And the differences were there from the start, inherited from the variety of Jewish pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the festival. Remember, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on Pentecost, it coincided with one of the three major Jewish festivals of the year. Folks from all over the known world would have been there. But, the ones who came to Jerusalem from larger Israel would have been comfortable speaking Aramaic and some liturgical Hebrew. Others were from the larger Roman Empire. These would have been the Hellenists, whose first language was Greek, and whose customs and dress were also different. Worldly distinctions can become spiritual distractions just like that, until Christ breaks through once more—One Shepherd!

Try to imagine Jerusalem in Temple times during major festivals. Pilgrims filled the city, staying for days, as the population surged. People seemingly lodged on the very rooftops. There were great activities for the masses at the Temple. But there was also a need for pilgrims to band together with their local folks, for lodging, for food, and for contemplation of Scripture. It's sort of like attending the larger Ohio Mission Region gathering, but then breaking to gather as the smaller Southwest Ohio District. It seems that they did something like this in the time before the Temple was destroyed, with larger festivities, and then more communal gatherings according to synagogue. By one count, there may have been up to 480 such meeting places in and around Jerusalem.

That seems to be what's behind that mysterious reference to "*the synagogue of the Freedmen*" (Acts 7:9), which is where Stephen first got into trouble. I wonder if he may have been part of them. Stephen is a Greek name, after all, not Hebrew. About those "freedmen," some scholars think that there was a specific synagogue in Jerusalem for Jewish people whose relatives had been carried away as slaves when the Romans originally conquered Jerusalem (Pompey did it in 63 B.C.).

When these captive Jews received their freedom and finally could go back to their roots, gathering for the Jewish festivals, a synagogue was formed, that of the “Freedmen” (Shmuel Safrai, “Pilgrimage in the Time of Jesus,” *Jerusalem Perspective*; 09/01/1989).

There were also synagogues designated by region. That’s why Acts mentions the Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia. All would have traveled to Israel from elsewhere in the Roman Empire, presumably together, for the most part, with strength and safety in numbers. All of these groups “*rose up and disputed with Stephen*” (6:9). This would also explain how Saul, later known as the famous Paul, would have gotten involved. His home town, Tarsus, falls in the territory of the Province of Cilicia. To quote a Bible scholar: “Saul was not necessarily an actual member of the Sanhedrin that condemned Stephen. But as a member of the Cilician synagogue he may have taken part in the original dispute...” (G. H. C. Macgregor, pg. 106, *The Interpreter’s Bible*; Vol. 9).

This brings us to a second obstacle at the level of the horizon, so to speak, which Stephen addressed head on. God was on the move again, another mighty deed! This was no time for silence or playing it safe. Heaven’s plan was moving for the sake of the whole world in the person of the risen Christ, overcoming the unnecessary divisions among human beings. Once the eye of faith has caught sight of this truth, how can it be ignored? It presses to be shared and celebrated. The Lord of Heaven and earth is above the divisions, even as he was born into them, “under the law,” in order to “redeem” all who are under the law (Gal. 4:5). Surely, the people would catch a glimpse of what it truly meant to be freed-men!

However, Stephen wasn’t just up against worldly differences of culture, he was up against spiritual, “cosmic powers” who resisted the Kingdom (Eph. 6:12). Again, if Stephen had lost focus, and let these dark forces occupy his full attention, his strength would have evaporated. But the Holy Spirit was working through this earthen vessel so that the Gospel of Jesus, risen above every awful thing this world could dish out, could reach even us. Stephen gave his life, as Jesus gave his life, for you and me. The Church of Jesus doesn’t live to serve itself. It lives to serve the everlasting Kingdom. As Jesus said to an anxious world, “*Let not your hearts be troubled.*” “*In my Father’s house are many rooms*” (Jn. 14:1a, 2a).

So, the first Christian martyr overlooked culture and spiritual evil. But then add the presence of fellow human beings literally in his face, full of fury, ears plugged, fists clenched around jagged stones. How might you and I have fared

under the circumstances? Only by the power of the Holy Spirit could Stephen have kept focus.

There are many accounts of martyrs from the early years that tell the same story—calm in the face of wild beasts and jeering crowds in the Colosseum. There are accounts of modern martyrs that bear the same witness. God gives peace from beyond this world to souls that need it within this world. There *is* a Kingdom that surpasses and outlasts evil and hatred. Our present earthly bodies will go the way of dust, but testimony to the living Lord Jesus never dies. And the Church goes on throughout the generations, until its Lord returns and wraps up this old world.

How clear is your vision of ultimate matters? Is the risen Lord at the center of it? One Bible teacher puts words to what's at stake: "It is the vision of Jesus which truly clears the skies. It is the remembrance of him which fortifies our drooping spirits. He was serene when everyone else was beside himself; he was forgiving when everyone else was vindictive; he prayed when the whole world around him was in tumult; he loved when he saw nothing but hate; he trusted when everyone was against him..." (Theodore P. Ferris, pg. 104, [The Interpreter's Bible](#); Vol. 9).

Thus, the source of Stephen's strength—the presence and example of the Lord, himself. Note that Stephen went on to bear witness to Jesus for Saul, who would go on to be possibly the world's most energetic evangelist. The ways and timing of conversion truly belong in God's hands. Ours is simply the Spirit-born witness, and the tending of the Christ-centered vision. God handles the rest for this life, and for the life to come, as only He can do. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY:**                    *“Be Thou My Vision”*    (WOV 776)

**\*APOSTLES’ CREED:**

**C**     **I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived  
by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again. He ascended  
into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will  
come again 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:**

**A**     Let us pray: Almighty and everlasting God, our strong rock, our firm resting  
place, the very cornerstone of our life, make us into living stones in a living  
temple. In a troubled world, open our eyes and hearts to the blessings of  
Heaven. And use us to be a blessing to others. Fan the flame of the Holy Spirit  
so that we will always cherish the Lord Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and  
the Life. Lord, in your mercy,

**C**     **Hear our prayer.**

**A**     O Lord, as we pray for the whole Church on earth, we give thanks for those who  
have gone before us, especially for Stephen and all who made great sacrifices so  
that we could receive the Gospel. Open our eyes to the blessings of being  
traditionally grounded. Inspire each generation to build faithfully on the firm  
foundation of Christ. And bless the Ohio Mission Region, fresh from its  
gathering yesterday. Unite us in the common proclamation of the Gospel of  
Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

**C**     **Hear our prayer.**

**A**     We pray for the needs of the world: For all who grieve and suffer from war or  
disaster. We pray for our civic leaders. Protect them and their families, and  
guide them with wisdom from above. We lift up all who serve honorably by  
standing in harm’s way on behalf of others. Protect them and their families.  
Lord, in your mercy,

**C**     **Hear our prayer.**

A We pray for all who need healing in any way: *Charlie, Pat & Stephanie, Jim Carlisle, Travis Deck & Family, Rob & Suzie Dell, Claude Dixon, Violet Forney, Randy Foust, Michael Good, John Ingram, Amy & Bryan Jackson, Jenny Lambert, Paula Murray, Dave O'Shea, Tech Sergeant—Carter Lee, Staff Sergeant—Brandon Mann, Judy & Mike Schamel, Jackie Steiner, George & Barb Suggs, Linda Summers, Mark & Jary Tannehill, Wayne Williams*, and others whom we name in our hearts at this time (pause for silent prayer). Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray,

C **Trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### OFFERING

ANTHEM: *“Come to the Banquet”* Choir

### \*OFFERTORY RESPONSE:

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 dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P Let us pray.

P Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things.

C **Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**\*HOLY COMMUNION**


**\*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING:**



♩ The Lord be with you. ♪ And al - so 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 him thanks and praise.



**\*SANCTUS:**



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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.

**\*THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:**

**P** 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.

**\*LORD'S PRAYER:**

**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.**

# DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION AND BLESSING OF CHILDREN

*Holy communion will be received kneeling or standing at the rail.*

## COMMUNION HYMNS: *“Lamb of God”*



**C** Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

*“I’m So Glad Jesus Lifted Me” (WOV 673)*

*“Now the Green Blade Rises” (LBW 148)*

*“For the Bread Which You Have Broken” (LBW 200)*

**P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

**C** **Amen.**

### **\*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:**

**P** Let us pray:

**C** **Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **\*BLESSING:**

**P** Almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

### **\*SENDING HYMN: *“Let All Things Now Living” (LBW 557)***

**\*DISMISSAL:**

**A** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

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The flowers on the altar this morning are given to the glory of God by Daren & Karen Marshall in Honor, Celebration & Praise to God for 5 years Cancer Free!

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**TODAY, May 3**—Worship w/Holy Communion  
Fellowship & Education for all ages—Youth Sunday School Rehearsal for May 10th  
Youth-Led service

**May 5**—10:00 a. Worship Committee Meeting

**May 10**—Mother's Day and Youth Led Worship—9:30 a.m.  
6:00 p.m. Sunday S'mores

**May 14**—7:00 p.m. Council Meeting  
6:30 p.m. AA Meeting (Shelter/FH)

**May 17**—9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion & Baptism  
**10:30 a.m. Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting**

**May 19**—6:00—Homeless Shelter Meal—Sponsored by: Richard & Jane Coggin

**May 21**—2:00 p. Graceful Fiber Guild  
6:30 p. AA Meeting

**May 24**—Pentecost Sunday Worship w/Holy Communion

**May 25**—**Office Closed** in Observance of *Memorial Day*

**May 31**—(Sharon Tipton playing for Janet) Holy Trinity with Holy Communion & Healing Prayer

# GRACE AT A GLANCE

## *Grace Lutheran Church*

111 Lutheran Dr., P.O. Box 86 - Eaton, OH 45320  
Phone: 937-456-6258 Email: GraceEaton111@gmail.com  
*www.gracelutheranofeaton.com ~ ~ Like us on Facebook*

### **OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday -Friday: 10—1, 2—5

#### **TODAY      *May 3, 2026—Fifth Sunday of Easter***

9:30 a.m.      Worship with Holy Communion

10:30 a.m.      Fellowship & Education for all ages—Youth Sunday school Rehearsal

#### **Monday      *May 4***

Pastor's Day Off

9:45 a.m.      Choose to Lose

#### **Tuesday      *May 5***

10:00 a.m.      Worship Committee Meeting

#### **Wednesday *May 6***

9:00 a.m.      Bible Study

5:30 p.m.      Confirmation Class

6:30 p.m.      Choir

#### **Thursday      *May 7***

7:30 p.m.      AA Meeting (FH)

#### **Friday      *May 8***

12:30 p.m.      Bulletin Production for 5/10-No Sermon

#### **Saturday      *May 9***

### **UPCOMING WEEK SPECIAL EVENTS**

Sun. 5/10—Mother's Day, Youth-Led Worship, Fellowship, Education for all ages, Sunday S'mores

Mon. 5/11—Pastor Off, Choose to Lose, Phoebe Women's Bible Study

Tues. 5/12—Mom's Bible Study, Lakeside Fellowship

Wed. 5/13—Bible Study, Confirmation, Choir

Thurs. 5/14—Council & Executive Mtg., AA Meeting

Fri. 5/15—Bulletin Production, GRACE HERALD Deadline

Sat. 5/16—

# WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

**Altar Guild for May:** Barb Myers, Evelyn Good  
**Offering Counter for May:** Tiffany Ingram

## Sunday, May 3—Easter 5

**9:30 a.m.**

**Greeter:** Dean & Mary Shetter  
**Usher:** Darryl Leyes  
**Lector:** Debbie McKinney  
**Communion:** Patty Barnes, Elaine Fudge

## Sunday, May 10—Easter 6—Mother's Day

**9:30 a.m.**

**Greeter:** Michael Good & Marti Good-Ernst  
**Usher:** Jeff Kiracofe  
**Lector:** Tiffany Ingram

## Sunday, May 17—Easter 7

**9:30 a.m.**

**Greeter:** Richard & Jane Coggin  
**Usher:** Richard & Jane Coggin  
**Lector:** Carol Perry  
**Communion:** Jane Coggin, Nancy Childs

## Sunday, May 24—Pentecost Sunday

**9:30 a.m.**

**Greeter:** John & Janice Barnes  
**Usher:** John & Janice Barnes  
**Lector:** Mary Shetter  
**Communion:** Janice Barnes, Tiffany Ingram

### Attendance & Stewardship — (\$4,187 needed wkly)

04/26/26

89

\$3,755.41

### ***Great Commission Outreach Partners:***

*World Mission Prayer League—Chris & Emily and family, Lutheran Military Veterans and Families, Abundant Grace, West Chester*

**Grace Lutheran Mission Endowment Fund:** The purpose of this fund is to extend the ministry of Grace Lutheran Church, apart from the general operation of the congregation. To learn more about our Mission Endowment Fund, please contact the church office and we'll give your question to the appropriate person.

## IN OUR PRAYERS

***After 4 weeks we will remove names from this list. If you would like to keep someone on the list, please note their name on the back of the “Attendance & Communion Registration” form.***

### **URGENT PRAYER LIST:**

#### **HEALING: (In Alphabetical Order)**

***Charlie:*** (11-year-old son of a former student of Nancy Parkinson—Charlie is awaiting a liver transplant)

***Pat & Stephanie:*** (Friend of Paula Murray—In need of a new home)

***Jim Carlisle:*** (Healing from hip surgery)

***Travis Deck & Family:*** (Friends of Coffman’s—He is in the military and has been re-deployed)

***Rob & Suzie Dell:*** (Dealing with family issues)

***Claude Dixon:*** (Father of Suzie Dell—under hospice care at home (in Columbus)

***Violet Forney:*** (Has a spinal injury found at a recent check-up. Doctors are watching it)

***Randy Foust:*** (Janice Pearce’s son-in-law—Recovering from back surgery)

***Michael Good:*** (Recovering from surgery)

***John Ingram:*** (Healing for ongoing medical issues)

***Amy & Bryan Jackson:*** (for comfort and healing)

***Jenny Lambert:*** (Linda Lambert’s daughter)

***Paula Murray:*** (Has a serious infection in foot; and other health issues)

***Dave O’Shea:*** (Father of Kelly Hanson—dealing with Parkinson’s Disease & fell and broke his hip)

***Tech Sergeant, Carter Lee:*** (special friend of the Franklin/Childers families)

***Staff Sergeant, Brandon Mann:*** (Nephew of Rex Mt. Castle—He is now stationed in Kuwait with the 1487th Transport Unit)

***Judy & Mike Schamel:*** (Back at home following rehab)

***Jackie Steiner***

***George & Barb Suggs:*** (Dealing with health issues)

***Linda Summers:*** (Friend of Paula Murray—Linda is under hospice care)

***Mark & Jary Tannehill:*** (Carol Matevia’s friends—Recovering from for leg amputation surgery).

***Wayne Williams***

**LONG-TERM PRAYER LIST** ....Sally Mowell, Connie Martin, Maggie Risko, Rhonda Paige Atkinson, Amy Jackson, Andy Proeschel, Judy Newkirk, Mike & Judy Schamel, Suzan Pauley, Carmen Hasdorff, Tom Schamel, Amanda & Shayla Dell, Fran Kester, Teddi & Mike Watkins, Jenifer Combs, Doug Davis, Pastor Dean & Sandy Haferman, Dave Brumbaugh, Scot Emig, Barbara Worley, Carolyn MacFadyen, Judy Jay, Will Suggs, Earl House, Barbara Lakes, Becky Hoskins, Kayli Johnson, Joe McHenry, Tom Barnes: and those serving in the military: Maj. Love Hartman; SPC Brandon Mann; Brad Newkirk; Lt. Col. Kyle Hundley.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY:

## Fellowship & Education

**Following Worship—Refreshments** for all are served in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship on Sundays.

- **Youth Sunday School classes** meet @ **10:30 a.m.** — in the Sunday School music room (Education wing) and start with songs and prayer, then go to the adjacent classroom for our lesson. Bring a friend! Parents are always welcome.
- **Adult Education**— Following 9:30 a.m. worship, the adults meet to discuss the lessons of the day unless there is a theme. Beginning April 12th they begin a new, 5-week series and is scheduled to end May 10th. It is entitled **GOD HEARD THEIR CRY—Finding freedom in the midst of life’s trials**. A Ray Vander Laan series from “Focus on the Family”. We hope you will join us for these very interesting sessions. Coffee and snacks provided.
- **Every other Sunday— Sunday S’mores @ 6:00 p.m.** —a Middle School- & High School-aged Youth Sunday Evening Ministry. Friends are welcome. Tina Ebright is the moderator and she can be reached at 937-472-5663.

### **Adult Bible Studies (during the week)**

- **The 2nd Monday of each Month — 7:00 p.m.—The Phoebe Women’s Bible Study**. They are beginning a new study— **Discerning the Voice of God** by Priscilla Shirer. Contact Kelly Mt. Castle (937-336-1223 or [kelly.mtcastle@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.mtcastle@gmail.com)).
- **The 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the Month:**
  - \* **6:00 p.m. — Wine & The Word** — The group shares a light meal (at the home of Carol Perry). **They are taking a break for the summer** and plan to resume in the fall. If you would like to join them, please contact Carol at 937-456-6683 or [cbperry122@embarqmail.com](mailto:cbperry122@embarqmail.com)
  - \* **7:00 p.m. — Lakeside Fellowship is held** at the Lakengren home of Dan & Karen Schultz. If you would like to join this group, please contact Karen/Dan at 419-890-7965 or [dkschultz52@yahoo.com](mailto:dkschultz52@yahoo.com).
- **The 2nd Tues. of each month — 5:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted)— FOR MOMS . . .** They are studying a 6-session Bible Study for **MOMS — Mom Set Free by: Jeannie Cunnion**.
- **The Wednesday Morning Prayer & Bible Study — 9:00 a.m.** — meets in the Meeting Room off of the Fellowship Hall. They are studying the ***minor prophets***.
- **The 3rd Thursday of each month — 2:00-4:00 p.m. — “Graceful Fiber Guild”** — **they meet** in the Fellowship Hall or the adjacent meeting room. Bring a craft you’ve been working on or just come to learn a new craft. Everyone is welcome to join us! Our next meeting is ***Thurs., May 21st***.

**These studies are open to any member and our friends. No prior Bible study background is needed. Please bring your Bible.**

## COMING IN JUNE



The 2026 Vacation Bible School  
The Amazing Race ~ Journeys of the Apostle Paul  
is scheduled for **June 21-25** from **6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.**

*At this point in our planning* we are in need of donations of maps (lots of maps!) that can be cut up and used for crafts and decorations as well as old-looking suitcases and briefcases (these will be returned) and suitcase-sized boxes. Keep 'in touch' for updates & how you can help with this exciting experience!!

# ***Listening for the Promise***

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

### **Fifth Sunday of Easter – May 3, 2026**

*“Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the Lord his God.”*

*- Psalm 146:5 -*

### **God is Faithful**

Two thousand years after the birth of Christ we are still waiting for the fulfillment of God’s promises. We are taught repeatedly in the scriptures to be patient. We aren’t very patient, are we? The language of the New Testament has a sense of immediacy that seems to contradict the reality we see. Two thousand years is a long time; those who were the first followers of Jesus thought that He would come again immediately. It has been long enough to make us doubt what we believe, to make us wonder whether God will ever fulfill His promises.

Jesus’ ministry did not make sense to the religious elite of His day. He touched the untouchables. He brought wholeness to the outcast. He brought life to those who were dead to the world. He set the prisoners free, opened the eyes of the blind, and made the lame walk. He did not do good things for the righteous; He did great things for the sinners. It made no sense in Jesus’ day and does not make sense today. Human nature expects reward for goodness. Jesus gave gifts to the humble, He fixed the broken, He forgave the sinners. No wonder so many people doubt that He is the Messiah even today.

The psalmist speaks of the hope we have in Jesus. “Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God.” This is not good news to the righteous; it is good news for the sinner because it speaks of looking beyond oneself and trusting in a higher power. That higher power, by virtue of its greatness, must know better how things should be accomplished. We are still waiting for the fulfillment of the promises two thousand years after the coming of Christ because God still has work to do. There are things to be accomplished, and we are called to wait both patiently and expectantly while God finishes what He has started. He will because He is faithful. We will one day see the fulfillment of all His promises.

# The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Find the 29 **bold** words from John 14:1-7 (ESV)

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

“Let not your **hearts** be **troubled**. **Believe** in **God**; believe also in me. 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? 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. And you know the way to where I am going.” **Thomas** said to him, “**Lord**, we do not know where you are **going**. How can we know the way?” **Jesus** said to him, “I am the **way**, and the **truth**, and the **life**. No one **comes** to the **Father** **except through** me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do **know** him and have **seen** him.”