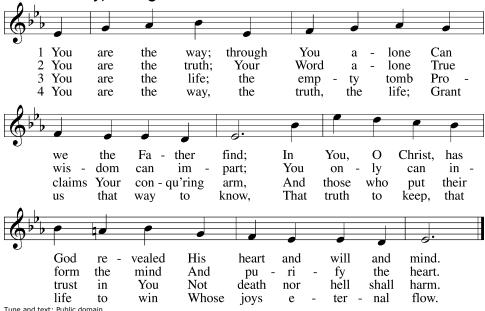
As We Gather

With the comforting words of our Savior, spoken before His passion and death, and now spoken in our ears as He is risen from death, our Lord today increases our confidence in the truth of our new righteousness through the continued forgiveness of our sins. In this Easter faith, we are more than prepared to face the challenges of living now as strangers and foreigners in this world, that is, as a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession. Those challenges may begin simply in our daily living but also may increase as they have in our day with increasing confusion in the public square over issues such as sexual identity and even marriage. Ultimately, as we hear of St. Stephen, the first martyr for the faith, the confession of this faith has become a life or death issue for many even in our own day. Regardless of the intensity of the good fight of the faith, we see our Savior Jesus come to deliver us. We see Him in the water of Baptism with His Word, in the body and blood we share at His command, in the authoritative and comforting word of Holy Absolution, and in His Word preached, as we wait to see Him come to "take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:3). Let us join all creation in praise to our saving Lord.

526 You Are the Way; through You Alone



Confession and Absolution

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

- **P** In the name of the Father and of the

 → Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

Exhortation LSB 203

- **P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- **C** who made heaven and earth.
- **P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
- **C** But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Confession of Sins LSB 203

Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

Prayer for Forgiveness

- Almighty God, merciful Father, in Holy Baptism You declared us to be Your children and gathered us into Your one, holy Church, in which You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C Amen.

Service of the Word

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.
- P 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.
- P 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.

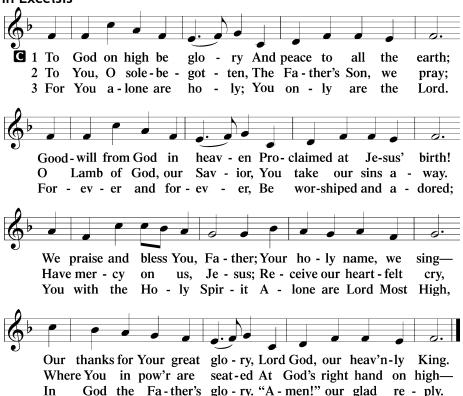
Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!

Kyrie LSB 204



C Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy; Lord, have mer-cy.

Gloria in Excelsis LSB 204



Salutation and Collect of the Day

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **C** And also with you.
- **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.

First Reading Acts 6:1–9; 7:2a, 51–60

P The First Reading is from Acts, chapter 6.

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.

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

²And Stephen said:

"Brothers and fathers, hear me. . . .

⁵¹You 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.

Epistle 1 Peter 2:2–10

P The Epistle is from 1 Peter, chapter 2.

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

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

⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone,"

⁸and

"A stone of stumbling,

and a rock of offense."

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

⁹But 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. ¹⁰Once 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.





Holy Gospel John 14:1–14

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

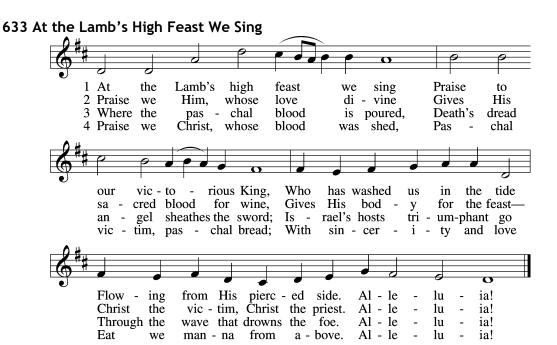
- **P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life + everlasting. Amen.



- Mighty Victim from the sky,
 Hell's fierce pow'rs beneath You lie;
 You have conquered in the fight,
 You have brought us life and light.
 Alleluia!
- Now no more can death appall, Now no more the grave enthrall; You have opened paradise, And Your saints in You shall rise. Alleluia!

Tune and text: Public domain

- 7 Easter triumph, Easter joy!
 This alone can sin destroy;
 From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free,
 Newborn souls in You to be.
 Alleluia!
- △ 8 Father, who the crown shall give, Savior, by whose death we live, Spirit, guide through all our days: Three in One, Your name we praise. Alleluia!

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

As newborn infants who long for the pure spiritual milk, so let us come before the Lord seeking His mercy with confidence that His grace will be sufficient for all our needs.

Brief silence

Almighty Father, everlasting God, Your Son has revealed You to us as a merciful Lord. Give to us Your Holy Spirit, that we may believe in Him whom You have sent and do the greater works He has told us we will do in His name. Lord, in Your mercy,

- C hear our prayer.
- Lord God, You have promised to build up Your Church to be a holy priesthood, that Your people might offer the spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving acceptable to You. Bless Your Church and bring all congregations back together again. Bless all pastors who proclaim Christ to us. Bless all church workers and those preparing for full-time church vocations, that Your Church may be supplied with faithful leaders and servants of Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.
- P Holy God, Your power brought all things into being and still You preserve what You have made. Bless our president, the Congress of these United States, our governor, and all elected and appointed civil servants so that they may honor You and Your purpose, establishing order and justice, encouraging

virtue and protecting all life. Give wisdom and moderation to them in their leadership for the well-being of the nation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

- C hear our prayer.
- P Gracious God, You have established the home and blessed those who show us Your love. Bless all mothers and the children in their care. Bless all families and make their homes places of blessing and love, where Your Word is spoken, forgiveness reigns and love is displayed. Give us good examples to inspire youth to all that is good and pure, and to seek after these things. Lord, in Your mercy,
- **C** hear our prayer.
- P Heavenly Father, You have given us the wisdom of faith that through the Spirit we might know Your Son to be the way, the truth and the life. Bless all those who teach and all who learn, that the goal of our knowledge may be to know Christ and to make Him known. Do not let Your Word be bound, but let it have free course among us. Preserve those in isolation from idleness, and instead let our minds be renewed in Scripture and prayer. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.
- P Compassionate Father, You are not aloof from the needs of this body and life, and You have called us to love our neighbor in need and give aid to the poor. Give us courage and faith, that we may not fear sharing the resources You have supplied with those who live in want, especially the widow, the orphan and the unemployed. Let love be perfected among us to drive out selfish fears. Lord, in Your mercy,
- **C** hear our prayer.
- P Eternal Father of an eternal mercy, You have raised up witnesses in every age and blessed us with those who endured suffering and even death in faithfulness to Christ. We give You thanks for these faithful saints and martyrs, and we pray You to make us strong when we face the day of test, that at length we may be brought with them into the joy of Your presence and the glory of everlasting life. Lord, in Your mercy,
- **C** hear our prayer.
- We praise You, God, for Your goodness in hearing the prayers of Your people and granting us confidence to approach Your throne of mercy. Hear us now in the name of and for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom, with whom and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is Yours, almighty Father, both now and forevermore.
- C Amen.

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.

Collect of the Word

- P Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C Amen.

Benedicamus LSB 212

- **P** Let us bless the Lord.
- **C** Thanks be to God.

Benediction

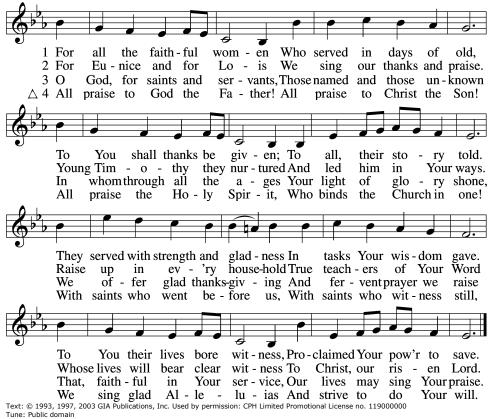
- The Lord bless you and keep you.

 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

 The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
- C Amen.

855 For All the Faithful Women

sts. 1, 13, 3-4



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