



ASCENSION

Lutheran Church

A **Christ-centered** community where we **connect, learn, and serve.**

Fifth Sunday of Easter – May 3, 2026



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Welcome! We're happy you're with us for worship today.

IF YOU ARE VISITING FOR THE FIRST TIME, please take a moment to sign in at the podium at either sanctuary entrance. We pray your time with us strengthens your faith in the Lord. We are a member congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). You can find more information about our beliefs at LCMS.org/about/beliefs.

IF YOU HAVE SMALL CHILDREN, we understand that God made them wiggly and noisy at times, but we also believe they should be with us in worship. If you need a moment, we have a nursery available to you through the hallway to the right of the altar. Children's bags are also available in the Narthex for use during service.

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated at Ascension Lutheran on each Sunday. We receive this Holy Sacrament in the glad confidence that our Lord Jesus, as His word says, gives not only bread and wine, but also His true Body and Blood for us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:26-28). Our Lord invites to His table those who, repenting of their sins, believe His word that His body and blood are truly present for the forgiveness of our sins. All baptized believers who hold our confession of faith and have examined themselves according to Scripture's guidance (1 Corinthians 11:27-29), are invited to receive His Sacrament. If you are not yet baptized or are visiting us for the first time, we invite you to come forth during communion and fold your arms over your heart for a blessing. Pastor would be happy to discuss receiving Holy Communion at Ascension with you.

AFTER EACH SERVICE from September to May, please join us for a brief time of **FELLOWSHIP** with coffee and treats downstairs in our Fellowship Hall briefly before we begin our **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** hour for those ages 2 and above.

If you have any questions, seek out Pastor, an usher, or a member with a name tag; they will be happy to help you out.

SERVING TODAY:

ELDER(S): Bob Booth & Mike Fiffik

LAY READER: Bob Booth

USHERS: Matt Gunther & Cristen Fiffik

ACOLYTE: Craig Fleishauer

SERVING NEXT WEEK:

ELDER(S): Kurt Dolph & Dave Dille

LAY READER: Dave Dille

USHERS: Ken Lindsey & Ron Curcio

ACOLYTE: Zach Schroeder

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Pre-Service - Abide

Welcome

Prelude

Stand

Invocation

Matthew 28:19b; 18:20

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Hymn – Cornerstone

Verse 1

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name

When darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil
My anchor holds within the veil
(Chorus x2)

Chorus

Christ alone cornerstone
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love
Through the storm He is Lord
Lord of all

Verse 3

When He shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone
Faultless stand before the throne
(Chorus x2)

Verse 2

Exhortation

Hebrews 10:22; Psalm 124:8; Psalm 32:5

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.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Confession of Sins

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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.

Absolution

[John 20:19–23]

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Greeting of Peace

Following the Absolution, the people may greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, "Peace be with you," as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matthew 5:22–24; Ephesians 4:1–3).

Hymn of Praise - Christ Be My Leader

LSB 861

Sit

First 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.

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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading

1 Peter 2:2–10

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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Holy Gospel

John 14:1–14

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

C **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.**

Sit

Children's Message

Pastor Thompson

Hymn of the Day - By All Your Saints in Warfare

LSB 517 sts. 1, 7, 3

Sermon

Pastor Thompson

Lutheran Catechesis - Confession Part 2

P *Which are these?*

C **Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?**

P *What is the Office of the Keys?*

C **The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.**

Stand

Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven**

and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life † of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

Offering

Meditation Song - I Need Thee Every Hour

Praise Team

Stand

Offertory – Christ The Eternal Lord

LSB 829 st. 1

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes.

1 Christ the e - ter - nal Lord, Whose prom - ise here we claim,
Whose gifts of grace are free - ly poured On all who name Your name;
With thank - ful - ness and praise We stand be - fore Your throne,



In - tent to serve You all our days And make Your glo - ry known.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926-2024

Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816-93

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Tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Church

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

After each prayer, the response will be:

- P** Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** Hear our prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us 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 Words of Institution

Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Peace of the Lord

John 20:19

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Sit

Holy Communion

Distribution Hymns - At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing

LSB 633

You Said I Am (Behold and Believe)

Verse 1

You said I am the Bread of Life
Whoever comes to dine
Will not hunger will not thirst
And will be satisfied
You said I am the only light
That gives the blind their sight
And if we see You will lead us through
The darkest night

Chorus

We behold we believe
You are the Lion and the Lamb
The Prince of Peace
We adore we confess
You are the one who came and died
And rose again
The great I Am

Verse 2

You said I am the open door
That souls are longing for
If we walk in new life begins
forevermore
You said I am the Shepherd guide
Who came to live and die
To lead the ones He loves
To resurrection life

(Chorus)

Interlude

The great I Am

Bridge

Before creation's spark
Before light from the dark
Before the waters part You are
You are the great I Am
Before You breathed on the dust
Before Abraham was
Before the burning bush You are
You are the great I Am
(Repeat)

Tag

You are the great I Am
You are the great I Am

Verse 3

You said I am the only way
To see the Father's face
The only truth the only life
The one who saves
You said I am the one true vine
In You we will abide
To bear the fruit of Gospel truth

In death and life
That all might know the mighty name
Of Jesus Christ
(Chorus)

Ending

You're the great I Am
You're the great I Am

Communion Dismissal

P Now may this true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, strengthen and preserve you, in body and soul, unto life everlasting. Depart in His peace ☩ and with joy.

C Amen.

Stand

Post-Communion Canticle – I Love Your Kingdom Lord

LSB 651 st. 1



I I love Your king - dom, Lord, The place of Your a - bode,



The Church our blest Re - deem - er saved With His own pre - cious blood.

Text: Timothy Dwight, 1752–1817, alt.
Tune: Aaron Williams, 1731–76
Text and tune: Public domain

Post-Communion Prayer

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

P 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.

Closing Song - Better Is One Day

Verse 1

How lovely is Your dwelling place
O Lord almighty
For my soul longs and even faints for
You
For here my heart is satisfied
Within Your presence
I sing beneath the shadow of Your
wings

Chorus

Better is one day in Your courts
Better is one day in Your house
Better is one day in Your courts
Than thousands elsewhere
(Than thousands elsewhere)

Verse 2

One thing I ask and I would seek
To see Your beauty
To find You in the place
Your glory dwells
(Chorus)

Bridge 1

My heart and flesh cry out
For You the living God
Your Spirit's water to my soul
I've tasted and I've seen
Come once again to me
I will draw near to You
I will draw near to You to You
(Chorus)

Sit

Announcements

Memory Verse of the Week: Acts 6:3 - 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.

Dismissal

P Go in peace and
C **serve the Lord!**

Acknowledgments

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Looking Ahead - Next Week's Verses:
Acts 17: 16-31; Psalm 66:8-20; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

This week we pray for:

- Thanksgiving for faith given to Craig and Concetta and for continued faithfulness throughout the rest of their earthly lives.
 - For the family and friends of Clayton Mees, who died in the faith. Comfort them with the hope and peace that comes from the promise of the resurrection victory in Jesus.
 - For protection for all who serve in our armed forces and especially for Joshua, Lynn Rodina's grandson, who is a marine deployed in the conflict in Iran.
 - Arlene Rusnica, who sustained a broken arm in a fall, that she recovers quickly and is relieved from pain.
 - John Fagen, for strength and faith as he battles cancer.
 - Kurt Dolph's continued cancer treatment and for a quick recovery and healing.
 - Greg Horne, husband of Rosalie Horne, as he deals with physical and mental distresses. Grant him relief and healing from his afflictions.
 - Darryl Gunther for healing for his eyes.
 - We give thanks for the progress Jim Obringer Sr. has made recovering from his stroke. We pray you continue to grant him a return to even more mobility.
 - Shirley Waselko's continued cancer treatments to give good results and for continued faith in the midst of her suffering.
-

Church News & Announcements:

Happy Anniversary to: Janeen & Ashi Daftary May 3rd

Happy Birthday to: Nancy Farris May 5th

Christian Education Hour - Join us at 11am (after some tasty treats in the Fellowship Hall) for one of our Bible Classes and Sunday School! Options are available for those aged 2 and above. See the Learn bulletin board in the Narthex for more info and about future classes and offerings.

Sunday School- Sunday school meets on the 2nd floor in the education room and is divided into three classes: PreK taught by Mrs. Fleishauer; K-2nd taught by

Mrs. Lopresto and 3rd-6th taught by Mrs. Koontz. There are signs located outside of each classroom.

Youth Group (7th – 12th)- Join Janine Nicolette in the Youth Room as she will present Children & Teen Study.

Adult Bible Class-

- **Adult Book of the Bible Study-** Join Cooper Blake for an adult book bible study on Proverbs.
- **Adult Topical Study:** Join Mike Fiffik in Fellowship Hall for Junk Drawer Jesus study. Each of us is the owner of a seemingly random collection of theologies, doctrines, and superstitions—a junk drawer of religious ideas and influences.
 - It's the witticisms your grandmother tossed around with ease that sounded like they came from a religious text
 - It's the mental screenshot of a meme shared on social media.
 - It's the empowering idea you underlined in a book and wrote on a Post-it Note now forever affixed to your laptop.

These are the things stuffed in our spiritual junk drawers because something in us says, "This might be useful." And so we hold on. But should we? In *Junk Drawer Jesus*, the spiritually exhausted are invited to examine our religious clutter and compare it to the person and the promises of Jesus Christ. We'll discover what—if anything—of our spiritual collection should be kept.

Prayer and Praise: We are meeting this Wednesday at 10am for Prayer & Praise! We meet in the Fireside Room at church or we have an online option via Zoom. The link is sent in the Weekly Reminder email. If you have questions or need prayer, please contact Bob Booth at 808-295-1835.

New Members needed for Praise Team – With the departure of some of our long-time Praise Team members we need some new people to help serve the worship of the congregation on Sundays. Please prayerfully consider joining our Praise Team! If you have any questions, please contact Lisa or Emily Marcellus.

Board of Stewardship- We are currently looking for someone to fill the Head of the Board of Stewardship. The Board of Stewardship's main objective is to

initiate programs of good stewardship attitudes amongst the Congregation members regarding their time, talents, and treasures. This can include, but not limited to recognizing members for their stewardship, annual pledges, training opportunities, and assistance with finding ministry opportunities. If you feel called to serve in this role, please contact Pastor Thompson, pastor@ascensionpgh.com or Beth Gard, president@ascensionpgh.com

Christmas Pageant Team Needed: Will Ascension continue to have a children's Christmas pageant? If yes, a team of members is needed. Costumes, scripts, and operations instructions are available and organized, as is help from the Music Director. If you are interested, please let Janeen Daftary know. A team of 2-3 members must be in place by September 20 in order for a 2026 pageant to take place.

Eden Christian Academy- Come out and support our own Hannah Koontz on clarinet at the Eden Christian Academy Upper School's Fine Arts Night **this Monday**, May 4th beginning at 6:30 pm with the art show and band concert following from 7 to 7:45 pm. The Fine Arts Night will be held at Eden Christian Academy Upper School Campus, Field House, 318 Nicholson Road, Sewickley.

Annual Plant Sale: The annual plant sale will be held **today**. Cheryl Saffa is very busy growing the vegetables and flowers. She will be offering several types of tomatoes, cukes, zucchini, peppers, parsley, and basil that she says is "so stinkin' cute." There will be various colors of vincas, too. All the money goes to the church.

Speaker Series: We are so excited to tell you about the Speaker's Program being held on **Wednesday, May 20** at 6:30 pm. It will be presented by Jeff Wissner, Town of McCandless Fire Marshal, and will be a fire safety class. We will be **giving Fire Blankets** to the first of you that sign up and ultimately attend. The limit will be one blanket per church family. We aren't absolutely sure how many we can get with our Thrivent grant so be one of the first to sign up. It will be on a first-come-first-serve basis. We welcome friends, family, and neighbors.

Ladies' Bible Study- Ladies' Bible Study scheduled for Saturday, May 9th is canceled. To be announced when it will resume in the fall.

PALM Bible Study – PALM's is hosting a regional bible study for our LCMS churches once a month. This month we will be hosting it at our church here at Ascension. The study is from 7-8:30 this Friday, May 8th.

Ascension Pirates Game & Tailgate: Join us for our annual baseball outing on Sunday, June 28 vs the Cincinnati Reds! We'll head to PNC Park after church and gather in the parking lot for some tailgating before the 1:35 PM game. Tickets: \$38 each (includes a \$5 food/drink voucher. Parking Passes: Approximately \$25. If you are interested in attending, please provide your interest on the signup sheet located under the Connect Board in the Narthex or let Tim Mayes know directly no later than **Monday, May 11th**. Please reach out to Tim with any questions (814-659-5630).

Paving Project: The paving project will start on Monday, May 18th.

Baby Bottle Campaign: Ascension's yearly BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN begins this Sunday, through the end of May. Please see enclosed folder for details on the project. The bottles are available to you in the Narthex. If you have questions, please see Cheryl Sedar, 412-400-4392.

This week at Ascension Lutheran Church:

Sunday 05/03	Divine Service Plant Sale Christian Education Hour	9:30 AM 11:00 AM 11:00 AM
Monday	Pleasant Valley Shelter Meal	5:00-7:00 PM
Tuesday	Outreach Committee Meeting	1:00 PM
Wednesday	Prayer & Praise Clayton Mees Funeral Service	10:00 AM 11:00 AM
Friday	PALM Bible Study	7:00 PM
Sunday 05/10	Divine Service Christian Education Hour	9:30 AM 11:00 AM