



300 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457

*A Congregation of the New England Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Pastor
The Rev. Cathy S. Rohrs

Minister of Music
Mijin Choi

Office Administrator
Robin Aldieri

May 10, 2020

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ: our way, our truth, our life.

Overview

The words of today's gospel are most often heard during a funeral service. It is a popular choice of scripture for that occasion because the words provide wonderful assurance that the one who has died in Christ has now taken up residence in their heavenly home. The gospel begins by Jesus saying that he will prepare a place for each one of us. But as the text continues, we can see that our place is not an isolated room of our own in a giant heavenly mansion. Jesus' words are less about a place than a relationship: our relationship with Jesus and God the Father. They tell us that in Jesus we know all we need to know about God, and just as we can have a relationship with another human person, we can also have a relationship with God that will one day be as real and obvious as are our relationships with one another. The hope of one day being with Christ fully and forever is as real as the works we are called to do in his name today.

This text allows us the opportunity to contemplate what is ultimately unknowable, yet is also a central part of our faith: what heaven will be like.

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 Washington Street
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

Pastor, The Rev. Cathy S. Rohrs Minister of Music, Mijin Choi

May 10, 2020 The Fifth Sunday of Easter

P Presiding Minister **A** Assisting Minister **C** Congregation

Welcome! Peace be with you. While the world is addressing the COVID 19 pandemic, keep your focus on God our Father in heaven who will never leave you nor forsake you. Please do not take any unnecessary risks and wash your hands before you leave your house, when you enter your house, after using the rest room, after touching your face, after touching someone else. Sanitizing your phone is a good idea also. When you feel afraid pray this prayer: "When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you, Lord." (Psalm 56:3)

If you would like to receive Faith Lutheran Church's monthly newsletters, email the church office at churchoffice@faithelcamiddletown.org. If you would like to join our Zoom online worship services, please email the church office or call us at 860-347-6068 and leave your name and phone number and we will contact you.

For pastoral emergencies, please text or call Pastor Cathy Rohrs (pronounced "roars") at 717-321-6799.

May God bless you and keep you.

ASSISTING MINISTER: Faith Twining
LITURGY ASSISTANT: Elizabeth Rohrs
SOLOIST: Robert Cinnante
ZOOM HOST: Steve McDermott

Prelude

Welcome & Greeting

Gathering Hymn: "I know That My Redeemer Lives" ELW #619 v 1-4

- 1 I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
he lives, my ever-living head!
- 2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
he lives eternally to save;
he lives exalted, throned above;
he lives to rule his church in love.
- 3 He lives to grant me rich supply;
he lives to guide me with his eye;
he lives to comfort me when faint;
he lives to hear my soul's complaint.
- 4 He lives to silence all my fears;
he lives to wipe away my tears;
he lives to calm my troubled heart;
he lives all blessings to impart.

Text: Samuel Medley, 1738-1799, alt.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are raised with him to new life.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

P We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning you created us in your image
and planted us in a well-watered garden.
In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched,
and you gave us water from the rock.

When we did not know the way,
you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.
At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side,
and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.
We praise you for your salvation through water,
for the water in the font,
and for all water everywhere.

Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.
Satisfy the thirsty, and give us the life only you can give.
To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

Kyrie

"In peace, let us pray..." ELW pg. 138

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

Hymn of Praise

“Glory to God...” ELW pg., 213

Refrain



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est;



glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

1 Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Refrain



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est;



glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the



right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

Refrain



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est;



glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

3 For you a-lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir-it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Final refrain



Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est;



glo-ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo-ple on



earth, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

Prayer of the Day

☐ Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

☑ Amen.

First Reading: Acts 7:55-60

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

⁵⁵Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶"Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

☐ Word of God, word of life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

¹In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

²**Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

⁴**Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, for you are my tower of strength.**

⁵Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

¹⁵**My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

¹⁶Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Christ is the cornerstone of God's saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God's chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.

²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

⁷To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," ⁸and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." 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, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts 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.

☐ Word of God, word of life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Gospel: John 14:1-14

☐ The Holy Gospel according to John, the Fourteenth Chapter.



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.

On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. 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, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place 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 know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” ⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? 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; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

- ☐ Here ends the Gospel.
- ☑ Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day: “*Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing*” ELW #389

- 1 Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.
- 2 Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching ev’ry place and time.
- 3 In ev’ry insult, rift, and war,
where color, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.
- 4 Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.
- 5 Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936
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We Offer To God

Apostles Creed

C I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.

The Prayers of the Church

P In these days of both sorrow and joy, we are uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection. We join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A Build us up, mothering God, as living stones united in your spiritual house. Continually strengthen your church as it is sent forth to proclaim your love in a fearful world. We pray especially for new congregations and those in redevelopment. Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.

A Humble us, creator God, as part of your creation. Fill us with respect and awe for the world you have made, including viruses, volcanoes, ocean temperatures, tropical rainstorms, glaciers, and other forces that both destroy and create. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Align our ways to your love, O God. We pray for countries, leaders, and other organizations as they prepare places for those seeking refuge and safety from the coronavirus pandemic. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A God of healing and rest, help those whose hearts are heavy and weighed down by many troubles *especially*... Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Nurturing God, we pray for those who tend and teach young children, for the safe pregnancies of expectant parents, and for families who struggle with infertility and miscarriage. We give thanks for all who have shown mothering care, and we remember all for whom this day is difficult. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Generous God, you call into your brilliant light all who have died, *especially*... Give us faith to take hold of the promise of your eternal life. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

Sharing the Peace

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

Offering

Opportunities for giving: Please put your offering in our *locked mailbox*, mail your offering to the church, give from your *online banking* app, or use our church *website* www.faithelcamiddletown.org to donate by clicking on the “donate here” button.

Musical Offering *Solo* Robert Cinnante

Offering Song: *“I’m So Glad Jesus Lifted Me”* ELW #860

- 1 I’m so glad Jesus lifted me.
I’m so glad Jesus lifted me.
I’m so glad Jesus lifted me,
singing glory, hallelujah! Jesus lifted me.
- 2 Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me.
Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me.
Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,
singing glory, hallelujah! Jesus lifted me.
- 3 When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me.
When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me.
When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
singing glory, hallelujah! Jesus lifted me.

Text: African American spiritual

The Offering Prayer

A Let us pray.
Generous God,
you feed us with the harvest of the land,
and you provide for our every need.
Receive our gifts of money, imagination, and labor,
and transform them into a feast that welcomes all,
in Jesus Christ, our host and our guest.
C Amen.

Thanksgiving for the Word

- P** Let us pray.
Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,
C we give you thanks and praise.
- P** By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you.
For your Word of life, O God,
C we give you thanks and praise.
- P** Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of our self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,
C we give you thanks and praise.
- P** Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; though Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.
C Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Sending

Benediction

☞ May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing.
Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

☞ **Amen.**

Announcements

Closing Hymn: “*I know That My Redeemer Lives*” ELW #619 v 5-8

- 5 He lives to bless me with his love;
he lives to plead for me above;
he lives my hungry soul to feed;
he lives to help in time of need.
- 6 He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
he lives and loves me to the end;
he lives, and while he lives, I'll sing;
he lives, my prophet, priest, and king!
- 7 He lives and grants me daily breath;
he lives, and I shall conquer death;
he lives my mansion to prepare;
he lives to bring me safely there.
- 8 He lives, all glory to his name!
He lives, my Savior, still the same;
what joy this blest assurance gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives!

Text: Samuel Medley, 1738-1799, alt.

Dismissal

- ☞ Go in peace. Remember the poor.
- ☞ **Thanks be to God.**

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PREPARING FOR NEXT SUNDAY, May 17, 2020

ASSISTING MINISTER: TBD
LITURGY ASSISTANT: Elizabeth Rohrs
SOLOIST: Robert Cinnante
ZOOM HOST: Steve McDermott

Lessons & Psalm

Acts 17:22-31
(Paul's message to the Athenians)
Psalm 66:8-20
(Bless our God, you peoples; let the sound of praise be heard)
1 Peter 3:13-22
(The days of Noah, a sign of baptism)
John 14:15-21
(Christ our advocate)

UPCOMING EVENTS

(*events are presented via Zoom)

Sunday, May 10	9:00 a.m.	Worship*
Monday, May 11	7:30 p.m.	AA*
Wednesday, May 13	6:00 p.m.	WTW To Go
Friday, May 15	7:30 p.m.	AA*
	10:00 p.m.	Until the Wheels Fall Off NA*
Saturday, May 16	5:30 p.m.	Basically Lit NA*
Sunday, May 17	9:00 a.m.	Worship*

Prayer Requests

Worshippers are encouraged to speak the names of loved ones in need of prayer during the Prayer of the Church. You are also encouraged to remember all the following in your prayers. Names can be added to the prayer list by informing the church office once permission has been received from the person being added to the prayer list. O Lord, hear our prayers!

Mission Partners: Genesis Lutheran Church in Bridgeport, CT and Salem Lutheran Church in Flint, MI.

Mission Supporters: Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, New England Synod Bishop James Hazelwood, Director of Evangelical Mission Kim Bergstrand, and Associate to the Bishop Mark Winzler.

Church Council: Donna Barney (Secretary); Ellen Cassidy; Margaret D'Aquila; Mark Diehl (Assistant Treasurer); Heather Karpe; Lee Kozlowski (Vice President); Tom Kugeman (Treasurer); Steve McDermott (President); Pastor Cathy S. Rohrs; Bill Tacke (Financial Secretary); and John Twining.

Prayer Team: Donna Barney, Margaret D'Aquila, Sue Girard, Janet Hayn; Liz Helbig, Heather Karpe, Rick Karpe, Carolyn Krenz, Tom Kugeman and Janet Wright.

Health Issues: Beverly Radziwon, David Gionfriddo; Fred Rau; Rich Radziwon; Earl Woike; and Giulio Giuffrida as well as our fellow Americans residing in Flint, MI who are still living with inadequate water quality, our NA and AA attendees, ACES families, and the people of United Pentecostal Church.

Life issues: The family and friends of Rich Radziwan, Beverly Pitkin, Ruth Anderson, Stephanie Wagar, Anthony Matthews, Winnie May, Ed Blasco, Joseph McDermott, Archie Smith, David Albanese, Megan Brancifort.

Please remember Faith Lutheran Church in your estate and funeral donation planning.

Purpose of Faith Lutheran Church

God's purpose for our new church is to unite unconditionally, sharing God's love through our growing faith and mission with everyone in the name of Jesus Christ.

Guiding Principles of Faith Lutheran Church

- Committed to serve*
- Forward thinking, future oriented*
- Welcoming*
- Guided by faith*
- Fun, relevant, cool—a place people want to be*

Our Church's Strategic Direction

*Addressing Hunger in Middletown;
Sharing Knowledge;
Serving & Empowering Youth & Seniors;
How? Coordinating assets in our Community to meet needs;
and Communicating about resources & events.*

Contact Information

Website: www.faiithelcamiddletown.org

Church Phone: (860) 347-6068

Church Email: churchoffice@faiithelcamiddletown.org

The Rev. Cathy S. Rohrs, Pastor

Please call or text Pastor Rohrs - cell phone: (717) 321-6799 or

email: pastorcathyrohrs@gmail.com