

# THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

## ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II — 10:15 A.M.  
SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026

### THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*Welcome to St. John's! We are glad you have joined us today. Everything you need is in this leaflet or the blue Hymnal 1982 found in the pew. We invite you to prepare for worship in silent prayer during the prelude, and we encourage you to participate throughout this liturgy in singing the hymns and service music and saying the portions in bold type. Prompts are provided for you to stand, sit, or kneel where appropriate and as you are able.*

**Prelude**      O Welt, ich muss dich lassen, Op. 122, No. 11      Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

**Welcome and Announcements**, *seated*

*All rise at the sound of the bell.*

**Hymn 518**      "Christ is made the sure foundation"      *Westminster Abbey*

**Opening Acclamation**

*Celebrant*      Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*People*      **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: 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 Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Glory to God S-278**      *Gloria in excelsis*

W. Mathias

1. Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and  
peace to his peo - ple on earth.      2. Lord God, heaven - ly King, al -  
might - y God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we  
praise you for your glo - ry.      3. Lord Je - sus Christ,  
on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,      Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you  
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;  
5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -

ceive our prayer. 6. For  
 you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,  
 7. you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the  
 Ho-ly Spi-rit, in the glo-ry of  
 God the Fa-ther. A-men.

### The Collect of the Day

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you  
*People* **And also with you.**  
*Celebrant* Let us pray.

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

*You may be seated.*

### The First Lesson: Acts 7:55-60

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then 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. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then 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.

*Lector* The Word of God for the people of God.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16** *In te, Domine, speravi*  
*Sung by the choir*

J. Barnby (1838–1896)

- 1 In 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.

3 Be 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.  
5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, \*  
for you have redeemed me,  
O Lord, O God of truth.  
15 My times are in your hand; \*  
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,  
and from those who persecute me.  
16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, \*  
and in your loving-kindness save me.

**The Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:2-10**

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

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like 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. For 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.”

To 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”,

and

“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.

But 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.

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.

*Lector* The Word of God for the people of God.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## Refrain

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Choral Verse: "I give you a new command-ment, says the Lord:\*  
love one another as I have loved you."*

## The Holy Gospel: John 14:1-14

*Celebrant* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.  
*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In 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? And 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. And you know the way to the place 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 know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus 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'? 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; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe 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. Very 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. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

*Celebrant* The Gospel of the Lord.  
*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## The Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Elaine Ellis Thomas

*Silence for reflection.*

The Nicene Creed, *standing as able*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### Prayers of the People

#### *Celebrant*

Jesus Christ is risen indeed. In the glorious light of the resurrection, let us bring our prayers before the Risen One whose deepest desire is that all might know the transforming power of God's love.

#### *Intercessor*

God of Love: All creation sings your praise this day. Bless this world and all that dwells in it. We give thanks for the many gifts you have showered on us, especially eternal life in the mighty resurrection of your Son. Risen Christ, **hear our prayer.**

God of Truth: The Church Universal sings with joy this Eastertide. Be with all who lead in your Church: vestries and lay ministers; our Presiding Bishop, Sean; our bishops, Jeff and Laura; Elaine, our priest; and all who serve in your name. Risen Christ, **hear our prayer.**

God of Justice: Shed your wisdom on this nation and its leaders, the state of Connecticut and all who govern it, and this community and all who seek to create a better world. Risen Christ, **hear our prayer.**

God of Mercy: The sick and sorrowful followed Jesus in search of healing. We pray for all who suffer from illness in body, mind, or spirit, especially those we now name aloud or in the silence of our hearts (*the people may add their own intercessions*). Risen Christ, **hear our prayer.**

God of Life: In the sure and certain hope of the resurrection, we pray for those who have died and whom we see no more, especially those we now name aloud or in the silence of our hearts (*the people may add their own intercessions*). Risen Christ, **hear our prayer.**

#### *Celebrant*

For all these things as well as those prayers we have no words to pray, we come before you, risen Christ. To you we offer praise eternal: **Alleluia, alleluia! Amen.**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,  
 heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The people may remain standing or you may kneel or sit as is your preference.*

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Celebrant and People*

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*The Celebrant continues*

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world.

Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, forever and ever.



*Celebrant* And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

**The Lord's Prayer, said by all**

**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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

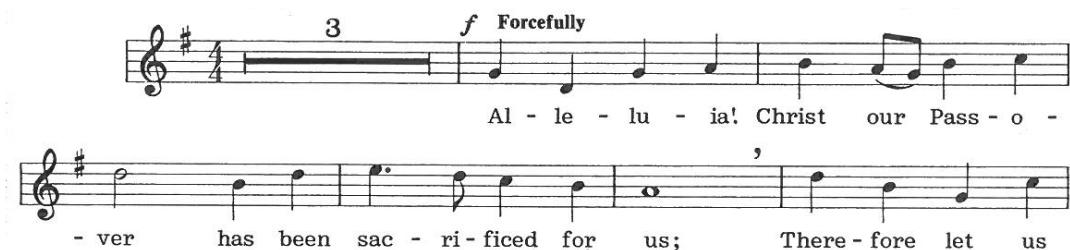
**The Breaking of the Bread**

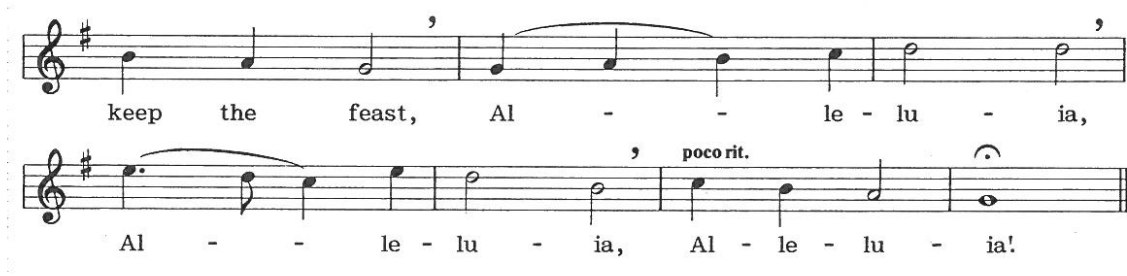
*A period of silence is kept.*

**Fraction Anthem**

*Alleluia! Christ our Passover*

J. Rickard (b. 1942)





**The Invitation to Communion**

*Celebrant*      The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

*All are welcome at God’s table no matter where you are in your walk with Christ. If you need gluten-free bread, simply ask the priest. If you prefer to receive a blessing, indicate that by crossing your hands over your chest when you come to the altar rail. The first chalice following the bread is for you to drink the wine. The second is if you choose to dip (or intinct) the wafer in the wine. If you are unable to come forward for any reason, ask an usher or someone nearby to request that communion be brought to you.*

**Hymn 487**                                      “Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life”                                      *The Call*

**Prayer after Communion, standing as able**

*Celebrant*      Let us pray.

**God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

**The Blessing**

**Hymn 457**                                      “Thou art the Way, to thee alone”                                      *St. James*

**The Dismissal**

*Celebrant*      Alleluia, alleluia. Go in peace to love and serve the Risen Lord.  
*People*            **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Postlude**                                      Voluntary                                      William Boyce (1711–1779)

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*The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in celebration of the birthdays of her children, Chelsea and Christopher, by Stephanie Patterson.*

## St. John's Prayer List

*Holding each other's joys, sorrows, and concerns before God in prayer is a spiritual practice that characterizes our life together at St. John's. In our worship services, we pray each other's prayers together. Outside of our time together many parishioners make it part of their daily lives to pray the prayers of the parish community. You are invited to participate in your own way.*

### Thanks be to God

**for the gift of eternal life** in the resurrection of our Lord;  
**for the Rev. Rachel Field** and her enthusiasm in promoting creation justice;  
**for the baptism last Sunday** of Wyatt Sampson;  
**for the promise of spring**;  
**for those discerning a call** to serve this community more deeply;  
**for all the blessings of our lives**, and for the faith, fellowship, and ministries of this parish;

### Your prayers are requested

**for an end to the war in Iran**;  
**for a path to sustained peace** in Israel, Palestine, Russia, and Ukraine;  
**for an end** to political and hate-fueled violence in our public spaces;  
**for the elected leaders of the United States** that they will govern with wisdom, compassion, and concern for the poor and outcast;  
**for lasting peace to come** to areas of violence in our world, especially Sudan, Nigeria, and Congo;  
**for an end to gun violence in this country** and the courage for each of us to work toward that;  
**for all LGBTQI+ people** who face bias and violence each and every day;  
**for members and friends of the parish** who are sick, sorrowful, or in any kind of trouble, including Eileen Aiken, Ed Birch, Reginald Brulotte, Jinny Buracchi, Connie Cliffe, JoAnne Connor, Bea Comstock, Tony Custodio, Evelyn, Sherley Furgueson, Nancy Gould, Robert Henry, Ethel, Julia, and Jim Gribbins, Hazel, Erin Kraten, Dorothy Rider, Leona Savoie, Dione Solan, Gary Young, Jean Shaw, Tim Thomas;

*Please note that any names on the prayer list will remain for a period of one month. At the end of each calendar month, the list will be cleared. If you would like to continue to have a name on the list, please contact the office after the first of the month.*

**for the Episcopal Church in Connecticut**, including St. Peter's Grace, Monroe; St. Mark's, Mystic; St. Michael's, Naugatuck;  
**for the Anglican Communion**, including the Church of North India.

### We commend to God's never-failing care

**those who have died**, remembering especially the civilians and military personnel who have died this week in Iran; the dead in the ongoing violence in Sudan, Congo, Ukraine, Russia, Israel, and Gaza; in gun violence around this country; those who are dying in climate-related disasters; immigrants who have died seeking a better life; and for U.S. civilians and service personnel who have died in the line of duty;

**and all whom we love but see no more.**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**Today: St. John's Socials** will kickoff with a celebratory **reception today from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.** in the Parish Hall. If you signed up, we look forward to seeing you there!

**Tomorrow:** Join us at **Essex Meadows on Monday at 11:00 a.m.** for Holy Eucharist with Pastor Elaine as celebrant and preacher.

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### **Tuesday: Bible Studies and Midday Eucharist**

**Morning Bible study** continues on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. with Part 4 of our Mark series covering chapters 8 & 9. Please bring a bible and your questions!

**Holy Eucharist** is also on Tuesday at 11:15 a.m. in the chancel (choir area) of the church.

**Evening Bible Study** continues this week at 5:30 p.m. with a discussion about "The Rapture."

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**Friday, May 8:** Calling all friends with or without green thumbs! Heavenly Helpers will be gathering on Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. to do some light gardening to "spiff up" our lovely church grounds as we continue this season of flowers and buds and weeds. Please bring any gardening tools you have, and a willingness to get "down and dirty," in the literal sense!

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**Next Sunday: Second Sundays at St. John's at 4:30 p.m.** in the Undercroft.

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**Ascension Day Eucharist, Thursday, May 14:** Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven. The Church marks this day with a major feast day. Join us for Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m.

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### **Altar Flowers**

If you would like to offer flowers on the altar for a particular date or occasion, there is a sign-up poster in the Parish Hall that lists the available dates. You may select an open date and confirm with the Parish Office the name or names in whose memory or in thanksgiving that you want to appear in the Sunday leaflets.

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### **Westbrook Food Pantry Needs**

Please continue to bring non-perishable food items for our neighbors at the Westbrook Food Pantry. Donations are collected each Sunday after morning services.

For the next two weeks we will be collecting **Canned Fruits and Vegetables.**

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**Bill's Blessings:** This week we are collecting **Personal Care Wipes.**  
Next week we will collect **Shaving Cream.**

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**CLERGY & PARISH STAFF**

The Rev. Dr. Elaine Ellis Thomas, *Rector*  
elaine@stjohnsessex.org / 860.767.8095 x.12

Anthony Pandolfe Jr., *Director of Music & Organist*  
anthony@stjohnsessex.org / 860.767.8095 x.17

Meghan Wrinn, *Parish Administrator*  
meghan@stjohnsessex.org/860.767.8095

Manuel Matute, *Sexton*

Dayle Larson, *Bookkeeper*

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**VOLUNTEER MINISTRY LEADERS**

Mary Bowers, *Bill's Blessings & Soup Kitchen Ministry*

Ernie Brainard, *Candle Master*

Marlene Going, *Weekly Food Collection*

Nancy Haslam, *Prayer Shawl Ministry*

Sandy Loether, *Newcomers Committee*

Jennifer Miller, *Meal Ministry*

Stephanie Patterson, *Altar Guild*

Peggy Tuttle, *Pastoral Care Card Ministry*

Kevin Walsh, *Mission and Justice Committee*

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**VOLUNTEER PROFESSIONALS**

Clio Coles, *Assistant Treasurer*

John Rogers, *Treasurer*

treasurer@stjohnsessex.org

Bill Scharfenstein, *Building and Grounds*

Charlie Walden, *Investment Oversight Committee*

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**VESTRY** Wesley Henry, *Warden*; Jan Perruccio, *Warden*; Peter Holland, *Vestry Secretary*;  
John Rogers, *Treasurer*; Lois Blood Bennett, Linda Board, Tony Custodio, Leigh  
Dorrington, Pam duPont, Chip Goodrich, Donna Moeller, Jane Riggio, Kevin Walsh

**WORSHIP**

**SUNDAYS** | Holy Eucharist — 8:00 & 10:15 a.m.

**TUESDAYS** | Bible Study — 10:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

**TUESDAYS** | Midweek Holy Eucharist — 11:15 a.m.

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

3 Cross Street, / (P.O. Box 422) Essex, CT 06426

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