



Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

1187 C.R. 128 & U.S. Rt. 20

Fremont, Ohio 43420

Pastor Tim Miller

Church: 419-332-6820

faithchurch@amplex.net

www.faithfremont.org

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 25, 2025

Setting 3 with Holy Communion

*Congregation please stand as you are able.

Introduction

Visions abound in the readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter. Paul has a vision about what to do. John has a vision of what will be. Jesus provides visions of peace that surpasses human understanding and power beyond human imagination.

(8:00) Prelude:

Sacred Mountain

S. Lanier

(10:30) Prelude:

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

John Barr

Welcome & Announcements: Joys and Concerns

Signing of the Pew Register by all present.

***Invitation to Worship**

P: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

C: and also with you.

P: This is the day that the Lord has made

C: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

P: We have come together in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world, and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may give ourselves to the service of God.

C: Amen.

P: Blessed is the Lord

C: for he has heard the voice of our prayer.

P: Therefore, our hearts dance for joy

C: and in our song will we praise our God.

P: Blessed are you, Lord our God, creator and redeemer of all;
To you be glory and praise forever. From the waters of chaos, you
drew forth the world and in your great love fashioned us in your
image. Now, through the deep waters of death, you have brought your
people to new birth by raising your Son to life in triumph. May Christ
your light ever dawn in our hearts as we offer you our sacrifice of
thanks and praise. Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C: Blessed be God forever.

P: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your
presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and
forever.

C: Amen.

(Above liturgy from "Unfolding The Living Work" by Jim Cotter)

***(8:00) Gathering Song:** *Be Unto Your Name*

**We are a moment, you are forever.
Lord of the ages, God before time.
We are a vapor, You are eternal.
Love everlasting reigning on high.**

Chorus:

**Holy, holy Lord God Almighty.
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.
Highest praises, honor, and glory
Be unto your name. Be unto your name.**

**We are the broken, You are the healer.
Jesus, Redeemer, mighty to save.
You are the love song we'll sing forever.
Bowing before you blessing your name. *Chorus***

***(10:30) Gathering Song:** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*
ELW 834

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***Thanksgiving for Baptism**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

P: In the name of ✝ the One
who was, who is, and who is to come.

C: Amen.

P: Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection,
and called to live the baptized life,
let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Water may be poured before or during the thanksgiving.

P: Holy God,
we give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that make a people your own,
that restore to wholeness,
and empower us to be witnesses in your name.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C: make us one as you are one.

P: We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that strengthen believers
and give new life to beloved servants of your church;
waters that extend your boundless love
and cross barriers of our own making.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C: make us one as you are one.

P: We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that open the hearts of believers
and give a voice in the night to those in captivity;
waters that set your people on a new path,
rejoicing in the Spirit's power.
Baptized into you, O Living One,

C: make us one as you are one.

P: Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living One,
that our every day is shaped by these waters
that give us our very lives in you.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One.

C: Amen.

***Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray.

C: Bountiful God, you gather your people into your realm, and you promise us food from your tree of life. Nourish us with your word, that empowered by your Spirit we may love one another and the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading:

Acts 16:9-15

A vision compels Paul to move his ministry into Greece. There he meets Lydia, an important person in the business community, whose heart has been opened by God to receive the gospel. Her conversion and baptism provide the impetus for the founding of the church at Philippi.

R: A reading from Acts, the 16th chapter.

⁹ During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

¹⁰ When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

¹¹ We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. ¹³ On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

- ¹ May God be merciful to us and bless us;
may the light of God's face shine upon us.
- ² **Let your way be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.**
- ³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
- ⁴ **Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide all the nations
on earth.**
- ⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
- ⁶ **The earth has brought forth its increase;
God, our own God, has blessed us.**
- ⁷ May God give us blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe.

Second Reading:**Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5**

John's vision of a new Jerusalem coming out of heaven provides continuity with God's past actions. Yet in this new city, God's presence replaces the temple, and the glory of God and the Lamb supplants sun and moon.

R: A reading from Revelation, the 21st and 22nd chapters.

¹⁰ And in the spirit [one of the angels] carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

²² I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵ Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶ People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷ But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

^{22:1} Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of

life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴ they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation:** *Lord, Be Glorified*

In my life, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;

In my life, Lord, be glorified today.

***Gospel**

John 14:23-29

As Jesus talks of returning to the Father, he promises to send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will teach Jesus' followers and remind them of all that Jesus taught. Even more, those in whom God makes a home will experience a peace that overcomes fear.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 14th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: ²³ Jesus answered [Judas (not Iscariot),] “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵ “I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I am coming to you.’ If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

*Sermon Hymn:

You Servants of God

ELW 825

*Nicene Creed

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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

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,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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 Intercession**

R: God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

R: Unite your people with communities of faith throughout the world. Further cooperation between people of different faith traditions and bless our non-Christian neighbors, that we learn and grow in deeper relationship. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Bless the earth with fresh water, clean air, and rich soil. Nurture growing crops and encourage communities developing sustainable farming practices. Help us to live in balance and harmony with your good creation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Reconcile nations and communities suffering from violence and conflict. Protect refugees, asylum-seekers, and all who flee their homes seeking safety and security. Make all nations safe for both migrants and residents. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Sustain all who are in need, especially individuals and families struggling with trauma or addiction. Support caregivers, especially nurses, doctors, counselors, and social workers. Come alongside all who are ill or struggling, *especially those we name at this time (Pause for people to be named)*. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: This Memorial Day weekend, we remember all who have died in military service. Soothe loved ones who mourn, and strengthen support systems for veterans and their families. Bring peace among nations, that war and conflict around the world might cease. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: We give you thanks for all your saints raised to new life in Christ. Gather us, with them, into the peace only you can give. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

C: Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

(10:30) Sr. Choir:

Kindle Our Love

P. Taylor

*Offertory

We Are an Offering

We lift our voices,

We lift our hands.

We lift our lives up to You,

We are an offering, we are an offering.

Lord use our voices, Lord use our hands,

Lord use our lives, They are yours,

We are an offering.

*Offering Prayer

P: Risen One,

you have gathered us around your table of grace
along with these gifts we bring.

Come among us again,

breathe your life into us,

and enliven us with this meal,

that we may live as your risen body in the world.

C: Amen.

*The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;
who in dying has destroyed death,
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

***Thanksgiving at the Table**

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.

P: With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us. Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God, blessed and
holy Trinity, now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Lord's Prayer

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.**

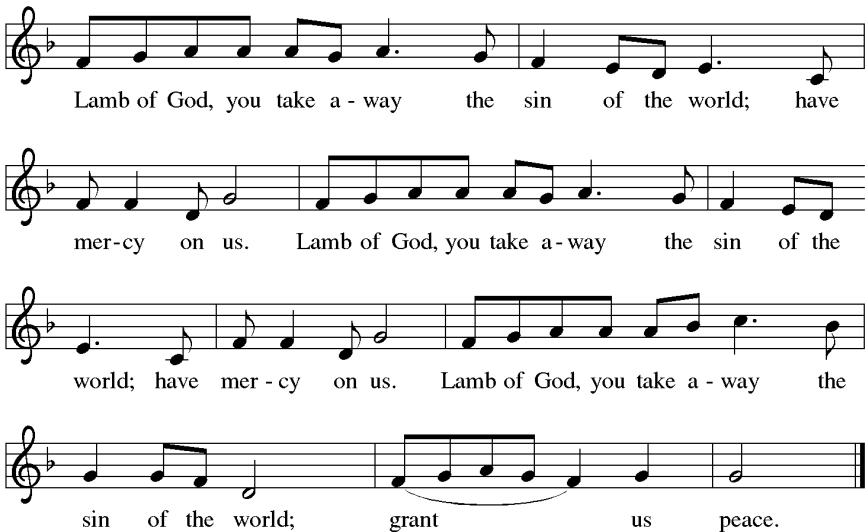
**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

P: Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

Lamb of God



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.

Distribution of Communion

Communion will be continuous. The ushers will invite you to come forward by the center aisle. You will be handed the bread with the words, "The Body of Christ given for you." You may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God!". Step to the Communion Assistant and take the cup. They will speak the words, "The Blood of Christ shed for you." You may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God!" Empty cups may be placed in the basket as you return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you prefer gluten- free bread, please let the Pastor know. If you prefer grape juice, please let the Communion Assistant know. If you prefer not to receive or have children who have not yet received, please let the Pastor know and he will offer a blessing.

(8:00) Flute Solo: *Jesus, Name Above All Names* **Nadia Hearn**

Communion Hymns:

(10:30) ELW 815 *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

(10:30) ELW 807 *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

***Post Communion Blessing**

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

***Prayer After Communion**

P: Living One,
in this feast you have made yourself known to us.
Send us now to tell of your wonders,
sing of your glory,
and proclaim your risen life
to a wounded and weary world.

C: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***Blessing**

P: The triune God,
who was, who is, and who is to come,
Sovereign, ✚ Savior, and Spirit,
light your way with resurrection dawn,
now and always.

C: Amen.

(10:30) Sr. Choir:

Go Now in Peace

D. Besig

***(8:00) Sending Song:** *We Are Marching in the Light of God*

TBOB 232

***(10:30) Sending Song:** *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* **ELW 756**

***Dismissal**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Go in peace. In Christ you are made new.

C: Thanks be to God.

***(8:00) Postlude:** *We Are Marching in the Light of God*

***(10:30) Postlude:** *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* **Charles J. Frost**

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JESUS SAYS: “PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU; MY PEACE I GIVE TO YOU. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid” (John 14:27, NRSV).

SAVE THE DATE OF JUNE 28, 2025 FOR THE NEXT WOMEN'S OUTING.

We will tour the Historic Lyme Village in Bellevue and have lunch at The Twin Lakes Golf Course Restaurant, also in Bellevue. Watch for more details in the weeks ahead! All are welcome!

YOU ARE INVITED to help us celebrate Erik Garlock’s graduation from Vanguard Technology Center and Fremont Ross High School. He will be finishing his Associates Degree in Computer Systems this year at Terra Community College. Please join us for the party on Saturday, June 7th, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Garlock Residence, 1714 Baker Rd., Fremont, Ohio.

THRIVENT ACTION TEAM IN ACTION – Our Saturday Christ Care group recently had a \$250 grant proposal approved and invite anyone interested to join us in making no-sew fleece quilts for children who find themselves in foster care. During what can be an uncertain, scary time for youngsters we hope that we can offer them a little love and comfort, and a little coziness in which they can curl up on. Attached to each quilt will be a tag that reads, “As you wrap yourself in this ‘fleecey’ we pray that you will also feel wrapped in God’s love”. We’ll be purchasing the fleece at a huge discount through Joann Fabrics and will be able to make approximately 40 quilts. Needless to say, your help would be greatly appreciated. See Noelle Leutenegger if you are interested in this ministry of love.



Kenna Lee Tooman will be graduating High School on June 1, 2025. We are so very proud of her accomplishments throughout her high school career. Kenna is a 2-year National Honors Society member and also participates in Leadership and Link which has given her many opportunities to volunteer for our community. Along with Kenna’s Academic and Volunteer accomplishments she is also a 3-sport student athlete. Upon graduation Kenna plans to attend The Ohio State University studying Pre-Dentistry.

Erik Garlock, son of Matthew & Miranda Garlock is graduating from Vanguard Technology Center and Fremont Ross High School. He will be finishing his Associates Degree in Computer Systems this year at Terra Community College.

Lily Jane Kaminski, daughter of Jane and Robert Kaminski is graduating from the Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, FL. She plans to attend the University of Florida to study film and TV production. She is the granddaughter of Parm Boyer.



Reese Smith, daughter of Ryan and Jamie Smith, will be graduating first in her class from Fremont Ross with her Associates degree from Terra State Community College. Reese will be going to Tiffin University in the fall for allied health/occupational therapy. Reese will continue to compete on the track and field team with the Tiffin Dragons.

Peyton Heschel, son of JR Heschel (and wife Amy) and Liz Heschel (and Steve Day), will be graduating from Fremont Ross with his Associates degree from Terra State Community College. Peyton will be going to Tiffin University in the fall for accounting and will continue to compete on the track and field team with the Tiffin Dragons.

Peyton Olivia Brothers, daughter of Julie & Dr. Mike Brothers and granddaughter of Larry & Teri Hinline, will graduate June 1, 2025 from Tuscarawas Valley High School. Peyton will attend Stark State College in the fall for a degree as a Physical Therapy Assistant.

Jacob Lawrence Ridener, son of Sara & Jim Ridener and grandson of Larry & Teri Hinline, will graduate from Oak Harbor High School on May 18, 2025. Jacob will be attending Owens Community College in the fall for two years, then transferring to Bowling Green State University to obtain a degree in Business.

Carson David Ridener, son of Sara & Jim Ridener and grandson of Larry & Teri Hinline, will graduate from Oak Harbor High School on May 18, 2025. Carson will also be attending Owens Community College in the fall for two years, then transferring to Bowling Green State University. His major is undecided at this time.

Isaac Brian Ridener, son of Sara & Jim Ridener and grandson of Larry & Teri Hinline, will graduate from Oak Harbor High School on May 18, 2025. Isaac will attend ATI in Wooster for Ag Business.

THE YOUTH & GROWTH COMMITTEE is in need of a Sunday School Teacher for the 1st thru 3rd grade class. Thank you.

WE WOULD LIKE TO ENHANCE OUR WORSHIP SERVICES with more musical talent. If anyone would like to share their talents, especially any of our youth, please let us know.

LIFT OUTDOOR WORSHIP Mark your calendar! LIFT Outdoor Worship Sunday, June 29th at 10am. More information coming soon.



SUMMER MUSIC: Make a joyful noise to the Lord! Please consider sharing your gifts of worshipful song through vocal or instrumental music at our 9 am worship service beginning June 2nd. You may contact Darla Brown at 419-680-6717 or Parm Boyer at 419-307-1332 if an accompanist is needed. There is a sign-up sheet on the board in the coat room area.



SUMMER WORSHIP: BEGINNING JUNE 1ST
THROUGH AUGUST 31ST: Worship will be at **9 a.m.** **only** with Sunday School and Fellowship time to follow.



ASSISTING TODAY

Preaching: Rev. Dane Meuschke

Organist: Parm Boyer **Pianist:** Becky Fox

Sr. Choir Director: Darla Brown **Flautist:** Marilyn Ring

8:00 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

Greeter: Kim Smith Paul Antesberger & Cindy Zorn

Lector: Jackie Seibert Miranda Garlock

Acolyte: Karly Paeth

Communion: K. Smith/J. Seibert P. Antesberger & M. Reiselt

Counters: Marie Reiselt* & Judi Neill

Fellowship Time Host:

Altar Guild: Margie Roach and Marie Reiselt

ASSISTING NEXT WEEK

Pastor: Rev. Tim Miller **Pianist:** Becky Fox **Flautist:** Marilyn Ring

9:00 a.m.

Greeter: Jonathan Hetrick

Lector: Marie Reiselt

Acolyte: Karly Paeth

Communion: Randy Koch & Darla Brown

Counters: Dave Kocsis* & Nicole Weiker

Fellowship Time Host:

Altar Guild: Cheryl Durnwald & Carol Trick

PRAYING DAILY



For healing and hope: Joan Bolen, Mary Ann Diekman, Millie Fetterman, Della Humbarger, Denny Krumnow, Bill Leutenegger, Stan Moyer, Nancy Mylander, Betty Nielsen, Gary Overmyer, Ken & Gloria Root, Letty Rusch, Bob Schneider, Bill Seibert, Janet Tressler, Linda Woessner. Bob Methney, Molly Witker.

For the Family of: Carnetta Weber.

For our Military: Noah Egbert, Troy Halfhill, Jade Kayser, Daniel Linder, Tony Rozzi, Christopher Templeton, & Joshua Tooman.

For our Bishops: Bishop Christian Ndossa, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and NWOS Bishop Daniel Beaudoin and Staff

For our partner congregation in Bumila, Tanzania

And its pastor: Pastor Peter Magasi

FAITH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK OF – May 25 to June 1st

Sunday **PASTOR TIM ON VACATION**

May 25-----8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School & Fellowship Time

Monday

May 26-----9 a.m. Men's Group in Fellowship Hall

Tuesday

May 27-----7:00 p.m. Esther Circle – Sermon on the Mount #7

Wednesday

May 28-----

Thursday

May 29----- 3 p.m. Christ Care

Friday

May 30-----

Saturday

May 31-----9:15 a.m. Christ Care

Sunday

June 1-----9 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
 10 a.m. Sunday School & Fellowship Time

SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2025: ATTENDANCE: 131 – OFFERING: \$2,944.52
NOISY OFFERING, SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2025: \$171.25

GOSPEL MESSAGE

May 25, 2025
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Graduating in Faith

This is a season of celebration—in the church, to be sure, but also in the lives of families who eagerly anticipate graduation ceremonies. Graduations can happen at any time of life, either in the formal sense or in the many informal ways humans commemorate transitions into new phases of life. For many of us, however, May and June are Graduation Central, with all the excited hoopla that implies.

When a child graduates from a school or program, parents face the bittersweet transition of letting go. The high school senior may leave home for college, the military, or independent employment; the college graduate may head off toward the myriad adventures of adulthood. Even the newly minted preschool alum eagerly anticipates the broader fields of big-kid school and greater independence.

Amid the excitement, pride, fear, and uncertainty, those who have cared for these loved ones—parents, mentors, teachers, and others—hope their voices will travel with the grads. Remember, child, what we have taught you. Remember who you are. Remember *whose* you are.

How fitting, then, that at this time of year the church reminds itself that God feels the same way about us. God wants the voice of the Spirit to travel with us. God sends us the Advocate—one who will stay with us even when Jesus physically returns to his Parent. In baptism, we have graduated into lives in Christ that may take us to unpredictable places. In this world of uncertainty, however, we trust that, as Jesus assures us, we need not be troubled or afraid. The One who reminds us who we are, and *whose* we are, is always with us.