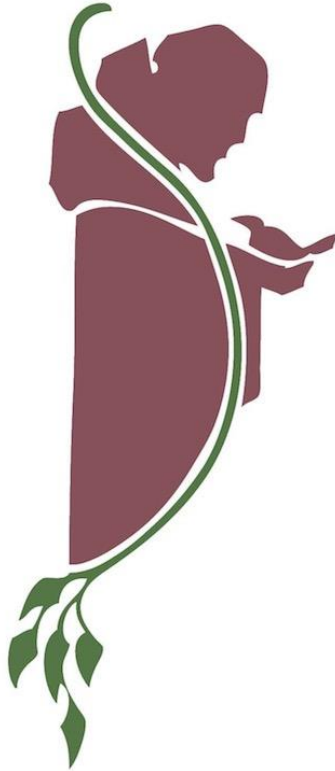


# The Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2026



*We seek to be instruments of God's peace, bearing witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ for all people.*

## ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ministers: Every member of the Congregation



**Welcome** in the name of the living Christ to St. Francis Church! May you find renewed grace and peace as we worship together today. St. Francis is an Episcopal Church, part of the wider ministry of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. If you are visiting with us today, please help us get to know you by introducing yourself at the door, and also by signing our guest book or filling out a pew card. *Please be sure to include an email address if you wish to be added to our mailing list.*

Please remember to take your cell phone or electronic device off silent mode at the end of worship.

You are invited to enter in reverence and awe of God's presence in this holy place. Before the liturgy begins we commend the keeping of silence as a time for prayer and reflection.

The fifty days of Easter provide us with an opportunity to renew ourselves to the Baptismal Covenant and awaken to the presence of God's Holy Spirit in our lives. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus we pray that Christ will be revealed to us "on the Way."

*All baptized persons – regardless of denomination or age – are invited to receive the sacrament with us. All are welcome to the Table; even if you choose to not receive, you may wish to receive a blessing. Gluten-free bread is provided for those who request it; please be in touch with one of the clergy or ushers to make this request.*

### **ABOUT OUR WORSHIP:**

The liturgy that we use for worship is from the red Book of Common Prayer (**BCP**). **Bold** print is to be spoken by the people of God.

At 10:00 a.m. our hymns and service music is from the blue Hymnal found in the book racks in the pews. Numbers that begin with an S- are in the front of the Hymnal.

**HOLY EUCHARIST – RITE II**

**THE WORD OF GOD**

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.

*Come, ye faithful, raise the strain*

**Hymnal 199**

**EASTER ACCLAMATION AND COLLECT FOR PURITY**

**BCP 355**

Alleluia. Christ is Risen.

**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.**

**GLORIA:** 8:00 a.m. *spoken*

**BCP 356**

10:00 a.m. *sung*

**Hymnal S-280**

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**COLLECT OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

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.**

*Please be seated.*

**FIRST READING: 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.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 31:1-5, 15-16**

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.

**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.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SEQUENCE HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.

*Father, we praise thee*

**Hymnal 1**

**GOSPEL:** *John 14:1-14*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ**

**SERMON:**

The Rev. Laura Goodwin

**THE NICENE CREED**

**BCP 358**

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 - FORM IV**

**BCP 388**

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

...for Miguelina, our Bishop, for Sean, our Presiding Bishop; for the community of St. Francis; and for all ministers and people.

... for The Church of North India (United); for the parish of St. Mark's, Leominster; for the mission of Greater Worcester Habitat for Humanity;

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

...for Donald, our President and Maura, our Governor;

... for all Federal and State employees, for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families, especially J. Pigsley, Gregory Smith, Jason Haynes, Mark Williams, Jacob Pezzini, Tyler Jeck, David Lane, Riley Smith, James Cimochoowski, Sam Richenburg;

...for peace throughout the world; for the victims of war and terrorism, for the people of Ukraine and Afghanistan, for peace in Sudan, Yemen, and the region of the Middle East; and for those facing famine and drought in Somalia and the Horn of Africa;

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

...for those in our Parish Cycle of Prayer: Deborah Harris; Loretta Haynes; Joy, Thomas, Thomson and Aila Head; Steve and Barbara Henning;

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation. We pray especially for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, those in prison, and for those in need of healing: Rich, Eric Warner, Kathleen Lloyd Jones, Jack, John Dougherty, Paul Stanovich, Tom, Bev, Judy Crosby, Brenda, Hilda Schinsing, Judy Capone, Mary Lee and Bob Kraushaar, Jen Gadowski, Jeanette, James Kelly, Carmelita Bello, Andrea McDonald, Mary Mullahy, Kathy Vogel, Richard, Donna Giuliani, Angela Favulli, Patrick Kelly, Priscilla Morris, Maryann Bello, Mark, Lisa, Abigail Runstrom, Diana, Jane, Nancy, Andi, Alicia LaBove, Jim Emard, Christina, Harry Schrefer, Matthew Parenteau, Brook, Leslie Rosario; those suffering from homelessness and all types of addiction and mental illness; the residents and staff of Holden Nursing Home; and those who mourn;

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your mercy all who have died, especially, Ricardo Rosario and Dolores Wellington, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and that they may share with Francis, Clare and all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God in loving memory and thanksgiving for the life and ministry of The Rev. Karen B. Safstrom by her St. Francis family.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

*Celebrant adds a final collect.*

**THE PEACE**

**BCP 360**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THE HOLY COMMUNION**

**OFFERTORY HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.      *Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life*

**Hymnal 487**

**OFFERTORY PRESENTATION AND DOXOLOGY**

8:00 a.m.    *All things come of thee, O Lord. **And of Thine own have we given thee.***

10:00 a.m.

Tune: Hymnal 380

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;***

***Praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Amen.***

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING:** *Eucharistic Prayer B*

**BCP 367**

*Celebrant*    The Lord be with you.

*People*      ***And also with you.***

*Celebrant*    Lift up your hearts.

*People*      ***We lift them to the Lord.***

*Celebrant*    Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People*      ***It is right to give God thanks and praise.***

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every where to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

*Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.*

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**SANCTUS**

**8:00 a.m. (spoken)**

**10:00 a.m. (sung)**

**Hymnal S-130**

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.***

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

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

After supper he 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 shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death,**

**We proclaim his resurrection,**

**We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with Francis, Clare, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

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

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**BCP 364**

**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.**

**FRACTION ANTHEM:**

8:00 a.m. Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

10:00 a.m. Agnus Dei **Hymnal S-164**

**COMMUNION HYMN:** 10:00 a.m. *For the bread which you have broken* **Hymnal 341**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** **BCP 365**

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**EASTER BLESSING**

**RECESSIONAL HYMN:** 10:00 a.m. *Christ is made the sure foundation* **Hymnal 518**

## THE DISMISSAL

BCP 366

Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, Alleluia.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

### **SERVERS THIS WEEKEND:**

Altar Guild: Dave Lucas, Mike Reno, Carolyn Schmidt

Nursing Home: Karen Kappes

#### 8:00 a.m.

Reader/LEM: Dick Delorme

#### 10:00 a.m.

Ushers: Cindy Foley and Sara Studley

Reader: Kathy Dixon

LEMs: Susan Dresley, Linda Shelton

Coffee Hour: The Dixons

We welcome The Rev. Laura Goodwin and thank her for being with us today.

# St. Francis Episcopal Church



Bearing Witness  
to  
Christ's Love

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