



Church of the Hills  
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Fifth Sunday of Easter

“Stephen’s Final Prayer”

Psalm 31:1-5; 15-16

Acts 7:55-60

Pastor Richard Aylor

May 3, 2026

***We are a vibrant family of faith rooted in God’s Word, gathering together to worship and equipped to share the love of Christ in the world.***



**\*\*Invitation to Confession**

Sue Brown

Leader: Whoever believes in Christ will not be put to shame. Confident in this promise, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

**\*\*Prayer of Confession**

**Almighty God, your word offers freedom from sin, but we confess that we have not obeyed your word. We have harbored malice toward our enemies; we have been deceitful in our relationships; we have been insincere in our commitments; through gossip we have slandered our friends. Forgive us our sins and lead us to genuine repentance. Help your children long for your pure, spiritual milk that we may grow into the joy of salvation through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**\*\* Declaration of Forgiveness and the Peace of Christ**

Leader: Sisters and brothers, 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.

**People: In the name of Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And, also with you.**

Leader: Share the Peace of Christ with one another.

**\*\*Response to Forgiveness**

“We Are Forgiven”

Purple Hymnal 447

We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God.  
Thanks be to God. We are forgiven.  
We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

(Repeat)

## Prayer for Illumination

Leader: Please join me in the Prayer for Illumination.

All: **Lord, as we listen to your holy Word, open our hearts to the power of your Spirit, call us out of darkness, and lead us into your marvelous light. Amen.**

## Old Testament Reading

Psalm 31:1-5; 15-16

<sup>1</sup> In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;  
do not let me ever be put to shame;  
in your righteousness deliver me.  
<sup>2</sup> Incline your ear to me;  
rescue me speedily.  
Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a strong fortress to save me.  
<sup>3</sup> You are indeed my rock and my fortress;  
for your name's sake lead me and guide me;  
<sup>4</sup> take me out of the net that is hidden for me,  
for you are my refuge.  
<sup>5</sup> Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.  
  
<sup>15</sup> My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.  
<sup>16</sup> Let your face shine upon your servant;  
save me in your steadfast love.

## Ministry of Music

“Meditation from Thais”

by Massenet

## New Testament Reading

Acts 7:55-60

<sup>55</sup> But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> “Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” <sup>57</sup> But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. <sup>58</sup> 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. <sup>59</sup> While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” <sup>60</sup> 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.

**Sermon**

“Stephen’s Final Prayer”

**\*\*Response to Sermon** “Dear Lord and Father of Mankind” Purple Hymnal 169 (v. 1, 2, 4, 5)

Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish  
ways; reclothe us in our rightful mind, in  
purer lives thy service find, in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard beside the Syrian  
sea the gracious calling of the Lord, let  
us, like them, without a word rise up and follow thee.

Drop thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings  
cease; take from our souls the strain and stress, and  
let our ordered lives confess the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire thy coolness and thy  
balm; let sense be dumb, let flesh retire; speak  
through the earthquake, wind, and fire, O still small voice of calm!

**Invitation to the Offering and Prayer of Dedication**

**\*\*Doxology**

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

Purple Hymnal 525 (v. 1)

Let us break bread together on our knees; (on our knees)  
let us break bread together on our knees. (On our knees)

**(Refrain)**

**When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)**

## The Eucharist

### Invitation to the Lord's Table

#### Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.....**

Therefore, with creation we sing your praise (purple 552):

**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. Hosanna in the highest.**

Great is the mystery of faith (purple 553):  
**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.  
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen**

**Amen. Amen. Amen.** (purple 554):

And now let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

#### Words of Institution

**Distribution of the Elements (Gluten-free elements are available)**

## Special Music during Communion

“It Is Well With My Soul”  
“Near to the Heart of God”

## For Reflection and Meditation:

The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen.

## Prayer after Communion

**All: Loving God, you have given us a share in the one bread and the one cup and made us one with Christ. Help us to bring your salvation and joy to all the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## \*\*Closing Hymn

“How Firm a Foundation” Purple Hymnal 463 (v. 1, 2, 3, 5)

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in God’s excellent Word!  
What more can be said than to you God hath said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,  
for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;  
I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.”

“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.”

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I’ll never, no never, no, never forsake.”

## **\*\*Charge and Blessing**

Leader: And the people of God say

**People: Alleluia. Amen.**

## **Postlude**

“Awesome God”

*Please join us for Fellowship Time in the Narthex immediately following the Worship Service. To all of our visitors, you are welcome to join us, and we look forward to getting to know you during this time.*

## **For Pastoral Care:**

Please contact Pastor Richard at 303-828-8263

## **A General Note regarding Financial Solicitations:**

Please remember that a church leader will never directly solicit you for funds or the transfer of funds. We will only ask for your support of the church through the traditional process of filling out pledge cards and fulfilling that pledge accordingly.

## **Office Hours:**

The Church Office is open Tuesday – Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (aside from staff lunch hours). Friday from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

## **Deadlines:**

**The deadline for all Church Communication Publications and notifications is Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.**

**Additionally, please provide advance notice for any special projects you may have, so that time can be accurately allocated, supplies ordered, and quality and fairness can be provided for all parties concerned.**

**Please be aware that any items received after the deadline will go into the following week's communication publications and job tasks.**

**Church Officers:**

Pastor – Richard Aylor  
Office Administrator – Peggy Farnham (and Toby)  
Director of Music –  
Finance Administrator – Tom Maxey  
Trustee Permanent Endowment Fund – Neil Snyder  
Treasurer – Jerry Bucholz  
Clerk of Session – Judy Jensen

Elder at Large – Bob McFadden  
Elder – Worship – Shari Gulbrandsen  
Elder – Stewardship – Alan Lebsock  
Elder – Love in Action – Vicki Kyle  
Elder – Christian Education – Heidi Smithson  
Elder – Personnel – Michael Marks  
Elder – Nominating – Margi Masquelier  
Elder – Administration – Tom Scripps  
Elder - Communications – Shari Gulbrandsen  
Elder – Building & Grounds – John O'Brien

Deacons:

Marilyn Sandifer  
Dianne Lebsock  
Marjorie Clinton

Cherie Braun  
Kelly Selva  
Cindy Sahli

A special thank you to Chase Allbritton for helping with the tech.

\*Hymnals are indicated for those that may have them at home.

Blue - "The Presbyterian Hymnal"  
Red - "Songs for Praise and Worship"  
Purple - "Glory to God"  
Yellow - "Hymns for the Family of God"

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Liturgy and reflections are provided by Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 Advent through Pentecost

\*\* Please stand if you are able