

Jesus had to make it all very plain. There are serious things to consider when we confess that Jesus is The Way, The Truth, The Life. The Way is through the cross. When we follow Jesus our way is ensured to be one of suffering. We are told these things, so that we understand our suffering. Jesus is the only truth. There are no others whom we are able to believe in for salvation. This is both a blessing and a curse. Jesus is The Life, He is the first fruits of the Resurrection. He holds us to Himself and breaths into us the Holy Spirit to pass us from life to life. For every piece of our life, for every question we could ask, Jesus is the answer.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who sent Your Son into the world, not to be ministered to, but to minister and give His life as a ransom for many. You raised Him by Your glory when He had offered the one sacrifice for sin forever. We ask that You would give us a sure faith in Him, that we may possess the blessed hope of eternal life.

O Father of Lights, for all spiritual and intellectual illumination and for the Revelation of Your divine truth in Jesus Christ, we thank You. Grant that all who are of the truth may come to Him. Pour out on us Your Spirit, that He may, through the engrafted Word, guide us into all truth by making known the mysteries of Your will, the unchangeable purpose for the raising of fallen man, and the pure and perfect doctrines that pertain to our eternal salvation.

Anoint Your Church, O God, with the Holy Spirit and with power, and manifest Your presence to all who live in this vineyard as the branches growing on the life of Jesus Christ, that in worship and work we may proclaim Your Word and testify that You are the One God of the universe and Jesus is the One Lord of our way, of our truth and of our life.

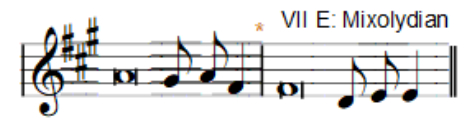
Send Your Word into the far reaches of the Earth, to all people wherever they may be, that they may know Christ's power over sin and hell and His victory over the grave. Let Your Spirit dwell in each home, that love and tranquility, joy and consolation may reign. Be with any who have trouble, care or sorrow. Endow them with the joy and peace of a pure faith, the quietness and confidence of a true love, and the blessed hope of a heavenly rest.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (Time of silent prayer.) Help us receive Your gifts with gratitude, hear our prayers, grant us Your grace, and finally receive us into everlasting communion with You; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

© Amen.

EASTER FIVE

Chant Tone



<p>Introit Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a — new song,* His praise in the assembly of the — godly!</p> <p>I will extol You, O Lord, for You have drawn me up* and have not let my foes rejoice — over me. O Lord my God, I cried to You for help,* and You have — healed me. O Lord, You have brought up my soul from Sheol;* You restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.</p>	<p>Sing praises to the Lord, O you His saints,* and give thanks to His holy name. For His anger is but for a — moment,* and His favor is for a — lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night,* but joy comes with the — morning.</p> <p>Glory be to the Father and to the Son* and to the Holy — Spirit; as it was in the be — ginning,* is now, and will be forever. — Amen.</p> <p>Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a — new song,* His praise in the assembly of the — godly!</p> <p><i>(Antiphon, Psalm 149:1; Psalm 30:1-5)</i></p>
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Collect of the Day

O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You promise, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual

Christ has risen | from the dead*
God the Father has crowned Him with glory and — honor,
You have given him dominion over the works | of your hands;*
you have put all things un | der His feet.
(Adapted from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6)

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ENTRANCE PRAYER: O Lord God, our Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, we Your children in Christ Jesus, come before You with hearts filled with gratitude and praise. We thank You that You established in Your Son, The Way, The Truth and The Life. We now know that there is no other path to salvation except through Jesus, You made Him to be the stone which was rejected by the leaders of the world, but which has become the cornerstone of our faith and life. Help us now, to show forth our life in Jesus, and that everything we do or say, declares that we are in Him as He is in You. We find this Way in the truth of Your Word. Make us to be content in the blessedness of this knowledge. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

IN THE WEEKS BETWEEN EASTER AND PENTECOST THE LESSONS EMPHASIZE THAT JESUS IS THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY AND THE ONE WHO WAS EXPECTED BY THE WORLD.

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life through Whom the Father has made Himself known to the world. Everything Jesus did was in conformity with the promises and purposes of God as proclaimed in Scripture with the message that no one comes to the Father except through the Son. We are delighted that you have been called out by the Son to worship the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. The blending together of our voices into the song of responsive praise is a wonder of permission from God to enter into His Holy presence. We thank everyone for being with us in worship.

THEME OF THE DAY:

The Way, The Truth and The Life

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 149:1) Psalm 30:1-5

Psalm 149 was written by David when Jerusalem was taken and established as the City of God. For our purpose we sing the new song of salvation in Jesus. Psalm 30 was written by David for the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem. In combination we sing the praises of our Messiah, Who as God-with-us is our faith and life.

COLLECT

The things of the world are constantly in change. We ask in this prayer that among all those changes we would find people in the church who are of one mind with us, and that we would always live in the truth of Jesus.

FIRST LESSON—Acts 6:1-9; 7:2a, 51-60

I am not a big fan of chopping up the scripture lesson, but we wanted to explain why Stephen was an Apostle. Stephen got a late start, as an Apostle, yet he fully understood the service and suffering for God he would endure. We have the martyrdom of Stephen. He explained to the Jews that the temple, and service in the temple would end. It would be to the glory of God that worship would be done in spirit and in truth which is established through Jesus, the Messiah. The people who taught that their salvation was tied to a building (the temple) and a city, (Jerusalem) found Stephen's Word-of-salvation, to be words of death and destruction. They had to kill him as they had killed Jesus.

GRADUAL—Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7, Psalm 8:6

This is quite the compilation of Scripture. It is a statement of the Resurrection followed by the glory and honor given to Christ by our Father.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 Peter 2:2-10

Peter was writing to the aliens and exiles, slaves, wives and others who have little power. In the face of unrelenting persecution Christians can feel vulnerable and begin to question their faith. Peter reminds us all that we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood. Jesus called us out to be His chosen. Our value and worth far exceeds our status in life. Our text today is the grand, opening doxology. Across the Sundays until Pentecost we read almost the entire letter of First Peter.

GOSPEL LESSON—John 14:1-14

Jesus was delivering some continuing discourse on the suffering and death of the Christ. Jesus was going to His Father's house to prepare a place, "for you!" He promised to come and take them (us) to join Him. Peter had previously asked Jesus where He was going. Thomas (remember him?) got lost in the metaphor and started to ask the same questions.