



IN MY
**FATHER'S
HOUSE**

THERE ARE MANY
**DWELLING
PLACES**

JOHN 14:2

FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Fifth Sunday of Easter ✠ May 3, 2026

*Indicates for the congregation to stand if you are able.

Congregation responses are printed in **bold print**.

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS and PRELUDE

THANKSGIVING OF BAPTISM

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us.

Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.** Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.** Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever. **Amen**

*HYMN "God Himself Is Present" P. 249

*PRAYER OF THE DAY Spoken in unison.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

*HYMN OF PRAISE "Praise to the Father"
Praise to the Father for his loving kindness, Tenderly caring for his erring children; Praise him, all angels; praise him in the Heaven; Praise to the Father!

FIRST READING Acts 7:55-60

⁵⁵ Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ 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. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ 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, 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 Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."

SECOND READING 1 Peter 2:2-10

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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." ⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," ⁸ 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. ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ 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.**

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² 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? ³ 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. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." ⁹ 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'? ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. ¹² 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. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

CHILDREN'S & CONGREGATIONAL MESSAGE, Pastor Barry Spatz.

HYMN "Just as I Am, without One Plea" P. 296

***PRAYERS** Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

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**

(Spoken)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

With joy we praise you, gracious God, **for you have created heaven and earth, made us in your image, and kept covenant with us—even when we fell into sin. We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord, who by his glorious resurrection overcame the power of sin and gave us new life. Therefore, we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim the glory of your name.**

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY"

(Spoken)

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.

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

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.

COMMUNION

***COMMUNION PRAYER**

Almighty God, **you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his, through the same Jesus Christ our risen Savior. Amen.**

***BLESSING**

***SENDING HYMN** "Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing" vs 1-4

P. 363

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Postlude

Website: [HTTPS://www.thefriedenslutheran.com](https://www.thefriedenslutheran.com)

Church e-mail: friedenslutheran4@gmail.com

Designated Pastor: Pastor Lee A. Diefenderfer, 1295 Red Dale Road,
Orwigsburg, PA 17961, 610-858-4136

Council President: Ed Tietsworth, (570) 292-1061

Worship time – 10:30 AM

Calendar

Today, Pastor Barry Spatz, Holy Communion.

May 10, Damaris Merwine.

May 17, Pastor Barry Spatz.

May 24, Pastor Linda Bonfilio.

May 31, James Kimmel.

Announcements

5/6/2026 – Worship & Music, 5 PM.

5/11/2026 – Ascension Day Service, 7:00 PM. The service will be hosted at Valley View Church of God. Pastor Mark Rothermel will give the message.

5/13/2026 – Council Meeting, 6 PM.

5/27/2026 – Baccalaureate services will be held at Trinity Lutheran at 7:00 PM. Pastor Suzanne Elliott will provide the message.

5/31/2026 – Last day of Sunday School. See you in the fall.

5/31/2026 – Recognition of 2026 Graduates.

6/1/2026 – Scholarship applications are due.

Prayer Corner

Rick Herring; David Merwine; Terry Schwartz; Saralynn Grantz

Linda, Lee & Jared Kiefer; Robert Lettick; Elaine Carter; Deb Barry.

Today's Leaders - Service, Pastor Barry Spatz, with Holy Communion Lector, Damaris Merwine Lay Assistant, Julie Klinger Head Usher, Dave Henninger Ushers, Michael Allvord, Scott Allvoard, Mike Deiter Greeters, Janet & Ron Radel.

Flowers – In honor of Mom's Birthday by Jess & Dave.

Bulletin – In loving memory of my buddy, Faye Deiter, by Ruth.

Volunteers 5/10/2026 – Service, Damaris Merwine Lector, Damaris Merwine Counters, Ann Miller & Vicki Troutman Head Usher, Dave Henninger Ushers, Mike Deiter, Rick Herring, Ed Hornung Greeters, AJ Kine, Ann Miller.

Dedication

Today is the dedication of two Communion purificators as a memorial to Kathryn Otto for her numerous years of service on the Altar Guild Committee.

Mother Daughter Banquet

WELCA Mother Daughter Banquet will be held on Saturday, May 9th at 11:00 AM, with brunch and entertainment (Amanda Ludwig).

Please reach out to Christy Leiter and Ann Miller for tickets.

Summer Bible School

Friedens's Bible School will be held from June 15th – 19th, 6:00 – 8:30 PM. **Vacation Bible is for children ages 3 to those students who have completed 6th grade.** The Bible School program will be on Sunday, June 21, 2026, 10:30 AM. Please join our youth as they showcase what they have learned during the week.

Love, Love, Love

That's what it's all about! Jesus loves.

Jesus' love is a constant in scripture. From his humble birth to his teachings, parables, healing miracles, feeding of the multitudes, power over creation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus loves.

Some people wanted the Messiah to take a much different approach. They thought their savior would come as a strong military leader, but Jesus did not start a violent overthrow of the Roman Empire. He just could not and would not do anything in conflict with love. He gave himself up and loved until the very end. In his last breath on the cross, he forgave everyone involved in crucifying him. This is the depth of the amazing love of God shown to us in Christ Jesus.

Stephen, “a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5), strove to live as Jesus lived and to love as Jesus loved. As he was being stoned to death, Stephen shouted, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” (7:60).

Following Jesus was not easy for Stephen and other early Christians. It is not easy today. But in today's gospel reading, Jesus assures his followers—then and now—of three things. First, the great doors to a place with God will be open to us, in a house with many rooms. Second, he is the way, truth, and life, and by knowing him, we come to know God the Father. Third, we can ask him for anything. These are promises of Jesus' continuing care for us, for people of every time and place, and for all creation.

Jesus loves.