

# Third Sunday of Easter

April 18, 2021

**Theme:** Stephen was called to serve the widows and to proclaim the radical words of justice and peace to a weary and unjust world. It cost him his life, but the effects of his words still have positive effects on people today.

## PRELUDE

### CALL OF WORSHIP

What kind of house shall we make for you, God?

**One built with human hands,**

When heaven is your throne

**And earth your footstool?**

Our creator's hands have made everything—

**Let us praise almighty God!**

### GATHERING SONG

*Amazing Love*

**My Lord, what love is this that pays so dearly, that I, the guilty one, may go free?**

**REFRAIN: Amazing love, oh, what sacrifice, the Son of God giv'n for me;  
my debt he pays and my death he dies, that I might live, that I might live.**

**And so they watched him die, despised, rejected;  
but, oh, the blood he shed flowed for me. REFRAIN**

**And now this love of Christ shall flow like rivers;  
come, wash your guilt away, live again. REFRAIN**

### GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: **God of might, Your messengers' words were not always well received, but they were full of your truth. Give us courage to speak out in the face of injustice and opposition, confident that you will strengthen us by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen**

### FIRST READING

Acts 6:1-7; 7:44-60

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### GOSPEL

Luke 23:33-34a, 44-46

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**  
The reading concludes: The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

### SERMON

#### SERMON HYMN

*Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*

#335

**Jesus, keep me near the cross, there's a precious fountain;  
free to all, a healing stream flows from Calv'ry's mountain.**

**REFRAIN: In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river**

**Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;  
there the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me. REFRAIN**

**Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;  
help me walk from day to day with its shadow o'er me. REFRAIN**

**Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,  
till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river. REFRAIN**

## **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. God of Wisdom, **Hear our prayer**

Incline your ear to our prayers and fill us with power to begin living out our faith, by the power of your Son our savior, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

## **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.**

## **BENEDICTION**

You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. **Amen.**

## **SENDING HYMN**

*Shine, Jesus Shine*

#671

**REFRAIN: Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory:**

**Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.**

**Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!**

**Lord, the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness, shining;  
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth you now bring us.  
Shine on me, shine on me: REFRAIN**

**As we gaze on your kingly brightness, so our faces display your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory, mirrored here, may our lives tell your story.  
Shine on me, shine on me: REFRAIN**

## **DISMISSAL**

**Alleluia! Christ is risen! Go in peace to hare the good news and stay safe and be safe!  
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

## **POSTLUDE**