November 8,2026

The Service

For 75 years, stones have been specially stacked on this corner, not just to sit here, but to Lift High The Cross and show off Jesus as our Good Shepherd. We get to do the same thing, except better! We're living stones built on the Living Stone; we're raised to praise!

In Our World Today ... we love to cheer our teams; we love to tell people how great our teams are, and what big fans we are. And when we cheer and tell people how great our teams are, we can feel so fulfilled.

In Our Worship Today ... we find a greater fulfillment, a higher calling and purpose than cheering and praising a sports team - we have been raised to praise the God who has called us out of darkness into his wonderful light! As the people of God, we get to bring light to our world!

The Greek letters IHS on the face of our altar stand for Jes, an abreviation of Jesus. The quatrefoil (four leaves) around the IHS is an ancient symbol that has special meaning for us as Christians. We see Jesus at the center of a cross, a cross for the four corners of the world.



Hymn: Holy God, We Praise Your Name *CW 953*

1 Holy God, we praise your name;
Lord of all, we bow before you.
All on earth your scepter claim;
all in heav'n above adore you.
Infinite your vast domain,
everlasting is your reign.

2 Hark! The glad celestial hymn
angel choirs above are raising;
cherubim and seraphim,
in unceasing chorus praising,
fill the heav'ns with sweet accord:
"Holy, holy, holy Lord!"

3 All apostles join the strain
as your sacred name they hallow;
prophets swell the glad refrain,
and the white-robed martyrs follow,
and from morn to set of sun
through the Church the song goes on.

4 You are King of glory, Christ,
Son of God, yet born of Mary,
for us sinners sacrificed,
on the cross our sins did carry;
first to break the bars of death,
you have opened heav'n to faith.

5 Holy Father, holy Son,
Holy Spirit, three we name you,
though in essence only one,
undivided God we claim you,
and, adoring, bend the knee
while we own the mystery.

Opening Sentences

O Lord, open my lips.
And my mouth shall declare your praise.

Hasten to save me, O God.
O Lord, come quickly to help me.

We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.
Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.
Amen.

Give glory to God, our light and our life.
Come, O come, let us worship.

Come, O Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord

Ref Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,
let us shout with joy to our saving Rock;
come, enter in with our songs of praise,
come, enter in with thanksgiving.

1 You are a great and a wondrous God,
cupping in your hands all the depths of earth.
You made the hills and the mountains high,
you made the seas and the dry land. (Refrain)

2 Come, let us worship and, bowing low,
kneel before the One who has made us all.
You are the God whom we call our own,
we are the flock that you shepherd. (Refrain)

First Reading *Ephesians 2:1–10*

[1]You were dead in your trespasses and sins, [2] in which you formerly walked when you followed the ways of this present world. You were following the ruler of the domain of the air, the spirit now at work in the people who disobey.
[3] Formerly, we all lived among them in the passions of our sinful flesh, as we carried out the desires of the sinful flesh and its thoughts. Like all the others, we were by nature objects of God's wrath.
[4] But God, because he is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in trespasses. It is by grace you have been saved! [6] He also raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. [7] He did this so that, in the coming ages, he might demonstrate the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— [9] not by works, so that no one can boast.
[10] For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance so that we would walk in them.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children Sing “Cornerstone”

(Verse 1)
My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus' name.

My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus' name.

(Chorus)
Christ alone. Cornerstone.
Weak made strong in the Savior's love.
Through the storm, He is Lord.
Lord of all.

(Verse 2)
When darkness seems to hide His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.
My anchor holds within the veil.

(Chorus)
Christ alone. Cornerstone.
Weak made strong in the Savior's love.
Through the storm, He is Lord.
Lord of all.

(Verse 3)
When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found.
Dressed in His righteousness alone.
Faultless to stand before the throne.

(Chorus)
Christ alone. Cornerstone.
Weak made strong in the Savior's love.
Through the storm, He is Lord.
Lord of all!

Second Reading *1 Peter 2:4–10*

4 As you come to him, the Living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and
precious, 5 you also, like living stones, are being built as a spiritual house to be a holy
priesthood, in order to bring spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus
Christ. 6 For it says in Scripture:

See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who believes in him will certainly not be put to shame.[a]
7 Therefore, for you who believe, this is an honor. But for those who do not believe:
The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,[b]
8 and,
a stone over which they stumble
and a rock over which they fall.[c]
Because they continue to disobey the word, they stumble over it. And that is the
consequence appointed for them.
9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the people who are
God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of
darkness into his marvelous light. 10 At one time you were not a people, but now you are
the people of God. At one time you were not shown mercy, but now you have been
shown mercy.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation *1 Peter 2:9*

Alleluia! 9 You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the people who are God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Alleluia!

Gospel *Matthew 5:13–16*

13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its flavor, how will it become salty
again? Then it is no good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by
people. 14 You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden.
15 People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket. No, they put it on a stand, and it
gives light to all who are in the house. 16 In the same way let your light shine in people's
presence, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn: We Are Called to Stand Together *CW 903 sts. 1–3, 5*

Sermon ***1 Peter 2:4-10***

Hymn: Church of God, Elect and Glorious ***CW 854***

Offering

If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.

Choir Sings

"It Is No Secret"
by Stuart Hamblen
accompanied by Meredith Fein, violin

1. The chimes of time ring out the news, another day is through.
Someone slipped and fell, oh, was that someone you?
You may have longed for added strength, your courage to renew.
Do not be disheartened for I have news for you.

Refrain: It is no secret what God can do:
what He's done for others, He'll do for you.
With arms wide open, he'll pardon you.
It is no secret, what God can do.

2. There is no night, for in His light you'll never walk alone.
Always feel at home wherever you may roam.
There is no pow'r can conquer you when God is on your side.
Take him at His promise don't run away and hide.

Repeat refrain

Prayer

Eternal God and Father, we thank you for the blessings we share as members of your holy Church, for your gracious Word and sacraments, for opportunities to worship and to grow in faith and knowledge, for occasions to serve and be served, and for fellowship with believers in our congregation and our synod.
Help us rejoice in these blessings, dear Lord, and use them faithfully.

Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church, you give grace to your people by calling us to be your witnesses in the world. Open our eyes to see the great and noble mission that lies before us. In the hurting eyes of the lonely, in the pained eyes of the sick, and in the searching eyes of the lost, help us to see your face, Lord Jesus, and to serve others as we would serve you.
Awaken us to opportunities to proclaim your message of love.

Holy Spirit, giver of life, through Word and sacrament bestow on us the wisdom and power we need to witness clearly and to act boldly. Help us to speak the truth in love, to give the reason for the hope we have, and to conduct ourselves with gentleness and respect.
Set our hearts on fire as we work and witness for Christ.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray for a family member, a neighbor, or a friend who does not believe in you, or whose faith is weak or troubled.

Silent prayer

Keep in your care those who are enduring chronic pain and incessant unhappiness, those enduring rejection and struggling with poverty, those mourning the loss of someone they loved. [Especially bless…*here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Bring healing and help and comfort and calm to everyone in distress.
Move us to act alone or join with others to provide help and support.

Bless the Church with men and women who are willing to proclaim your Word in places where we cannot go. Keep them and their loved ones in your care and let nothing hinder their work. By the power of the gospel, restore their spirits each day, so that they do not lose heart as they serve us and others.
Move us to support them with our sincere prayers and generous offerings.

Wherever your Word is proclaimed, O Lord, grant it success. Let your kingdom come to us and others, so that we and many more might join the assembly of saints and angels to sing your praise forever.
Savior of all, hear our prayer and help us in our mission. Amen.

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.

Prayer for Grace

O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger. And in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless and keep you.
Amen.

The Lord's face ever shine upon you.
Amen.

The Lord grant you peace for all your days.
Amen.

Hymn: Lift High the Cross *CW 900*

Ref Lift high the cross; the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
our King victorious, Christ, the Son of God. (Refrain)

2 All newborn soldiers of the Crucified
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. (Refrain)

3 Let ev'ry race and ev'ry language tell
of him who saves our souls from death and hell. (Refrain)

4 So shall our song of triumph ever be:
praise to the Crucified for victory! (Refrain)

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November 8, 2026 - 75 Years - Raised to Praise 1 Peter 2:4-10

Out on the cold, gray, windswept plains of south-central England, stones rise up with stones set on stones. Stones set on stones thousands of years ago, thousands of years before our lesson. Those stones, with the stones set on stones weren't just put there to be there, to look good. They were put there to point, to show. Exactly what and why? We don't know. In some way, it seems, they were raised to praise.
On the other side of the world, in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, on a small, rocky island called Easter Island, a different set of stones set on stones stand tall. Those stones standing tall can be as tall as this pulpit or almost as tall as our ceiling. Those stones, set on stones, weren't put there just to be there, just to look good. They were put there for a purpose. Exactly what and why? We don't know. In some way, it seems, they were raised to praise.
On the desert sands of Egypt, massive stones, pyramids of massive stones set on massive stones point up to the sky. They weren't just put there to be there, to look good. They were put here to point, to show. Exactly what and why? We don't know. In some way, it seems, they were raised to praise.
On the corner of West Park and Garfield, on what used to be the edge of town, walls of stone rise up with stone set on stone. Stones set on stones, not just to be here, not just to look good here. These stones were set here to point, to show. What and why? The stones were set here to point us up to the heavens, to lift high the cross, to show off Jesus as our Good Shepherd. These stones were set here to be a place where we learn what it means to be stones set on the Living Stone of Jesus Christ - Raised to Praise.
This set of stones, as beautiful as it is … compared with the pyramids of Egypt, the heads on Easter Island, Stonehenge … this set of stones seems small, insignificant.

That's ok. Things aren't always the way they seem. The value of a stone isn't always in the eyes of the beholder. We don't always know or appreciate value when we see it. In our lesson, Peter calls Jesus a stone, not like the cold, hard heads of Easter Island, but as the Living Stone, as God's chosen and precious cornerstone. In the ancient world, in days of old, the cornerstone would be the most important stone in a building's foundation, specially chosen, specially shaped to set right. It set the lines for the foundation, the walls, the whole building. A misshapen cornerstone would set a bad edge, a misdirected wall, a building that wouldn't fit right or set right. So the cornerstone had to be just right. In the eyes of God, Jesus was

and Jesus is just the right cornerstone for the church God is building. But in the eyes of the world, Jesus was not the right fit. In the eyes of the world, Jesus was garbage stone, stone to be tossed off as a bad fit, not at all right for the temple they wanted to build for themselves.
Same thing is still true today, isn't it? God says Jesus is just the right fit for what he wants to do. The world says Jesus is not the right fit for what they want to do. Jesus calls, Jesus invites: "Come to me all you who are weary and heavy burdened," but the world makes itself too busy to pay attention. Jesus promises: "and I will give you rest," but the world answers: "Jesus doesn't have the kind of rest I want." God calls us to set our hearts and our families on Jesus - kind, compassionate, forgiving; but the world says: "Forgive? Look what he/she/they did to me!" Why do I always have to be the one giving? What about me?" God calls us to build our days, our weeks, our lives on Jesus-Time, and what does the world say? I don't have time for Jesus-Time." In so many ways, God gives us Jesus to be our Rock and Foundation, and what does the world say? "Jesus doesn't fit for me!" And they toss Jesus off to the side.
And then what happens? They trip on Jesus, stumble, fall, and then so often want to blame God. But God didn't make them stumble and fall; tossing Jesus off and then tripping on Jesus is not what God chose for them but what they chose for themselves.

How does Peter describe that way of life? Dark and empty. You might remember that old way of life. When life is hard - "Life isn't fair!" When someone else has it better - "Life isn't fair!" When someone scowls at you, scowl back. When someone hurts you, hurt them back. When someone else has what you want - take it for yourself or trash it for them. When life feels dark and empty, buy yourself something. When life has you on edge, take something to dull the edge. When life feels heavy and hard and you need a break - drink harder. When you don't know what to do, or just don't want to do, when you can't do or think any longer - set your mind on a screen for hours and hours. Put like that, Peter was right. What is life? Dark and empty. What do I have to live for if all I have is this life?
Ever been there? That gets to be our past. Before our lesson, Peter describes us as people who have left that empty way of life - thank you, Lord! He then calls us to live like people who have left that empty way of life. Why? Because Jesus has redeemed us, Jesus has freed us; with his blood, and his innocent sufferings and death, Jesus has bought us out, forgiven us and freed us from our old and empty way of life.
Now what? We get to live new! You get to live as someone specially

chosen by God, because you are specially chosen by God to be his child, his heir, his pride and joy! You get to live as a royal priest - you are royalty with direct access to God himself; so you get to pray, not just as a beggar, but you get to talk with God as privileged royalty. And then, you get to share the treasures of heaven! You get to share the promise of heaven; you get to share the peace of heaven; you get to share the forgiveness and the love of heaven - you are a royal priest. Not everybody out there is going to be impressed. But you aren't part of that world. God has set you apart to be his holy nation, his special people - the people who on the last day will hear Jesus say: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."
Between now and then, who are we? What are we? As Jesus is the Living Stone cornerstone foundation of God's church, you are like Jesus, living stones, built on Jesus, raised to praise.

We aren't here just to exist. We aren't here just to take whatever the world throws at us; we aren't here just to suck it up, grin and bear it. We aren't here to live dark and empty lives.
We are raised to praise! Brewer fans know how good it is to be able to cheer. Football fans - if you have the right team - you know how good it is to be able to tell the world how great your team is. You know how good it is to be able to tell someone about your favorite vacation spot or to share some family pride. Well, we get to cheer and tell our world about something even better.
We get to be part of the Revelation crowd praising and cheering around the throne of God in heaven. And we get to practice here on earth - not just cheering Jesus here, but praising him out there. In a world of complainers, we get to be the people who have something good, something exciting to share. In a world of worriers, we get to be the people who bring hope to our world. In a world of heartache, we get to be the people who bring God's love to our world. In a world of guilt and shame, we get to be the people who bring God's grace and peace. Yes, in a world of darkness, we get to be the people who bring light to life. Why? Better than Stonehenge, more interesting than the heads of Easter Island, more impressive than the pyramids - We are Raised to Praise! Amen.