

May 18th, 2025

The Readings on This Day

****Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)*

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Easter lasts for several more weeks. The three readings continue the unfolding of the meaning of the resurrection: the loving community formed by God's love and baptized with the water of life includes those who had been previously deemed unacceptable. All things are being made new, for the resurrection continues through the power of the Spirit.



[Acts 11:1-18](#)

Throughout the centuries, Christians have debated the meaning of church membership and its openness to nonmembers. So Peter's vision continues to challenge the church: what in our time and in our religious community are the rules that separate insiders from outsiders? Does Luke intend that Christians have no such barriers? Christians have not agreed to what extent Luke's call to repentance (v. 18) fits with the elimination of any traditions of religion or morality.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard that in Christ historic barriers are removed, we praise God with the exultant [Psalm 148](#), which is appointed also for the first Sunday after Christmas. In this poem, all the created earth (even those sea monsters that will be eliminated at the end of time, according to the book of Revelation!) join the church in praise. Like Peter, we are surprised by the inclusivity within God's dominion.

[Revelation 21:1-6](#)

Our hope is in God, who promises to make all things new for the believing community. God's promises are always realized both now and in the future, and so in some ways we are already in the new Jerusalem, married to God, living without sorrow and death.

[John 13:31-35](#)

The loving community of the church manifests the glory of God, which surprisingly is seen in the passion and death of Christ. That Christ, the Son of God, submitted to death reveals a loving, sacrificing God who nurtures a community that also is known for its mutual love and service. In about 200 ce Tertullian wrote that outsiders said of Christians, "See how they love one another," a testimony especially to Christian care for the poor, the sick and the dying. In such love is the glory of God.