

## **May 4<sup>th</sup> Acts 6:1-15**

L: A reading from the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Acts.

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup>And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup>Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, <sup>4</sup>while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.” <sup>5</sup>What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. <sup>6</sup>They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. <sup>7</sup>The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

<sup>8</sup>Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup>Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. <sup>10</sup>But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. <sup>11</sup>Then they secretly instigated some men to say, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” <sup>12</sup>They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. <sup>13</sup>They set up false witnesses who said, “This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; <sup>14</sup>for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.” <sup>15</sup>And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **May 11<sup>th</sup> Acts 8:26-39**

L: A reading from the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Acts.

<sup>26</sup>Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) <sup>27</sup>So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup>and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” <sup>30</sup>So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” <sup>31</sup>He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup>Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. <sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.” <sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” <sup>38</sup>He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## May 18<sup>th</sup> Acts 15:1-18

L: A reading from the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Acts.

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”<sup>2</sup> And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders.<sup>3</sup> So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers.<sup>4</sup> When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.<sup>5</sup> But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, “It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.”

<sup>6</sup>The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter.<sup>7</sup> After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers.<sup>8</sup> And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us;<sup>9</sup> and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us.<sup>10</sup> Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?

<sup>11</sup>On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”<sup>12</sup> The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles.<sup>13</sup> After they finished speaking, James replied, “My brothers, listen to me.<sup>14</sup> Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name.<sup>15</sup> This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written,<sup>16</sup> ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; from its ruins I will rebuild it, and I will set it up,<sup>17</sup> so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called. Thus

says the Lord, who has been making these things <sup>18</sup>known from long ago.’”

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## May 25<sup>th</sup> Galatians 1:13-17; 2:11-21

L: A reading from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> chapters of the book of Galatians.

<sup>13</sup>You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. <sup>14</sup>I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. <sup>15</sup>But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased <sup>16</sup>to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, <sup>17</sup>nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

<sup>11</sup>But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; <sup>12</sup>for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction. <sup>13</sup>And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup>But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?" <sup>15</sup>We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; <sup>16</sup>yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. <sup>17</sup>But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! <sup>18</sup>But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. <sup>19</sup>For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; <sup>20</sup>and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup>I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**