



**ST. STEPHEN'S**  
united methodist church

**EYE  
WITNESS**

**RUTH**



**“Eye Witness: Ruth”**  
**Ruth 1: 8-17**

**May 9, 2021**

# Fifth Sunday of Easter

11:00 am

WELCOME

Rev. Heather Velez

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

*Rock of Ages*  
(by Thomas Hastings)

Dr. Andreea Muț, Accompanist

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (Adapted from Psalm 98 MSG)

Donna Ebelt-Wilson, Liturgist

Leader: Sing to God a brand-new song. He's made a world of wonders!  
God remembered to love us, a bonus to God's dear family, Israel—indefatigable love.

**People: Shout your praises to God, everybody!**

Leader: Let loose and sing! Round up an orchestra to play for God, add on a hundred-voice choir.  
Fill the air with praises to King God.

**People: Shout your praises to God, everybody!**

Leader: Let the sea and its fish give a round of applause, with everything living on earth joining in.  
Let ocean breakers call out, "Encore!"

**People: Shout your praises to God, everybody!**

Leader: A tribute to God, when God comes to set the earth right.  
God will straighten out the whole world and everyone in it.

**People: Shout your praises to God, everybody! Halleluiah!**

\*HYMN

*Rejoice, Ye Pure of Heart*  
(stanzas 1, 2, 3 and 5)

Rev. Suzi Byrd

1. *Rejoice, you pure in heart; rejoice, give thanks, and sing;  
your glorious banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.*

***Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing.***

2. *Your clear hosannas raise, and alleluias loud;  
whilst answering echoes upward float, like wreaths of incense cloud.*

***Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing.***

3. *Yes, on through life's long path, still chanting as you go;  
from youth to age, by night and day, in gladness and in woe.*

***Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing.***

5. *Praise God who reigns on high, the Lord whom we adore,  
the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God forevermore.*

***Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing.***

\*AFFIRMATION

The Apostles' Creed (Traditional)

Donna

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;  
And 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, dead, and buried;  
the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

\*GLORIA PATRI

Suzi

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Steven Fisher, Family Ministries Director

PRAYER

Suzi

THE 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. Amen**

\*SCRIPTURE READING

Ruth 1: 8-17 (CEB)

Donna

8 Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, "Go, turn back, each of you to the household of your mother. May the Lord deal faithfully with you, just as you have done with the dead and with me. 9 May the Lord provide for you so that you may find security, each woman in the household of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 But they replied to her, "No, instead we will return with you, to your people." 11 Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters. Why would you go with me? Will there again be sons in my womb, that they would be husbands for you? 12 Turn back, my daughters. Go. I am too old for a husband. If I were to say that I have hope, even if I had a husband tonight, and even more, if I were to bear sons— 13 would you wait until they grew up? Would you refrain from having a husband? No, my daughters. This is more bitter for me than for you, since the Lord's will has come out against me." 14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth stayed with her. 15 Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her gods. Turn back after your sister-in-law." 16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to abandon you, to turn back from following after you. Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. 17 Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do this to me and more so if even death separates me from you."

\*SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Donna

One: Inspired words for beloved people.

All: **Lord, transform us through its hearing.**

SERMON

**"Eye Witness: Ruth"**

Heather

OFFERING PRAYER AND INVITATION

Suzi

*Those wishing to commit their lives to Christ are invited to contact Pastor Nathan at 512-771-2741.  
You can give using your smartphone! Text a dollar amount to 84321 and select St. Stephen's.  
Our Communion offering for May will go to Stevens Elementary School.*

OFFERTORY

*My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord  
(arranged by Moses Hogan)*

Suzi  
Sung by Houston Virtual Choir

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Heather

\*BENEDICTION

\*CLOSING HYMN

*I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry*

Suzi

*I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.*

*I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;  
In a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.*

*When you heard the wonder of the Word, I was there to cheer you on;  
You were raised to praise the living God, to whom you now belong.*

*If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one,  
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk 'till rising sun.*

*In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young,  
I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.  
(continued on next page)*

*When the evening gently closes in, and you shut your weary eyes,  
I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.*

*I was there to hear your bawling cry, I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.*

**\*Please stand as you are able.**

**Altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Karen Alford  
in honor of Rachel Fisher's second birthday, and in celebration of what  
would have been Karen and David's forty-first wedding anniversary on May 17.**



To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world



Reopening for in-person worship, Sunday, May 23rd



Register online at [ststx.org/events/](https://ststx.org/events/)



beginning fall 2021  
[ststx.org/events](https://ststx.org/events)



Communion Offering  
for May:  
Stevens Elementary



Update your information:  
[stsumc.churchcenter.com/directory/people](https://stsumc.churchcenter.com/directory/people)

### You can give using your smart phone!

Text a dollar amount to 84321 and select St. Stephen's, or go to [ststx.org/give](https://ststx.org/give).

### Join Us!

St. Stephen's is a church with an exciting vision for loving God and our neighbors. If you want to learn more about our church, more about who Jesus is and why that matters, or just about anything else, Nathan would love to meet with you! Call or text him at 512.771.2741 to make an appointment.

### How to reach St. Stephen's

2003 W.43rd Street, Houston, TX, 77018  
(713) 686-8241 | [ststx.org](https://ststx.org)

