

Grace at a Glance

Stephen’s Witness

Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60

Sunday, May 4, 2025

Affirmation of Baptism



Scripture Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60

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. ²And 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. ³Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, ⁴while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.” ⁵What 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. ⁶They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷The 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.

⁸Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then 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. ¹⁰But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. ¹¹Then they secretly instigated some men to say, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” ¹²They 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. ¹³They set up false witnesses who said, “This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴for 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.” ¹⁵And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

²And Stephen replied: ^{44a}“Our ancestors had the tent of testimony in the wilderness, as God directed when he spoke to Moses, ordering him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. ⁴⁵Our ancestors in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors. And it was there until the time of David, ⁴⁶who found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. ⁴⁷But it was Solomon who built a house for him. ⁴⁸Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands; as the prophet says, ⁴⁹‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?’ ⁵⁰Did not my hand make all these things?’

⁵¹“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵²Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.”

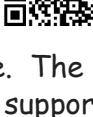
⁵⁴When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶“Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, So often when we hear testimony, even from those we know and trust, we doubt the truth of your presence in our lives. Forgive us for our stubborn shortsightedness, and open our hearts to recognize the truth of your love for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



QR direct link to 'Give' feature on Grace website!



MAY MISSION OF THE MONTH

The Mission of the Month at Grace is Dwelling Place. The Dwelling Place offers safe transitional housing and Christ-centered support services for women and children who have suffered domestic abuse.

Dwelling Place's extended-stay program provides a loving community and one-on-one case management to help clients discover their new identity: a woman created by God, worthy of love, and beautiful inside and out. The Dwelling Place offers healing and hope.

Please prayerfully consider making a donation to this organization which reaches out to God's women and children at some of their most frightening moments and offers safety, guidance and hope for a better future.

Please use your blue multi-purpose envelope, mark mission of the month and place in the offering plate or mail to the church office. Checks should be made payable to Grace. Thank you.

This Sunday we worship at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary.

Confidential Prayer Link: <https://forms.gle/oCUEbVJ6CkmdD3nB6>

We have established a confidential prayer email that we have added to our website which can be used by anyone wishing for prayers. This can be made available to just the pastor, the pastor and the prayer chain, OR the pastor, the prayer chain, and the congregation as you choose. Please feel free to test it out. This is just one more way you can access our pastor and/or the prayer team.

We have a dedicated free phone line which you can call in and listen to the livestreaming worship services. So if you don't have a computer or would rather just listen, call in on 1-(833) 579 - 2830. We are working on improving the quality of this experience. Please pass this number to your friends without computers.

We will continue to post recordings of the services each week on our website and Facebook page. Stay tuned for more information as we go forward. We pray for everyone to stay safe and healthy.

Your giving is very important to continuing our missions as always. You can give electronically using the give button on the website (www.gracelutheranstpaul.fyi), mail it in to the church (1730 Old Hudson Road, St. Paul 55106) or place in the offering at worship on Sunday.

The office hours are M-Thurs, 9:30-1:30. Feel free to call the church (651-774-9617) with any questions, prayers, or requests for help.

Upcoming:	May 3 10-2	Clean-up Day at Grace Come and help!
	May 4	Confirmation Sunday!
	May 18	Spring Rhubarb Festival & Brunch!
	May 26	Memorial Day
	June 1	Graduate Recognition Sunday

Sound & Video System - The upgrade in the Tower rooms is complete and the new system in the Sanctuary has been installed!! We are currently at \$24,955.00 including the SGM gifts. Please label any gifts for the Sound System so that they get to the right place. Thank you!! (Total cost of the Sound System was \$86,981.48)



Monday, April 27– Sunday, May 4, 2025

Wednesday, April 30	10-12 - Coffee and Conversation
Thursday, May 1	7 pm Grace Book Club (virtual)
Saturday, May 3	10-2 Cleanup day at Grace - all are welcome to come and help!!
Sunday, May 4	9:30 am Worship Confirmation!! Live streamed and recorded Phone in line 1-(833) 579 -2830 10:45 am Sunday School & Fellowship

Sunday School question of the week -

Earth Day/Stewardship question

How can we be good stewards of God’s creation?

Answer from last week

(No question last week)

Church Chuckles

