

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Easter Season

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

FEAST OF LYDIA OF THYATIRA

9:30 am Wednesday, 21 May 2025

[From Lessor Feasts & Fasts](#)



Lydia of Thyatira was Paul's first European convert. She was a Gentile woman living in Philippi who, like many others, was interested in the Jewish faith, but had not converted. As what the Jewish community called a "God-fearer," she was undoubtedly accorded some level of respect by the Jewish community, but would not have been treated as a full member of the Jewish community in Philippi. Paul encountered her on a riverbank where she and a group of women had gathered for Sabbath prayers. Paul and his companions began to talk with the women, and God "opened her heart" to hear what Paul had to say about Christ and the Gospel. Lydia believed what she heard and, as was the custom when the head of a household converted, her whole household was baptized along with her.

Lydia was a prosperous cloth merchant and had the means to offer hospitality to the apostles during their time in Philippi. Her home, having served as a base of operations for Paul and his

[Continued Pg 11](#)

SALUTATION:

Presider: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: **The Lord is risen, indeed! Alleluia!**

Presider: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify you Holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GLORIA —

#S-278

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY:

Presider: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray

All: Eternal God, who gives good gifts to all people, and who grants the spirit of generosity: Give us, we pray you, hearts always open to hear your word, that, following the example of your servant Lydia, we may show hospitality to those who are in any need or trouble; through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD: *(Please be seated for the lessons)*

First Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Malachi (3:16-18):

Those who revered the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord took note and listened, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who revered the Lord and thought on his name. They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as parents spare their children who serve them. Then once more you shall see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

Reader The Word of the Lord **People** **Thanks be to God**

The PSALM:

Psalm 100 (read in unison)

- 1 Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.**
- 2 Know this: The Lord himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**
- 3 Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.**

**4 For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

Second Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Acts (16:11-15):

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

Reader The Word of the Lord **People** **Thanks be to God**

Gospel Lesson: *(Please stand as you are able)*

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Luke (15:8–10):**

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

Jesus said, "What woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

HOMILY (Deacon Sherry Simon)

Nicene Creed: *Traditional Version* (Said aloud by all, in unison)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - in the beauty of the earth:

**People: in the rhythm of the seasons, in the mystery of time and space,
Alleluia**

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - in the tenderness of touch

People: in the heartbeat of intimacy, in the insights of solitude, Alleluia

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - in the creative possibility

**People: of the hardest conversation, of the dreariest task, of the most
threatening event, Alleluia**

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - to offer re-creation

**People: to every unhealed hurt, to every deadened place, to every damaged
Heart, Alleluia.**

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive – to give us encouragement

**People: to face our fears, to wrestle with our doubts, to overcome our
disappointments, Alleluia.**

Leader: You set before us a great choice, death in our souls without you or Life
abundantly and eternally with you.

People: Therefore, we choose life.

Leader: The dance of resurrection soars and surges through the whole creation,

**People: This is your grace through which we live. So let us live fully and
thankfully. Alleluia.**

The Peace:

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you The Offertory:

Presider Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself as an offering and sacrifice to God.

Doxology #380 vs. 3

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

The Holy Communion - *The Great Thanksgiving BCP Rite 2A*

Presider: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you

Presider: Lift up your hearts

People: We lift them to the Lord

Presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Presider:

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Pascal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus -

#S-128

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

Presider continues:

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit (+) to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also (+) that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

Presider: As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

**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, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread (*Presider breaks the consecrated bread*)

Fraction Anthem : Hymnal 1982 #S-155

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is
sac - ri - ficed for us; there - fore let us keep the feast.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died and rose again for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving.

(All are invited and welcome to come forward and receive communion in this church. The bread is gluten free and we use real wine. To receive by intincting/dipping your bread into the wine, please use the left altar rail. To receive by eating the bread and taking a sip of wine from the cup, please use the right altar rail. You may receive only the bread if you prefer. If you are not ready to take communion with us today, you may also come forward, cross your arms over your chest and receive a blessing instead.)

Post Communion Prayer *(The people stand as they are able.)*

Presider: Let us pray.

All: Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom.

And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

Presider: May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Deacon: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in God's Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (Alleluia!)

Continued from front:

companions, became the location of a house church in Philippi. Although she is not mentioned by name outside of Acts 16, her significant role in enabling the spread of the Gospel in Philippi has led to her recognition as a saint in a wide range of Christian traditions, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, and many Protestant traditions. In the Orthodox Church she is given the title "Equal to the Apostles" for her role in spreading the Christian faith.

More from [Wikipedia the free encyclopedia](#)

[Lydia of Thyatira](#) (Greek: Λυδία) is a woman mentioned in the New Testament who is regarded as the first documented convert to Christianity in Europe. Several Christian denominations have designated her a saint.

Lydia of Thyatira and Philippi

The name, "Lydia", meaning "the Lydian woman", by which she was known indicates that she was from Lydia in Asia Minor. Though she is commonly known as "St. Lydia" or even more simply "The Woman of Purple", Lydia is given other titles: "of Thyatira", "Purpuraria", and "of Philippi ('Philippisia' in Greek)". "[Lydia's] name is an ethnicon, deriving from her place of origin".[1] The first refers to her place of birth, which is a city in the ancient region of Lydia (modern-day Akhisar, Turkey). The second comes from the Latin word for purple and relates to her connection with purple dye. Philippi modern-day Macedonia was the city in which Lydia was living when she met St. Paul and his companions. All these titles expound upon this woman's background.

New Testament narrative

Acts 16 describes Lydia as follows:

A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one who worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to listen to the things which were spoken by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and stay." So she persuaded us.

—Acts 16:14–15 World English Bible

Wayne Grudem sees the story of Lydia as being an example of effectual calling.[2]

Background

Lydia was from Ancient Macedonia background, since originating from Thyatira, Asia Minor, but probably romanized one, while she lived in a Roman settlement.[3] She was evidently a well-to-do agent of a purple-dye firm in Thyatira, a city southeast of Pergamum and approximately 40 miles (64 km) inland, across the Aegean Sea from Athens. Lydia insisted on giving hospitality to Apostle Paul and his companions in Philippi. They stayed with her until their departure, through Amphipolis and Apollonia, to Thessalonica (Acts 16:40–17:1).

Paul, Silas and Timothy were traveling through the region of Philippi when they encounter "a reputable businesswoman and possibly a widow... [who] was a righteous Gentile or 'God-fearer' attracted to Judaism".[4] "[S]he was one of a large group [considered]... sympathizers with Judaism, believers in the one God, but who had not yet become 'proselytes' or taken the final step to conversion to Judaism".[5]

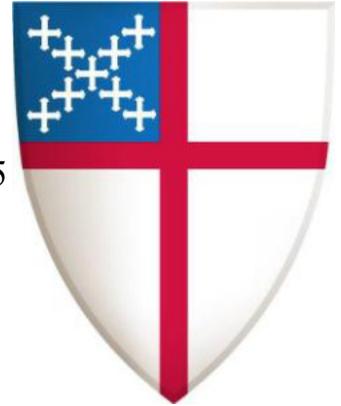
Because these encounters and events take place "in what is now Europe", Lydia is considered "the first 'European' Christian convert".[6]

[Continued online](#)

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Or you can also use the QRC here to fill this out online.



Info Update Giving Envelopes Mail News Letter

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