

# Earle Street Baptist Church

10:30 am Worship

July 5, 2026

*Sixth Sunday after Pentecost  
250<sup>TH</sup> Independence Celebration*

CHIMES

WELCOME

Janice Hinnant

PRELUDE

*America*

arr. Carolyn Hamlin

CALL TO WORSHIP

Norma Green

Leader: Our God reigns in places high and low!

**All: Our God reigns over earth and wind and fire;**

Leader: Over kings and queens and governments;

**All: Over the principalities and powers we cannot see;**

Leader: Over the hearts of men and women who submit to God's loving, gracious rule.

**All: May we have such hearts. Amen.**

INVOCATION

\*HYMN OF PRAISE #62

*God of Our Fathers*

NATIONAL HYMN

(All children, grade 5 and under, may come forward on the final stanza.)

**God of our fathers, whose almighty hand  
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band  
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,  
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.**

**Thy love divine hath led us in the past,  
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast;  
Be Thou our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay,  
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.**

**From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,  
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;  
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,  
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.**

**Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way,  
Lead us from night to never-ending day;  
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,  
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Jane Leo

(Following this, preschoolers, ages 3 – K5, may go to Sunday School,  
and children, grades 1 – 5 may go to Children's Church.)

PASTORAL PRAYER

Gary Strickland

\*OFFERTORY HYMN #701      *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*      AMERICA

**My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing:  
Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride,  
From every mountainside, let freedom ring!**

**My native country, thee, land of the noble free, thy name I love:  
I love thy rocks and rills, thy woods and templed hills;  
My heart with rapture thrills like that above.**

**Let music swell the breeze, and ring from all the trees sweet freedom's song:  
Let mortal tongues awake; let all that breathe partake;  
Let rocks their silence break, the sound prolong.**

**Our sovereign God, to Thee, Author of liberty, to Thee we sing:  
Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light;  
Protect us by Thy might, great God, our King!**

\*OFFERTORY PRAYER      Noellen Groff

OFFERTORY      *I'd Rather Have Jesus*      arr. Dino Kartsonakis

\*RESPONSE      *Doxology*      OLD 100TH  
**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

GOSPEL READING      Matthew 16:13-23      Gary Strickland

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup> They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup> "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." <sup>20</sup> Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. <sup>21</sup> From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. <sup>22</sup> Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" <sup>23</sup> Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM      *An American Hymn*      arr. Cecil Effinger

Sanctuary Choir

(When invited, please sing the words in bold print.)

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!  
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for pilgrim feet, whose stern impassioned stress

A thoroughfare for freedom beat across the wilderness.

America! America! God mend thine every flaw.  
Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life.  
America! America! May God thy gold refine,  
Till all success be nobleness and every gain divine.

**O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years,  
Thine alabaster cities gleam undimmed by human tears.  
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.**

MESSAGE

**“Who Do You Say That I Am?”**

Gary Strickland

Sermon Series: *Questions God Asks*

INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

\*HYMN OF COMMITMENT #692

AURELIA

*Let Truth and Mercy Find Here*

**Let truth and mercy find here a joyful meeting place.  
And here let peace and justice be joined in warm embrace.  
And in this congregation let strangers now be friends,  
To do the gospel’s bidding ‘til wars on earth shall end.**

**Let truth’s bright flame be blazing in all the darkest hours,  
Confronting schemes of darkness, exposing evil powers.**

**Let mercy’s gentle manner, so willing to forgive,  
Fill warring hearts with longing ‘til in truth’s light we live.**

**So now let peace and justice be never far apart,  
But flowing like a river for every thirsty heart.  
These two shall be united, a mighty moving stream,  
Upon whose banks we gather to work and pray and dream.**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

COMMISSIONING THE BRONX MISSION TEAM

\*BENEDICTION

Gary Strickland

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #705

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory Be to the Father*

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen, amen.**

\*POSTLUDE

*The Stars and Stripes Forever*

arr. Thomas Vozzella

\*Congregation please stand, if able.

Hearing devices are available upon request. Please see one of the ushers if you would like to use one.  
Our worship services are live streamed via the ESBC YouTube channel. The services are also archived  
for future viewing on YouTube.

For an explanation of the meaning of the colors and symbols used for worship in our sanctuary, please refer to the worship guide located on the front page of the hymnal.

**Deacon of the Week**—Noellen Groff

**Greeters**—Margaret Kirby/Anna Kay & Moira Lord/Norma Green

**Sound Technician**—Eddy Leo

**Video Technician**—Dan Boehm

**Ushers**—Keith Merck, Jay Gibson, Curtis Dobbins, Grant Wooten, Mary Arrowood, Glenn Arrowood, Quay Farmer

**Preschool/Children's Volunteers**—Anna Kay Lord, Rebecca Register, Marsha Burt, Bill Burt, Margo Love, Jane Leo, Noellen Groff, Calder Standridge