

Easter Sunday

March 31, 2024



Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church
920 15th Street
Perry, Iowa



EASTER
SUNDAY

PRELUDE

Wandering Heart: "And I Hope"
Courage

Call to Worship

Yesterday we thought death had won.
Yesterday we thought all was lost.
Yesterday we thought Christ was gone.

But not today.

Today we know that love has won.

Today we know that hope is real.

Today we know that Christ is here.

We have a reason to hope.

We have a reason to sing!

Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Christ is risen today.

Confession and Forgiveness

In the Gospel of Luke, the women come to the tomb, and to their surprise, instead of finding Jesus, they find angels. The angels tell the women, "Jesus is not here," and when that answer is met with confusion, the angels say, "Remember what he told you." *Remember*. It's one of the words Jesus used at his last supper, and it's one of the first words we hear at the empty tomb. *Remember*.

I think this call to remember is why we need the prayer of confession and these words of forgiveness every single week. It's not enough to hear of God's grace once. We need to hear it over and over again, week after week. We need to be reminded that God's grace and mercy will never run out.

So friends, let us run to God like the women ran to the tomb. Let us tell the truth of our lives so that once again we can be reminded that our God is a God of grace, mercy, and love. Let us pray so that we can remember.

Join me in the prayer of confession:

The stone is rolled away!

We assume it is a mistake.

The angels say, "He is not here!"

We assume their news is fake.

The women tell the story,

but we do not want to hear it.

Peter runs to the tomb,

but we do not understand.

Forgive us, God, for thinking an empty tomb is nothing more than a prank.

Forgive us for seeing discarded burial cloths and still holding tight to death.

Forgive us for pushing away reasons to hope when you are alive and well in the world.

Teach us to see what you see.

Unravel the threads of our unbelief.

Amen.

The angels tell the women, "*Remember* what Jesus told you."

So, church, remember this:

You are seen.

You are forgiven.

You are held in God's grace.

All of this is true.

Grace and mercy abound for you.

Remember this.

Amen!

Gathering Song

ELW#365

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today



1 Je - sus Christ is ris'n to - day, Al - le - lu - ia!
2 Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
3 But the pains which he en - dured, Al - le - lu - ia!
4 Sing we to our God a - bove, Al - le - lu - ia!



our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!
un - to Christ, our heav'n - ly king, Al - le - lu - ia!
our sal - va - tion have pro - cured; Al - le - lu - ia!
praise e - ter - nal as his love; Al - le - lu - ia!



who did once up - on the cross, Al - le - lu - ia!
who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!
now a - bove the sky he's king, Al - le - lu - ia!
praise him, all you heav'n - ly host, Al - le - lu - ia!



suf - fer to re - deem our loss. Al - le - lu - ia!
sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!
where the an - gels ev - er sing. Al - le - lu - ia!
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Latin carol, 14th cent., sts. 1-3; tr. J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708, alt.; Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, st. 4
Music: EASTER HYMN, J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Kyrie



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Hymn of Praise



1 Glo - ry be to God in heav - en; peace, good - will to all the earth.
2 Glo - ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
3 Ho - ly One we now ac - claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might - y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

Prayer of the Day

God of new beginnings,

On that first Easter morning, the disciples struggled to hear the good news. Doubt clouded their minds. Negativity took root and hope vanished with a simple shake of their heads.

As we return to this familiar text, help us to hear differently this morning. Open our ears that we might hear the sound of Alleluias ringing through this text.

Open up our minds that the mystery and joy of Easter might feel within reach. Open up our hearts that we might believe the unbelievable. And like Peter, in this hearing, may we move closer to you.

God of the empty tomb, we are hungry for your good news. Speak to us now. With hope in our hearts we listen and we pray, amen.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!

² **Let Israel say,**

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

¹⁴ The LORD is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

¹⁵ **There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:**

“The right hand of the LORD does valiantly;

¹⁶ the right hand of the LORD is exalted;
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly.”

¹⁷ **I shall not die, but I shall live
and recount the deeds of the LORD.**

¹⁸ The LORD has punished me severely,
but he did not give me over to death.

¹⁹ **Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.**

²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.

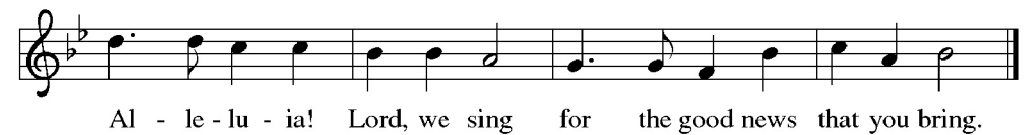
²¹ **I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.**

²² The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ **This is the LORD’s doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.^[c]

Gospel Acclamation



The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 24th chapter

Glory to you O Lord.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. ²They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they went in they did not find the body.^[a] ⁴While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵The women^[b] were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men^[c] said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen."^[d] ⁶Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again." ⁸Then they remembered his words, ⁹and returning from the tomb they told all this to the apostles. ¹¹But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹²But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.^[e] The gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Message

Sermon

Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds

1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings,
 3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love;
 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring

in praise of love that still a - bounds: "Christ has
 there - fore our heart with rap - ture sings: "Christ has
 set heart and will on things a - bove that we
 and with the heav'n - ly bless - ed sing: "Christ has

tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Sing, choirs of
 tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Now still he
 con - quer through your tri - umph; grant grace suf -
 tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!" Be to the

an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song of glo - ry
 comes to give us life and by his pres - ence stills all
 fi - cient for life's day that by our lives we tru - ly
 Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest, most ho - ly

here: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 strife. "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 say: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876-1947, alt.
 Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623
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Affirmation of Faith

We may weep through the longest nights.

We may stare at the empty tomb with more questions than answers.

We may run our fingers over the burial cloths and still long for more.

But today, we are a people of hope.

We believe in new beginnings.

We believe that the God who created the world is stronger than death.

We believe that Jesus abides among us, healing, teaching, and leaving fingerprints throughout this world.

We believe that a tomb could not hold him.

We believe that the sun does rise.

We believe that Peter was there with questions, awe, and faith the size of a mustard seed.

We believe that the story is not over yet, for God is among us.

Today we are a people of hope.

Peace

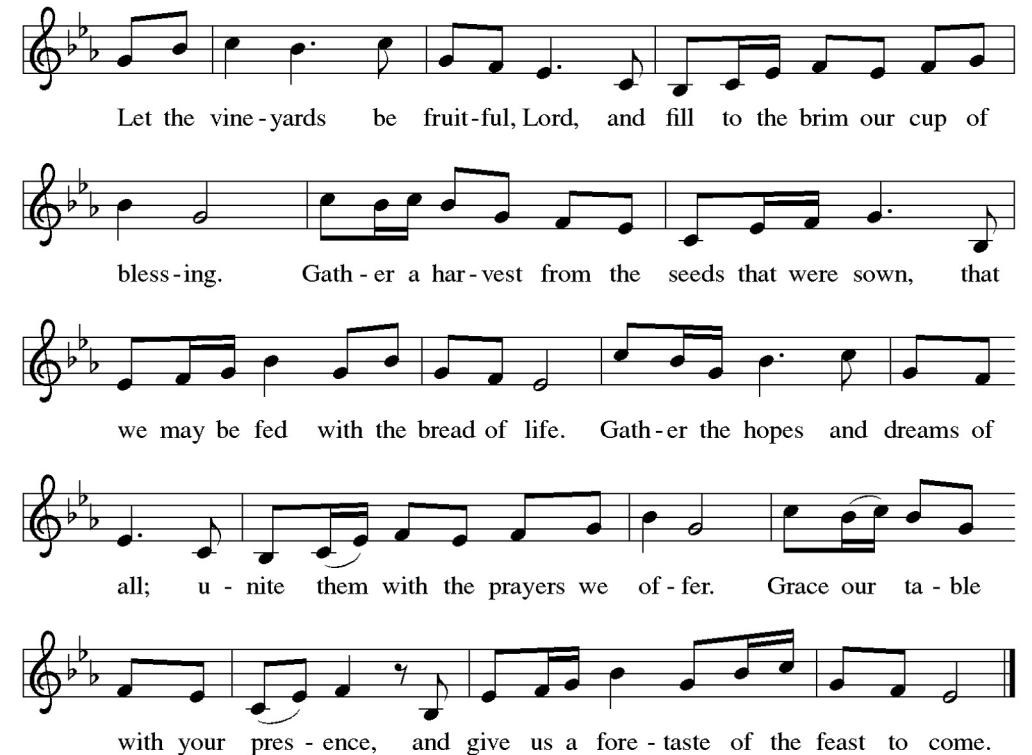
The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

Offering Song



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

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Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Liturgy of Communion and Prayer of the People

When the women got to the tomb on that Easter morning they were met by angels, who told them,
"He is not here! But remember what he told you."

I can't help but wonder, there in that garden as the sun rose over the trees,
if they remembered it all.

I wonder if they remembered Jesus telling 5,000 people to sit together in the
grass, passing
out baskets of fish and bread.

I wonder if they remembered how he stopped in the middle of the crowd to
ask, "Who touched
my robe?"

I wonder if they remembered how he ate with Zacchaeus or scooped up the
children onto his knee.

I wonder if they remembered him teaching in the temple, telling people,
"Love your neighbor
as yourself."

I wonder if they remembered how the wind stopped with the sound of his
voice.

I wonder if they remembered how he washed their feet and said, "This is my
body, broken for
you."

I wonder if they remembered it all. . .

Friends, just like the women in the garden, we need those same reminders.
The suffering of the
world can erode the muscle memory of grace and welcome that we hold.
Don't let it. Come to the
Table and remember.

Remember how Jesus fed everyone.
Remember how none were turned away.
Remember why we gather,

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave
thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my
body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all
people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Come and remember. There is room for you here.

(brief silence)

God of today and tomorrow, God of the garden and the tomb, God of our
faith and our doubt, we are running toward you. Like Peter on that Easter
morning, we simply cannot stay away.

So with beating hearts and wide eyes, we have arrived in this sanctuary,
bringing with us questions, hopes, joys, and concerns. Hear these prayers as
we draw closer to you.

God of the dawn, we start with our hopes:

Thank you for the gifts of this world that instill buoyancy in us. Thank you for
the curiosity of children, for the sound of your people singing in unison, for
crowded tables and neighborly kindness, for the sun after the rain, the spring
after the frost, love after loss, and faith after doubt.

Like Peter, we have countless reasons to hold onto hope. Highest among
them is the joy and promise of this day. Thank you for these holy
breadcrumbs on the journey of faith.

However, before we found ourselves in the garden, before the joy and the alleluias of this day, we found ourselves at the foot of the cross. So for the things that erode our hope, for the things that stitch doubt and fear into our hearts, we ask for your comforting hand.

Wrap your arms around all who are still locked in that upper room. Wrap your arms around all who cannot find healing after their longest night. Wrap your arms around all who look for reasons to hope, but cannot find those breadcrumbs amidst reasons to grieve.

Holy God, like Peter, fan the flames of our faith. Like Peter, invite us to step out of our boats. And like Peter, use us to care for those in need, to tell your story, and to build a better world. We remember, and we believe. So with awe-struck, wildly-beating, grateful hearts, we run toward you. With feet in the garden and eyes on the cross, we pray to you, saying the words your son taught us to pray:

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 and ever. Amen.

Communion

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table.

Communion Song



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;

you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Post Communion Prayer

Shepherding God,
you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. Amen.

I Know That My Redeemer Lives!



1 I know that my Re - deem - er lives! What com - fort
 2 He lives tri - um - phant from the grave; he lives c -
 3 He lives to grant me rich sup - ply; he lives to
 4 He lives to si - lence all my fears; he lives to



this sweet sen - tence gives! He lives, he lives, who
 ter - nal - ly to save; he lives ex - alt - ed,
 guide me with his eye; he lives to com - fort
 wipe a - way my tears; he lives to calm my



once was dead; he lives, my ev - er - liv - ing head!
 throned a - bove; he lives to rule his church in love.
 me when faint; he lives to hear my soul's com - plaint.
 trou - bled heart; he lives all bless - ings to im - part.

- 5 He lives to bless me with his love;
 he lives to plead for me above;
 he lives my hungry soul to feed;
 he lives to help in time of need.
- 6 He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
 he lives and loves me to the end;
 he lives, and while he lives, I'll sing;
 he lives, my prophet, priest, and king!
- 7 He lives and grants me daily breath;
 he lives, and I shall conquer death;
 he lives my mansion to prepare;
 he lives to bring me safely there.
- 8 He lives, all glory to his name!
 He lives, my Savior, still the same;
 what joy this blest assurance gives:
 I know that my Redeemer lives!

Benediction

Beloved wanderer,
 as you leave this place,
 may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve.
 May you look for God in every face.
 May you find the courage to get out of the boat,
 to run to the tomb,
 and to speak of your faith.
 And when the world falls apart,
 may you hear God's voice deep within,
 saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid."
 You are called.
 You are blessed.
 In both your ups and your downs,
 you always belong to God.
 Go now in peace.
 Go trusting that good news.

Amen

Text: Samuel Medley, 1738-1799, alt.
 Music: DUKE STREET, attr. John Hatton, d. 1793

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DISMISSAL IN PEACE

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

