

April 12 2020 Easter Sunday – Prepared by Vicar Jordan Smith

Martin Luther Church Service Outline and Sermon

Liturgical Colour - White or Gold

Welcome

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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This is one of my favourite phrases we get to say each year. It is a traditional acclamation based on the angel's proclamation that the tomb is empty. The body that the Mary's seek is not there. After the journey through Lent and Holy Week, we celebrate that Christ is risen!

That celebration is different this year, and while we are not physically together, we have been together digitally and spiritually. We are not at the church building, but the church is still alive through all of us that remember the resurrection on this day. The resurrection can not be stopped. Two thousand years ago, officials tried to stop it with a large stone and guards, but as we will hear in today's reading, no force can stand against the saving power of Jesus Christ.

I hope you have a chance to connect with your family and friends today over the phone or other ways of communicating. This is the day that we, like the women at the tomb, are astonished, elated, and grateful for the good news that the angel brings. Let us share that good news with those we love.

Let us celebrate that good news today with song, scripture, and prayer. We will begin the service with a thanksgiving for baptism and I encourage you to pause the video now to get a bowl of water that you can use to help us remember our baptism¹

Thanksgiving for Baptism

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,

¹ Adapted from Sundays and Seasons

we are raised with him to new life.
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water is be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning you created us in your image
and planted us in a well-watered garden.
In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched,
and you gave us water from the rock.
When we did not know the way,
you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.
At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side,
and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.
We praise you for your salvation through water,
for the water in this font,
and for all water everywhere.
Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.
Satisfy the thirsty, and give us the life only you can give.
To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

Prayer of the Day

God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life.
Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward
the fullness of eternal life with you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good;
God's mercy endures forever.

²**Let Israel now declare,
"God's mercy endures forever."**

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my song,
and has become my salvation.

¹⁵**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:
"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!**

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD is exalted!
The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷**I shall not die, but live,
and declare the works of the LORD.**

¹⁸The LORD indeed punished me sorely,
but did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹**Open for me the gates of righteousness;
I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**

²⁰"This is the gate of the LORD;

here the righteous may enter.”

²¹**I give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and you have become my salvation.**

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

²³**By the LORD has this been done;
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

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

Readings:

Matthew 28:1-10

¹After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Sermon:

On that first Easter, Jesus’ disciples and friends were staying together, huddled in a room in fear, afraid that all had been lost. It can seem similar to our situation today, filled with grief and uncertainty over what life looks like amid all that has changed. As we heard today, there is life among grief, that Jesus comes to us and says, Do not be afraid.

Gordon Lathrop offers us this reflection on today’s Gospel: “This Easter we are indeed in the wilderness, and our life is indeed hidden. But because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that the ancient promises to Israel are now extended to us. In the resurrection, God loves you with an everlasting love. God will again build you. Christ is your life and you shall appear with him. And today the Galilee region where, by the power of the Spirit Jesus was seen alive, is in our own homes. Against all sadness, this is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Christ is risen. Alleluia.”²

Hymn:

Now the Green Blade Rises, ELW 379 or 098 EG

Prayers:

² ELCA Worship at home resources. <https://blogs.elca.org/worship/1956/>

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Gott der Auferstehung, von Anfang an gabst du uns als Geschenk, Frauen die Zeugnis ablegten: als Prediger, Lehrer und in der Leitung. Öffne unsere Ohren für ihre Verkündigung, heute und an jedem anderen Tag.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God our Creator, we lament that our lifestyles have harmed your creation and that our efforts to repair your earth are now postponed, and yet we praise you for the beauty of the natural world, for springtime flowers and budding trees, for the soil and rain that nourish the crops

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Uneinigkeit und Konflikte herrschen in den Ländern dieser Welt; Wir konzentrieren uns eher auf Angst und Gier als auf Deine Gerechtigkeit und unerschütterliche Liebe. Bitte baue alle diese Länder auf dem Grundstein des Friedens auf.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The world cries out, we lament all who suffer, those we name here before you, especially Ursula, Dieter, and the Butchereit family, but especially we lament the coronavirus and its incalculable suffering, the many thousands sick, the fear instilled, the loss of employment, the cancelation of plans, the overflow in hospitals, the scarcity of supplies, the exhaustion of medical staff.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Iris: Als es so schien als ob die Zeit zum Stillstand kam, ging das Leben weiter. Wir danken denen, die diese Woche ihre Geburtstage gefeiert haben, dass sie Freude in einer Welt voller Sorgen finden können. Wir beten besonders für Irma, Larissa, Ulrich, Marlis, Anja, Gordon, Lukas und Sonja.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of resurrection, from the very beginning you give the church the gift of women as your witnesses: as preachers, teachers, and leaders. Open our ears to their proclamation this day and always.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The countries of the world experience disunity and conflict; we set our minds on fear and greed rather than on your rule of justice and steadfast love. Build up all countries on your cornerstone of peace.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

As time seems to come to a standstill, life still continues. We thank for those who celebrated their birthdays this week, that they can find joy in a world filled with worry. We pray especially for Irma, Larissa, Ulrich, Marlis, Anja, Gordon, Lukas, and Sonja.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Risen Lord, you went ahead of us into the grave and defeated the powers of evil. We remember those who have died especially Wanda Butchereit who died this week. Inspire us to live our lives in this resurrection hope and draw us to you in our final days.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are Source of life, Word of salvation, and Power of mercy, into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your compassionate might, for the sake of him who lived, died, and rose for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD for Easter (Adapted by Rev. Erik Parker)

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, God of Life, for in Christ the Word you made a new creation: you spoke over the waters of the Jordan, called John to baptize, and sent your Messiah to dying people. For your Risen Word, O God,
we give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!

Through the Word incarnate, you joined with all creation to proclaim the Good News: offering living water to the woman at the well, giving sight to the blind man, calling forth Lazarus from the grave. For your Risen Word, O God,
we give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!

Through Christ the Word who walked among us, you showed us the way of life: you received our condemnation of the cross, forgave our sinfulness, and walked out of the tomb on the third day. For your Risen Word, O God,
we give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!

Send your Spirit of Resurrection, O God; meet us behind locked doors: breathe your peace on us, dispel our fears, and send us out, for the sake of a world in need. Brought to life in your Word, O God, give hope to all in need of Easter joy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory forever. **Amen.**

Blessing

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead
raise you to new life, fill you with hope,
and turn your mourning into dancing.

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Christ is risen, just as he said.

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!