

Second Sunday of Easter

April 16th, 2023

Introduction to the Day

In today's gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gathering around word and meal, and in our everyday lives. Throughout the coming Sundays of Easter the first two readings will be from the Acts of the Apostles and the first letter of Peter. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

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

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life.
Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are welcomed, restored, and supported
as citizens of the new creation.
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Silence for Reflection

Holy God,
holy and merciful,
holy and mighty,
you are the river of life,
you are the everlasting wellspring.

In mercy and might you have freed us from death
and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.
In baptismal waters our old life is washed away,
and in them we are born anew.

As water is poured into the font

Glory to you for oceans and lakes,
for rivers and streams.

Honor to you for waters that wash us clean,
quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and
creatures.

Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism,
the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

**Wash away our sin and all that separates us
from you.
Empower our witness to your resurrection.
Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.**

Satisfy the world's need through this living water.
Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment.
Where despair prevails, grant hope.
Where chaos reigns, bring peace.
We ask this through Christ,
who with you and the Spirit reigns forever.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn “Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!”

#382, vs. 1,2,4

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Reading: Psalm 16

¹Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;

I have said to the LORD, “You are my Lord, my good above all other.”

²**All my delight is in the godly that are in the land,
upon those who are noble among the people.**

³But those who run after other gods

shall have their troubles multiplied.

**⁴I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods,
never take their names upon my lips.**

⁵O LORD, you are my portion and my cup;
it is you who uphold my lot.

**⁶My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;
indeed, I have a rich inheritance.**

⁷I will bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
my heart teaches me night after night.

**⁸I have set the LORD always before me;
because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. R**

⁹My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.

**¹⁰For you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor let your holy one see the pit.**

¹¹You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Gospel: John 20:19-31

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

Sermon

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

So, what do we need for tomorrow?

We've heard the resurrection preached, but for many, we are still living in the Holy Saturday of waiting, wondering when Sunday will come, and the resurrection will be realized.

The disciples can relate. We find them locked in a room for fear of the Jews. In their grief of what has happened to their leader they go into hiding. Some of them may have been around for Jesus' trial and crucifixion. Some are mentioned as being there. But, ultimately, we don't fully know. What we do know is that we find them in hiding in today's gospel text.

And Jesus appears to them. The resurrection is the last thing on their mind. **EVEN THOUGH** earlier in that day Jesus appeared to Peter and to Mary outside of the tomb. Still, they have gone into hiding. Peter and Mary have both, most assuredly, come excitedly telling of the resurrection.

And even so, they are afraid.

And, Thomas, poor Thomas, wasn't even there to experience it when Jesus appeared to them in that room that had the doors locked for fear of the Jews.

We have no idea where Thomas was. For all we know he could have been out proclaiming the risen Christ. Okay, probably not. But, at the very least, he wasn't in *THAT* room hiding for fear of the Jews. So, they tell him about.

"Jesus appeared to us! We saw him!"

Thomas, rightfully so, simply wants his own resurrection experience. And, he has now joined them in that locked room. Under the cover of grief and sorrow, it is nearly impossible for him to imagine the resurrection. No matter how excitedly his friends tell him about it he needs the proof for himself.

We've all had those moments, right, where we've experienced something or missed out on an experience that is nearly impossible to believe? This is where Thomas finds himself.

And, this is where Jesus finds Thomas. In his fear and grief and unbelief Jesus shows up. "Peace be with you. Touch my wounds. See that is me. Do not doubt. Believe."

And, because he has seen, he believes.

So, where do we fit into this? How does *this* story connect to our own stories of fear and grief and unbelief? This experience hardly makes it easier for us to believe this story that has happened, especially when we find ourselves longing for the hope of the very resurrection that they witnessed in that room.

But, the hope of the resurrection, believe it or not, is there. We might need to look for it. It might take a trusted community to embrace us for us to finally realize it. We might need to see the wounds of pain and death to see the hope of life, but it is there.

People of God, we find ourselves basking in the glow of this promise. We don't always see it. We sometimes struggle to realize it. But, the love of God in the resurrected Christ breaks through in the locked places of our hearts and minds reminding us of that which we cling to. The promise of eternal life.

Wherever you find yourself in this story, whether it's the disciples who were in that room from the start, or Thomas who joins them later. Jesus shows up. The Risen Christ breaks in bringing a word of peace.

The Holy Spirit is breathed upon us and we are sent out to make known to all the love of God that death cannot contain.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

Apostle’s Creed

Prayers of Intercession

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of rebirth, the good news of your resurrection brings refreshment to a weary world. Following the women at the tomb, empower us to boldly share your radical love through our words and our work. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

As you breathed your Spirit into the disciples, breathe your spirit of healing upon all creation. Nourish the earth with sufficient rains. Strengthen us to counter the effects of pollution and destruction. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You prepared the disciples for their ministry by calming their fears and granting them your peace. Equip our communities’ leaders (*especially*). Give them a spirit of peace and hearts that burn for justice, that their leadership reflects your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You come among us in unexpected ways. Send us to those who hide in fear or question your love. Be a healing presence for any isolated by addiction, incarceration, mental illness, chronic pain, sickness, or grief (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Sandy*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

As you met the disciples on the road to Emmaus, show us your presence along our journeys. Bless our doubts and questions. Provide trusting and safe relationships for all ages, to nurture our connection to you and one another. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Resurrecting God, you bring us to new life every day. Thank you for blessing us with companions on our faith journey, especially those who now rest in your love (*especially*). Strengthen us with the eternal peace of your promises. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ’s resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

Generous God,
in this meal you offer your very self.
We give thanks for these gifts of the earth.
In the breaking of this bread
reveal to us the Risen One.
In the pouring of this wine
pour us out in service to the world;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Words of Institution

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

Prayer

Gracious God,
in you we live and move and have our being.
With your word and this meal of grace,
you have nourished our life together.
Strengthen us to show your love
and serve the world in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Blessing

The God of all,
who raised † Jesus from the dead,
bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit
to live in the new creation.

Amen.

Sending Song

“Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises”

#433

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord!

Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!

And all of Good Shepherd said...

AMEN!

April Financial Snapshot

Through April 12

Total
Revenue **\$17,220**

3 more Sunday Offerings to Come

Total
Expenses **\$8,330**

\$24,000 - \$27,000 projected expense

April Difference
\$8,890

The Opportunity:

With three Sundays to go in April the opportunity is in front of us to build up the cushion for the typical drop in summer giving.

Feeling Generous?

Consider a "Rebound Gift" to help recover from the extraordinarily high XCel bills of the first quarter of the year.



Join us for our Easter Season Sermon Series: Tomorrow.

As sure as the sun rises on a new day, so too does tomorrow come. Throughout Lent we asked ourselves the question: What do I need for tomorrow. It was the theme of our Easter message. And now, tomorrow is here. So, what do we do with it? Join us this Easter Season as we look to the Tomorrows in our own lives.

Sojourner House Blessing and Open House
May 12, 1-3 p.m.

Empty Bowls - May 18

Feed My People's largest annual fundraiser and gathering to support hunger relief work in west central Wisconsin. \$25 Bowl + Food or \$10 Bowl Only
A variety of food trucks will be on site. A huge selection of artisanal bowls to choose from.
Online Silent Auction. Tours of the Food Bank.



Have you remembered Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in your will or estate plan?

When you make or revise your will or estate plan, or review your life insurance or retirement fund beneficiaries, please consider naming Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd/Endowment as one of your beneficiaries.

The use of the following sample bequest language will ensure that your gift is directed appropriately:

I hereby leave
[% of estate/dollar amount/residue of my estate/% or residue] of my estate/trust to
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd/Endowment
1120 Cedar St. Eau Claire, WI 54703
to be used in such a manner as outlined in the LCGS Gift Policies
[or designated for a specific purpose]