

Easter Sunday – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Introduction to the Day

Christ is risen! Jesus is alive, and God has swallowed up death forever. With Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, we may feel astonished and confused, unsure of what to make of the empty tomb. But this is why we gather: to proclaim, witness, praise, and affirm the liberating reality of Christ's death and resurrection. In word and feast, we celebrate God's unending love, and depart to share this good news with all the world. Alleluia!

**Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the wellspring of grace,  
our Easter and our joy.

**Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Immersed in the promises of baptism,  
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.  
We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning  
your voice thundered over the deep  
and water became the essence of life.  
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.  
The ark carried your creation through the flood into  
a new day.  
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed  
through the sea  
into freedom's land.

In a desert pool the Ethiopian official  
entered your boundless baptismal life.  
Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John  
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection  
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,  
freeing us to live as Easter people.  
We rejoice with glad hearts,  
giving all honor and praise to you,  
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

**Processional Gospel – Mark 16:1-7**

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Jesus' body. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."

**Easter Proclamation**

**Christ is Risen**

Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

**Processional Hymn**

**"Jesus Christ is Risen Today"**

**#365**

**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.

## **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.**

## **Reading – Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

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

<sup>2</sup>**Let Israel now declare, "God's mercy endures forever."**

<sup>14</sup>The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

<sup>15</sup>**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:**

**"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!**

<sup>16</sup>The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

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

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

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

<sup>20</sup>"This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter."

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

<sup>22</sup>The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

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

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

## **Easter Anthem – "Sing an Easter Alleluia!"**

## **Children's Message**

### **Holy Gospel – Mark 16:8-16**

But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."

So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. She went out and told those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

After this he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table, and he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.

The one who believes and is baptized will be saved, but the one who does not believe will be condemned.

P: The Gospel of our Lord

**C: 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

Honest question: Any of you reading this find yourself thinking, “I would’ve believed it.” ??

This is a truly unbelievable story. It doesn’t happen. It shouldn’t happen.

But it did. For Jesus, it happened.

And he appeared to those closest to him and continually called them to experience it. Mark’s gospel gives us a quick glance at the endings of the other 3 gospels. Mark’s Gospel actually ends at verse 8. Jesus tells the women at the tomb to go and tell everyone, but, because they were terrified and amazed they said nothing to anyone.

The shorter ending tells us that they did briefly tell Peter what they had experienced and what Jesus had commanded them. Jesus, too, would go out among them and make his appearances.

People didn’t like that ending. The open-ended feeling of that shorter ending didn’t sit well with later readers of the Gospel of Mark. So, they took snippets from the other Gospel endings to give Mark’s Gospel just a touch more meat.

First. Mary Magdalene has her Jesus encounter. Jesus appears to her, and she assumes he is just the gardener, until he calls her by name, “Mary” and she goes from there to tell the others who were with him what she had seen.

But, they did not believe her.

Then, we hear that Jesus appeared to a couple of His followers on a road to the country. They invited Him, this weary traveler, to stay with them for the night. And, it was in that invitation that Jesus breaks bread in their presence and it is in that that they have their own resurrection encounter. They go back to tell the others of what they have experienced. That they have seen and experienced the risen Christ! That he broke bread with them.

But, they did not believe the two.

Finally, we get the story of Jesus appearing to the eleven and he upbraids them. Sidebar: anyone ever heard that word used before? We had to look it up at Bible Study on Tuesday. Upbraid: to find fault with someone, or scold someone.

Jesus SCOLDS the eleven for not believing the testimony of those who experienced the risen Christ. Jesus found fault with the 11 because of their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

Now, we might hear this and think it is a call for us to scold those among us who, when I first asked the question of who among us found themselves thinking, “I believe it,” responded with a shake of the head. I tell you today that is not what this is. In fact, it is the exact opposite.

For us, Jesus is affirming the storytelling that DID happen.

Jesus calls us to tell this story. We are created to be storytellers. That is why we are here. That is why we are hearing the story told today, because it needs to be told!

Now, how we tell this story varies. We *think* that telling this story means that we revert to the clichés that have come from it. We *think* that this is some easy fix for us. We expect others to find comfort in what have become platitudes of faith that we often find ourselves experiencing that near upbraided feeling.

And that is simply not the case.

For us, the resurrection is experienced in the moments of sitting with someone who needs us to sit with them. These disciples were grieving. Their grief clouded their vision of what was right in front of them, and if you’ve been there before you know the hopeless feeling they likely felt.

But, Jesus shows up.

Jesus shows up in those who tell the story, each in their own way, to a world that needs to hear it.

People of God, we are created to be those storytellers that bring the resurrection story to God’s people.

This is a truly unbelievable story. And life situations make it all the more difficult to believe. Resurrection doesn't happen. It shouldn't happen.

But. It did. For Jesus, it happened.

And, thanks be to God, for us, it happens.

AMEN

## Hymn of the Day

“Now all the Vault of Heaven Resound”

#367

## Apostle's Creed

### Prayers

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, we pray for the body of Christ, the church. Where the church is persecuted, protect it. Where the church is privileged, grant it humility. Where the church is fractured, heal it. Guide us all to embody Christ's love in the world. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Life-giving God, we pray for the earth, your good creation. Join our prayers with branches lifted in praise and roaring waters of new life, that together we may proclaim Easter hope. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, we pray for all peoples and nations. Free oppressed communities from occupation, exploitation, and abuse. Teach leaders your way of justice. Empower peacemakers and all who work to end violence and strife. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Liberating God, we pray for people everywhere who long for good news. Roll away the stones that keep people from living with dignity and wholeness. Breathe new life and hope into people struggling to make it through each day (*We pray especially for Matt, David, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Cherri, Peggy, John, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Dan and Sharon, Roger and MaryLee*). God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Loving God, we pray for this community of faith (*name/s may be spoken here*) and for your Spirit in our midst. Feed us at your Easter table and fill us with your wisdom, that we may serve and care for others. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Eternal God, we remember those who have gone before us in death (*especially John Donne and all whose ministry in the arts inspired generations to faith*). Renew our trust in your promises, that we live with joyful courage and compassion. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

**Amen.**

### Peace

### Offering

### Offertory Prayer

Risen One,

you call us to believe and bear fruit.

May the gifts that we offer here

be signs of your abiding love.  
Form us to be your witnesses in the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our true vine.  
Amen.

## **Sacrament of Holy Communion**

### **Lord's Prayer**

### **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.**

### **Choir Anthem        “Joyful, Joyful”**

### **Blessing**

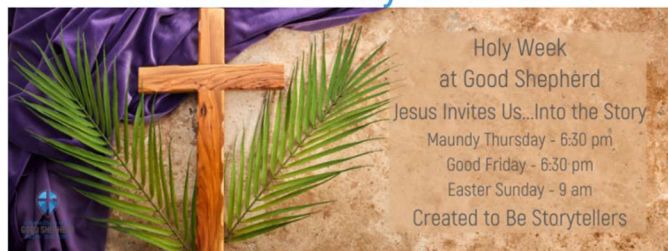
Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**  
The God of resurrection power,  
the Christ of unending joy,  
and the Spirit of Easter hope  
✠ bless you now and always.  
**Amen.**

### **Sending Hymn                “Thine is the Glory”                #374**

### **Sending**

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.  
**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**  
And all of Good Shepherd said,  
**“AMEN”**

## Your Generosity in Action:



Generosity is about much more than financial resources. The Music Ministries of Good Shepherd have been working to prepare numerous pieces to provide powerful meaningful Holy Week worship. We hope you'll come and be a part of the Holy Week Story.

Monthly Financials to date:	Total Revenue	Total Expenses	Difference
	<b>\$25,570</b>	<b>\$21,326</b>	<b>\$4,244</b>
	2023: \$22,024	2023: \$25,072	Checkbook thru February \$25,942

*We are thankful for all who provided flowers to beautify our sanctuary on this Easter Sunday – the day of our Lord's Resurrection!*

Jo Anderson & Keith Franson Barth Family	In memory of Keith's Mom, Katie Franson
Carol Brose	In memory of Frank
Gena Coach	In memory of Robert and Cody and all my loved ones
Joe and Nancy Dennie	In memory of loved ones
David & Melody Dragseth	In memory of Curt, Mike and Keith
Frank and Heather Garber	In honor of friends and family
Mavis Gardow and Family	In memory of George
Clarice Gardow	In memory of Robert Gardow
	In honor of children, Steve, Jeff, Mark Gardow, Julie and Scott Revoir; Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren
Gilbertson Families	
Mark and Vicki Golden	For our Moms
Mike and Barb Huggins	In memory of our parents and grandparents
Matt and Laura Johnson Family	In memory of Mom and Grandma, Bonnie Bartosh Priest, and Grandma Bartosh
Matt and Laura Johnson Family	In memory of parents and grandparents, Daniel and Sandy Johnson
Marie Kunferman	In memory of loved ones
Sandy Nelson	In memory of Jim
Dave and Teri Oestreich	In memory of Sheridan and Dora Burce
Ann and Jim Schlegelmilch & Kay and Bill Hagedorn	Given in memory of loved ones
Roger and MaryLee Szymoniak	In honor of grandchildren Auburin, Tyler and Tristin

A photograph of a church service. A man in a dark suit stands at a podium on the right, drawing on a large canvas. The canvas depicts a shepherd with sheep in a lush, colorful landscape with a waterfall and a rainbow. The scene is projected onto a large screen on the left. The church interior has a brick wall and a large wooden cross. A congregation is visible in the foreground.

# MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

APRIL 21 - GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY  
DRAWN TO THE WORD  
AT GOOD SHEPHERD