

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER



April 11, 2021

10:00 a.m.

INTRODUCTION

The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we play in the mystery of Christ's presence, mostly through the glorious Gospel of John. Today we gather with the disciples on the first Easter, and Jesus breathes the Spirit on us. With Thomas we ask for a sign, and Jesus offers us his wounded self in the broken bread. From frightened individuals we are transformed into a community of open doors, peace, forgiveness, and material sharing such that no one among us is in need.

PRELUDE



+ GATHERING +

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P Alleluia! Christ is risen

Congregation (C) Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P We thank you, risen Christ, for these waters where you make us new, leading us from death to life, from tears to joy. We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth, like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls, like cups of cool water shared with strangers. Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear. Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness. Send us companions on our journey as we share your life. Make us one, risen Christ. Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life. To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

C Amen.

1 That Eas - ter day with joy was bright; the
 2 O Je - sus, king of gen - tle - ness, with
 3 O Christ, you are the Lord of all in
 4 All praise, O ris - en Lord, we give to

sun shone out with fair - er light when, to their long - ing
 con - stant love our hearts pos - sess; to you our lips will
 this our Eas - ter fes - ti - val, for you will be our
 you, once dead, but now a - live! To God the Fa - ther

eyes re - stored, the a - pos - tles saw their ris - en Lord!
 ev - er raise the trib - ute of our grate - ful praise.
 strength and shield from ev - 'ry weap - on death can wield.
 e - qual praise, and God the Spir - it, now we raise!

Text: Latin hymn, 5th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.
 Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

GREETING

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

C And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb



who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, with joy we celebrate the day of our Lord's resurrection. By the grace of Christ among us, enable us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Acts 4:32-35

While the apostles testified to others about the resurrection of Jesus, the early Christian community shared what they owned or sold their possessions to help their fellow believers who were in need.

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 133 *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader ¹How good and how pleas- | ant it is,
 when kindred live togeth- | er in unity!

**C ²It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down up- | on the beard,
 upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar | of his robe.**

L ³It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the | hills of Zion.
 For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life for- | evermore.

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

C Amen.

SECOND READING: 1 John 1:1--2:2

The opening of this letter serves as a reality check. The reality of God is light, but our confessed reality has been sin. God cleanses us from our sinful reality through Christ's death so that we live in fellowship with Christ and walk in God's light.

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

²¹My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ²²and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

The story of Easter continues as the risen Jesus appears to his disciples. His words to Thomas offer a blessing to all who entrust themselves in faith to the risen Lord.

P The holy gospel according to John, the twentieth chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

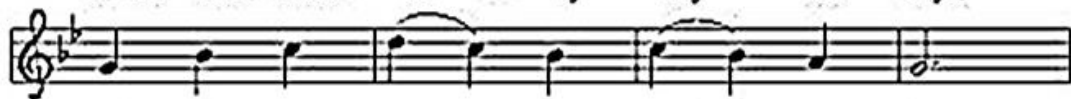
HYMN OF THE DAY **386** *O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing (vs. 1, 4, 6, 7 & 9)*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 O sons and daugh - ters, let us sing
2 That Eas - ter morn, at break of day,
3 An an - gel clad in white they see,
4 That night the a - pos - tles met in fear;
Insert stanzas 5-8 if desired.
9 On this most ho - ly day of days,



with heav'n - ly hosts to Christ our king:
the faith - ful wom - en went their way
who sits and speaks un - to the three,
a - mong them came their mas - ter dear,
be laud and ju - bi - lee and praise:



to - day the grave has lost its sting! Al - le - lu - ia!
to seek the tomb where Je - sus lay, Al - le - lu - ia!
"Your Lord will go to Gal - i - lee," Al - le - lu - ia!
and said, "My peace be with you here." Al - le - lu - ia!
to God your hearts and voic - es raise. Al - le - lu - ia!

After the final stanza



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>5 When Thomas first the tidings heard,
that they had seen the risen Lord,
he doubted the disciples' word.
Alleluia!</p> <p>6 "My pierced side, O Thomas, see,
and look upon my hands, my feet;
not faithless, but believing be."
Alleluia!</p> | <p>7 No longer Thomas then denied;
he saw the feet, the hands, the side;
"You are my Lord and God!" he cried.
Alleluia!</p> <p>8 How blest are they who have not seen,
and yet whose faith has constant been,
for they eternal life shall win.
Alleluia!</p> |
|---|--|

APOSTLES' CREED

A Let us confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

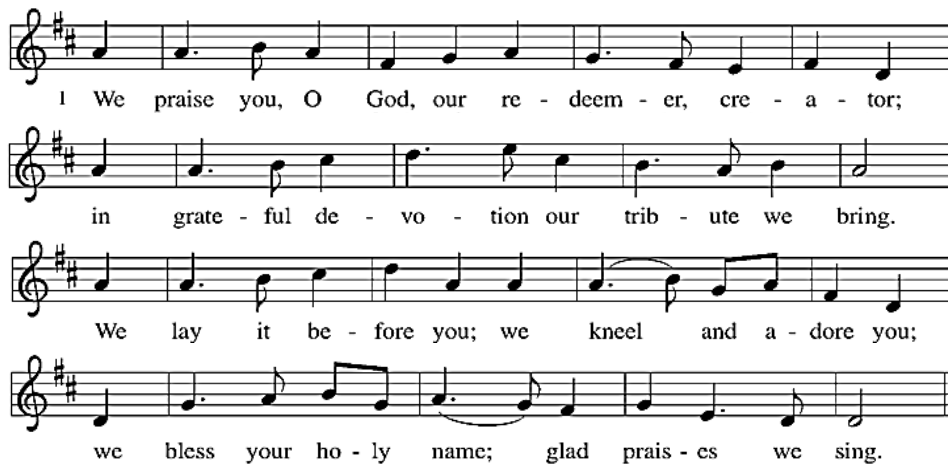
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.

Congregational response: Your mercy is great.

OFFERING HYMN *We Praise You, O God (vs. 1)*



I We praise you, O God, our re - deem - er, cre - a - tor;
in grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
we bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

+ SENDING +

BLESSING *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, ✙ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN 376 *Thine Is the Glory (vs. 1 & 2)*

1 Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con - qu'ring Son; end - less is the
 2 Lo, Je - sus meets thee, ris - en from the tomb! Lov - ing - ly he
 3 No more we doubt thee, glo - rious Prince of life; life is naught with-

vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won! An - gels in bright rai - ment
 greets thee, scat - ters fear and gloom; let his church with glad - ness
 out thee; aid us in our strife; make us more than con - qu'rors,

rolled the stone a - way, kept the fold - ed grave - clothes
 hymns of tri - umph sing, for the Lord now liv - eth;
 through thy death - less love; bring us safe through Jor - dan

Refrain
 where thy bod - y lay.
 death hath lost its sting! Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con - qu'ring
 to thy home a - bove.

Son; end - less is the vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won!

DISMISSAL

- A We believe out loud that God's mission for us is:
- C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.**
- P Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!
- C Thanks be to God.**

+ + +

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**FLOWERS ARE GIVEN
TO THE GLORY OF GOD.**

Calendar for April 11 - 18

April	11	Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Worship (online), Second Sunday of Easter
			11:30 a.m.	Congregational picnic
	14	Wed.	Noon	Bible study (online)
	18	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship (online), Third Sunday of Easter

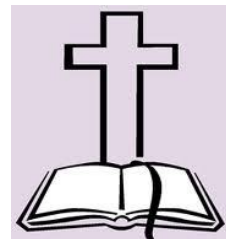
Next Sunday's Readings, Third Sunday of Easter:

[Acts 3:12-19](#)

[Psalm 4](#)

[1 John 3:1-7](#)

[Luke 24:36b-48](#)



PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: The family of Patricia Louise Basford (stepmother of Nathan Basford), mourning her passing; the family of Kim Hancock (colleague of Cheryl Stuart), our shared sympathy on the death of her sister from Covid; Mark Canning, recovering from heart surgery.

For the sick: Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor); being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Jamie Ann Meyers (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Gerhard Hofer (brother-in-law of Ridy Hofer).

In treatment for cancer: Stephanie Barber; Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Chris Dickman (synod councilmember); child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl).

For health and protection: For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personal, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc. All immigrant families split apart by US Government; for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those “unaccounted for”.

For prisoners: Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

Other concerns: Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

Church concerns: St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

World concerns: For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.