

Welcome

The Lord be with you. Dear siblings in Christ, welcome to worship!

It is Easter! You thought it was just last week, but it isn't – every morning is Easter morning! And every Sunday is an Easter celebration. But more than that, the church likes to celebrate good things for a long time – so the next 50 days are all part of the season of Easter. We'll be reading stories of people who met Jesus after he walked out of the tomb the next few weeks.

The first Sunday after Easter is always the story of the skeptic. You might be used to hearing him called "Doubting Thomas" but we want to give him more credit than that label does. And today, our Alaska Synod Bishop, Shelley Wickstrom, will do that. Surprise! We have a guest preacher even in this chaos!

If you'd like to participate in worship with the prayers and responses, head to our website: lordoflifeak.com and click on the pdf document to follow along.

It's our practice to pause as we move into worship, to quiet the noises within ourselves and become aware of God's presence with us. It's also a time to remember that we are not gathering alone, but with the whole communion of saints. So together, let us pause and join our hearts as we come to worship.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen. C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

In this season of Easter, it is especially fitting to celebrate baptism. Through our baptisms, we are joined to Christ's death and are raised with him to new life. So we begin by giving thanks for God's work in our baptism.

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 water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.

Remembering the gift of your grace in our baptisms, you shower us again with the water of life.

We praise you for your salvation through water, for the water in this font, for the water of melting snow, 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

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.

Scripture, 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.

Sermon from Shelley Wickstrom

Bishop of the Alaska Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Hymn of the Day is "We are Baptized in Christ Jesus" by John Ylvisaker

We are baptized in Christ Jesus, we are baptized in his death;
that as Christ is raised victorious, we might live a brand new life.
And if we have been united in a dreadful death like his,
we will all be reunited, for he lives.

In the water and the witness, in the breaking of the bread,
in the waiting arms of Jesus who is risen from the dead,
God has made a new beginning from the ashes of our past;
in the losing and the winning we hold fast.

Glory be to God the Father, glory be to Christ the Son,
glory to the Holy Spirit, ever three and ever one;
as it was in the beginning, glory now resounds again
in a song that has no ending, amen.

Apostle's Creed

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.

Prayers of God's People

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.

Open the doors we close, O God, when we fear those who worship you in different ways. Guide us to unity and harmony so that we may come to respect and cherish our commonalities. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Open the paths we ignore, O God, when we prioritize financial gain and convenience over listening to the groaning of the earth. Inspire all to care for the world you have made so that living things might thrive. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Open the rooms we lock, O God, to those who live without a homeland or place of safety. We pray that generous nations offer refuge and peace for all. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Open the hearts we close, O God, to the cries of those in pain. We pray for those isolated physically and emotionally in this time, especially those with addictions, mental illness, chronic suffering, grief, and all whom we name before you now ... Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Open the ways of love, O God, in the pursuit of peace throughout the world, and bless the efforts of missionaries, healthcare professionals, activists for women and children, and relief workers, especially those who find themselves in harm's way. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

We pray together with hope the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us to pray,

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever, amen.

Offering

Filled with the things of God, we live in response to God's grace poured out on us. Keep offering good works on behalf of your neighbors, get creative in extending care to others, and continue to support your church and community with financial gifts to ensure our ministries have a future. What we are doing matters to God.

You may mail your offering to our locked mailbox at 1005 St. Nicholas Drive, North Pole, AK 99705. You may give securely on our website, lordoflifeak.com by clicking the "Giving" tab and "I'd like to give" button. You may give securely from your phone using the "Give Plus Church" app, search by our zip code of 99705 and choose Lord of Life, and follow the easy instructions.

Let us pray, Merciful God, you take our ordinary gifts and make them into an abundance. Do the same with our lives, that we may serve in the name and strength of the risen Christ, amen.

Announcements

DEEP GRATITUDE to everyone who participated in last week's drive-in worship: the Pahkamaa, Peterson, Sandbo, and Renner/Ungrodt families. None of it would have been possible without Jason at the sound board – just like Good Friday's compilation wouldn't have happened either – so a shout-out to my talented and patient spouse.

Our council met last Monday and noted the ways our church has become visible to the community through this crisis. If you are part of our worshiping community whether in person for 2 or 20 or our almost 45 years, or you have joined us this way – you belong here, and we're glad God has brought you here.

Blessing

May the One who brought Jesus forth 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!