

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER
MAY 4, 2025
8:30 AM



Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church
Reinholds, Pennsylvania

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT SWAMP LUTHERAN CHURCH

Visitors are welcome and invited to make themselves at home. If you're interested in learning more about Swamp Lutheran, have questions, or are looking for a church home, speak with Pastor Scott or church members. Please complete a visitor card and place it in the offering plate or sign guest register in narthex.

Restrooms are located off the narthex (lobby) by the coat rack.

The worship service is printed in this bulletin. **Hymns** are found in the red hymnal Evangelical Lutheran Worship. **Children's** active presence is welcomed in our worship. There are special kids bulletins available in the narthex and at the side entrance.

Offering plates are passed. Additionally, there is an offering drop box in the narthex. Online giving via cell phone is easy and secure. Just use this QR code from your phone's camera app.



Our worship is rooted in the ancient pattern of the church—gathering, word, meal, sending. The shape of this liturgy and much of the actual words/prayers come directly from scripture. Though we make seasonal shifts, the constancy of our worship reflects God's constant love and promises through forgiveness, scripture, and the sacraments of baptism and communion. Following this liturgical pattern, as well as the Revised Common Lectionary, a three-year cycle of scripture readings, connects us through our worship with Christians around the world and throughout time.

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive **Holy Communion**. We believe "Holy Communion is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and drink." (Small Catechism, Martin Luther) Children who do not yet receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

Website – Be sure and check our website www.swamplutheran.org regularly for updates and schedules of ongoing activities of the church. Full prayer list is in the newsletter each month.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

The disciples make a big splash and eat breakfast with the risen Jesus. Wading in the water (remembering baptism) and eating with Jesus (celebrating holy communion) is our weekly encounter with the risen Christ. Jesus asks us again and again: Do you love me? And Jesus invites us, again and again, to follow him, bringing the Easter life to others.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE THIS JOYFUL EASTERTIDE PAUL BOUMAN

congregational responses are in bold type.

Stand

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

In the name of ✠ the One
who was, who is, and who is to come. **Amen.**

Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection,
and called to live the baptized life,
let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Holy God,
we give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that make a people your own,
that restore to wholeness,
and empower us to be witnesses in your name.
Baptized into you, O Living One,
make us one as you are one.

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that strengthen believers
and give new life to beloved servants of your church;
waters that extend your boundless love
and cross barriers of our own making.
Baptized into you, O Living One,
make us one as you are one.

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,
waters that open the hearts of believers
and give a voice in the night to those in captivity;
waters that set your people on a new path,
rejoicing in the Spirit's power.
Baptized into you, O Living One,
make us one as you are one.

Grant us grace, love, and life, O Living One,
that our every day is shaped by these waters
that give us our very lives in you.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN BLESSING AND HONOR ELW 854

GREETING

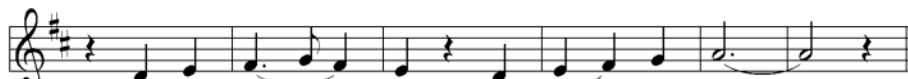
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the
Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Hymn of Praise



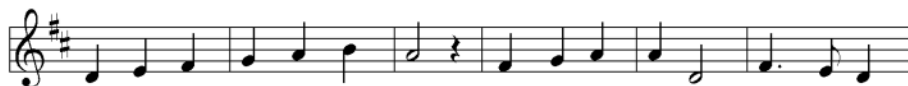
☐ This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.



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



☐ Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. ☐ Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.



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



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

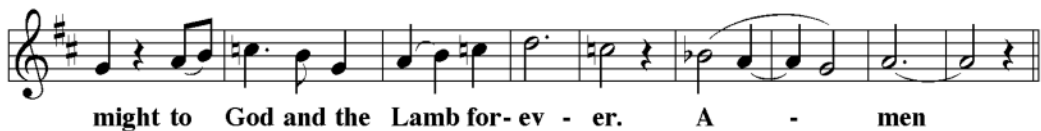


☐ Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and join in the hymn of



all cre - a - tion: ☐ Bless - ing and hon - or, glo - ry and

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Eternal and all-merciful God, with all the angels and all the saints we laud your majesty and might. By the resurrection of your Son, show yourself to us and inspire us to follow Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sit

ANTHEM FEED MY SHEEP ARR. JOAN REPPERT

Children leave for Children's Church

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

Psalm 30

¹I will exalt you, O LORD, because you have lift- | ed me up
and have not let my enemies triumph | over me.

²**O LORD my God, I cried | out to you,
and you restored | me to health.**

³You brought me up, O LORD, | from the dead;
you restored my life as I was going down | to the grave.

⁴**Sing praise to the LORD, | all you faithful;
give thanks in ho- | ly remembrance.**

⁵God's wrath is short; God's favor | lasts a lifetime.
Weeping spends the night, but joy comes | in the morning.

⁶**While I felt se- | cure, I said,
"I shall never | be disturbed.**

⁷You, LORD, with your favor, made me as strong | as the mountains."
Then you hid your face, and I was | filled with fear.

⁸**I cried to | you, O LORD;
I pleaded with | my Lord, saying,**

⁹“What profit is there in my blood, if I go down | to the pit?

Will the dust praise you or de- | clare your faithfulness?

¹⁰**Hear, O LORD, and have mer- | cy upon me;**

O LORD, | be my helper.”

¹¹You have turned my wailing | into dancing;

you have put off my sackcloth and clothed | me with joy.

¹²**Therefore my heart sings to you | without ceasing;**

O LORD my God, I will give you | thanks forever.

READING: **Revelation 5:11-14**

¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹²singing with full voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing,

“To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might
forever and ever!”

¹⁴And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the elders fell down and worshiped.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY

GOSPEL: **John 21:1-19**

The Holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

The risen Christ appears again to his disciples by the sea where they were first called. After echoes of the fishing and feeding miracles, he gives a final reminder of the cost of a disciple's love and obedience.

¹After [he appeared to his followers in Jerusalem,] Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. ²Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." ⁶He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

⁹When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very

truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” ¹⁹(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

CHILDREN RETURN FROM CHILDREN’S CHURCH

CHILDREN’S SERMON

Stand

APOSTLES’ CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

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.

**that is, the true, universal Christian church of all times and places*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

After each petition:

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share the peace.

Sit

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERTORY

I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

GORDON YOUNG

OFFERING

In addition to the plate, online giving via cell phone is safe and secure. See QR code on the inside cover of this bulletin.

As the offering is brought to the table, the congregation stands and sings.

Create in Me a Clean Heart
Offering Song

The musical score is written on six staves in a single system. It is in the key of B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: 'Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.' The score ends with a double bar line.

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.
Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me
with your free Spir - it. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God,
and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.

Music: *Liturgy of Joy*, James M. Capers, b. 1948
Music © 1993 Augsburg Fortress.

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OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One,
**you have gathered us around your table of grace
along with these gifts we bring.
Come among us again,
breathe your life into us,
and enliven us with this meal,
that we may live as your risen body in the world.
Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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. Ame**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.
Thanks be to God.

LAMB OF GOD *remain standing*



THE

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Following the direction of the ushers, form a circle to receive communion. The bread, cup, and wine will be brought to you. Grape juice and gluten free options are available—tell the usher. After being communed, please return to your seat. After all have communed, stand

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Let us pray.
Living One,
in this feast you have made yourself known to us.
Send us now to tell of your wonders,
sing of your glory,
and proclaim your risen life
to a wounded and weary world. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

The triune God,
who was, who is, and who is to come,
Sovereign, ✠ Savior, and Spirit,
light your way with resurrection dawn,
now and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN YOU SERVANTS OF GOD ELW 825

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. In Christ you are made new. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

POSTLUDE With High Delight Let Us Unite Charles Callahan

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CIRCLE OF PRAYER - Hunter Leisey, John Frantz, Ed Miller, John Wesner, Jeff Kappenstein, Nettie Kriener, Clair Sweigart, Faith Moyer, Michael A. Crowther, Reba Ranck, Grace Ranck, Ray Fox, Gene Miller, Jean Wolf, Bobby Hershey, Marilyn Gelsinger, Edith Snyder, Teresa Sweigart, Mel and Troy Ulrich, Earl Myers, Elizabeth Sherman, Judy Habecker, Anna Rose Schannauer, Pauline Wassmer, Jerry Landis, Mary Beth Jenkins, Evelyn Gehman, Joan Leed, Ron Adams, Kevin Williams, Karen Laudenslager, Susan Levan, Larry Eberly, Anson Kauffman, Janet Bingaman, Dwayne Dimitris, Gladys Eckenroad, Bonnie Koehle-Koon, Ross Houck, Chris Zander, Kathleen Troutman, Sally Bergman,

Keith Reimert, Larry Hagy, Pam Heisey, Cathy Stine, Connie Malafarina, Ted Heisey(Jenny Weitzel's brother), family of Molly Weitzel, family of Michael Wargo, family of Diane Showalter Emes.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given in loving memory of his wife, Anna Hershey, by Robert Hershey.

SANCTUARY CANDLE is given in memory of Nancy Kulp by Sue Kreitz.

ALTAR FLOWER/CANDLE UPDATE: Thank you to everyone who donated to the Altar Flower and Sanctuary Candle ministry. The 2025 Flower Calendar is posted in the Narthex. The Sanctuary Candle cost will remain at \$5.00 and the cost of the Altar Flowers remains at \$40.00 (subject to change).

OFFERING ENVELOPES – If you give via the online option, let us know by email (secretary@swamplutheran.org) or by phone to the office so that you will no longer receive offering envelopes for 2025.

FOOD BANK – Needs of the food bank are ongoing and need replenished monthly. There is a need for paper towels, toilet paper, canned tuna, chicken, vegetables and soup. Thank you for helping as you are able. We distribute on the 2nd Wednesday each month. Please check for a current expiration date.

ACTION FUND – Donations are sought for Swamp Action Fund to help the needy in our community. Write “Action Fund” in the comment line of your check payable to Swamp Lutheran Church.

Cocalico Builders of Hope fundraiser. Strawberry Shortcake Stand at Adamstown Community Days, May 29-31 in the Grove. Featuring Boehringer's ice cream. Come out and enjoy a sweet treat!



Gently Used Sneakers Needed. SLY is collecting sneakers as a fundraiser. Used sneakers (pairs only; athletic shoes only) may be deposited in the bins located in the Narthex and the social hall lobby. SLY is **not** able to accept any non-athletic footwear including but not limited to dress shoes, heels, rain boots, sandals, slip-ons, water socks, wedges, and work boots of any kind. Questions may be addressed to Pastor Scott Brubaker at 717-336-2849 or email pastor@swamplutheran.org



US FLAGS When a US flag becomes worn, faded, torn or soiled, it should be retired and replaced with a new flag. For those of you interested in retiring your worn US flags, please bring them to the church. We will collect them in the church library and deliver them to the Reinholds VFW who will arrange for them to be retired in proper fashion. Thank you for your consideration.



LIVESTREAM TECHNICIAN

We need volunteers to learn and share in the livestreaming and sound control for Sunday worship. We need additional helpers so that we can create a rotation schedule. If interested or to learn more, contact Pastor Scott.

Widow & Widowers Luncheon at 11:30am on Tuesday May 13 at Udder Choice Ephrata, located in a private room, upon entering, on right. (separate checks) Pastor Glenn Beard will be the guest speaker and will be sharing his experiences with Disaster Response of the ELCA. If you have a widow or widower friend, feel free to bring them along! We ask that you contact Terri to RSVP at 717-336-2849 for a headcount for the restaurant. We hope to see you soon..and remember **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

Greeter Schedule May

4 Ken & Sam Reimert
11 Deb Kohl
18 Deb Sweigert
25 Glenn & Linda Beard

Greeters Schedule for June

1 David & Laraine Kramer
8 Lamar & June Eberly
15 Pam Leisey
22 Gene & Heather Ferrari
29 Lowell & Sandy Haws

SERVICE COMMITTEE LWR Personal Care Kits.

During the months of March and April we will be collecting items for personal care kits. The following items are included in each kit, you may donate a complete kit or individual items.

- 1 light-weight bath size towel (maximum 52"X27"), dark color recommended
- 2 bath size bars (4 or 5 oz) of soap in original wrapping

- 1 adult size toothbrush in its original packaging
- 1 sturdy comb, remove packaging
- 1 metal nail clippers, remove packaging

Do not add other items than those that are listed. All items should be new. All kits, soap, and quilts can be collected for LWR until Sunday, October 1st. Thank you for your support of Lutheran World Relief's worldwide mission! Jane Leshar 717-471-2974.

On behalf of Learning Committee, thank you for the prize donations and to our a Sunday School teachers, youth group leaders, and all other volunteers who supported and worked together to provide the community egg hunt on April 19, and the Flashlight Egg Hunt on April 11. Over 1000 eggs were filled with candy for the young children, plus extra for the older youth's flashlight search. Additionally, there were snacks, crafts or a movie, and additional activities for both groups. A joyous way to welcome the Easter season!

Week in the Parish (May 5 - 11)

May 5	7:00PM	Bell Choir
May 6	6:00PM	Zoom Bible Study
May 6	7:00PM	Welcome Cmte
May 7	7:00PM	Choir
May 11	MOTHER'S DAY	
May 11	8:30AM	Worship
May 11	9:45AM	Sunday School

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 12	7:00PM	Bell Choir
May 13	11:30AM	Widow & Widowers Luncheon
May 13	6:00PM	Zoom Bible Study
May 14	1-4:00PM	EASS Food Distribution
May 14	7:00PM	Choir

May 15	6:30PM	Learning Cmte
May 16	OFFICE CLOSED	
May 17	2:00PM Bell Choir Afternoon of Music at Reinholds Trinity	
Chapel		
May 18	8:30AM	Worship
May 18	9:45AM	Sunday School
May 18	11:00AM	Spring Fest

DAILY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK

<i>Monday May 5</i>	Psalm 121 Ezekiel 1:1-25 Acts 9:19b-31
<i>Tuesday May 6</i>	Psalm 121 Ezekiel 1:26—2:1 Acts 26:1-18
<i>Wednesday May 7</i>	Psalm 121 Isaiah 6:1-8 Luke 5:1-11
<i>Thursday May 8</i>	Psalm 23 Ezekiel 11:1-25 Revelation 5:1-10
<i>Friday May 9</i>	Psalm 23 Ezekiel 20:39-44 Revelation 6:1—7:4
<i>Saturday May 10</i>	Psalm 23 Ezekiel 28:25-26 Luke 12:29-32

UPCOMING SUNDAY READINGS

Sunday Fourth Sunday of Easter Acts 9:36-43 Psalm 23 Revelation 7:9-17
John 10:22-30

Orders are being taken for red geraniums for Pentecost, Sunday June 8th, 2025. Price is not yet known and the deadline for ordering is Sunday May 18th. Please give the following information the church office or Jodi Showalter 717-413-7149.

Name_____ Phone Number_____

Red Geraniums_____

In memory of_____

In honor of _____



★ ★ ★

SPRING FEST

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT FOR ALL AGES

May 18 @ 11AM

Swamp Lutheran Church
275 Swamp Church Road, Reinholds, PA 17569

**The Swing Fever Band, Free Food,
Games for Kids. All proceeds go to Stockings for
Soldiers shipping costs and Wreaths Across
America for the local Swamp Church Cemetery**

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
CONTACT THE CHURCH AT 717.336.2849**



Swamp Lutheran Church

**Philadelphia Phillies
Bus Trip**

Philadelphia Phillies

vs.

Washington Nationals

August 22, 2025

Game Time 6:45 PM

\$100.00

300 Level Ticket (3rd baseline)

Miller Lite Floppy Hat Giveaway

**Round trip Deluxe Motor Coach to/from Swamp Lutheran
Church and Citizens Bank Park**

Snacks and Door Prizes

**CONTACT: RUTH KRAMER (717) 335-8018 or
LORI GOCKLEY (717) 203-8551 by JUNE 2, 2025**



**REINHOLDS STATION TRINITY CHAPEL
PRESENTS**

*An Afternoon of Music by
The Swamp Lutheran Church
Handbell Choir
under the direction of Mr. Doug Kulp*

May 17, 2025 2:00PM



114 E. Main St.
Reinholds, PA 17569
717 336-6846

The public is invited to this free concert.
Donations are accepted

Other Readings for this Sunday

Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]

Saul (later called Paul) was an ardent persecutor of all who followed the Way of Christ. This reading recounts the story of his transformation beginning with an encounter with Jesus Christ on the way to Damascus.

¹Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." [⁷The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹²and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." ¹³But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; ¹⁴and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." ¹⁵But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." ¹⁷So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, ¹⁹and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, ²⁰and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."]

GOSPEL MESSAGE

May 4, 2025

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Grace upon Grace

The risen Christ is difficult to recognize at first. According to today's gospel reading from John, even as he approached his disciples on the beach, they "did not know that it was Jesus" (John 21:4). Neither did Mary Magdalene recognize him outside the tomb on Easter morning. She assumed he was the gardener (20:14-15). Apparently, resurrection changes Jesus to the extent that he appears a stranger even to his closest friends.

That is, until he makes himself known to them again. In Mary's case, he simply speaks her name. "Rabbouni! Teacher!" she replies, newly hopeful as she carries the good news to the others (20:16-18). For the disciples in the fishing boat, it is a miraculous catch that brings Jesus' identity to light. "It is the Lord!" the beloved disciple says to Peter, who promptly dives overboard to reach Jesus on the shore (21:7).

As the story draws to a close, Jesus returns to his disciples with signs that he will continue to be with them. He calls them by name, feeds them with abundance, and invites them again into lives of purpose: "Do you love me? . . . Feed my sheep" (21:17). In this way, the end of the Gospel of John recalls the beginning. Jesus, crucified and risen, continues to grant his followers "grace upon grace" (1:16).

Moreover, the end of John signals the beginning of Jesus' ministry alongside disciples through the ages. The risen Jesus is a mystery to us too. We may not readily recognize him in the course of daily life. Yet even as he is hidden from view, he is also revealed. In baptism, he calls us by name. At his table, he feeds us with abundance. At the doorways of our gathering places, he invites us again and again into lives of purpose. Grace upon grace.

Christ is risen indeed. Come, follow him!

Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church

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SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:30AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45AM

You are Welcome Here!

At Swamp Lutheran Church, *Grace is Spoken Here!* We welcome with full participation and inclusion all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, imprisonment, physical or mental health, socio-economic circumstances or anything that too often divides us. Together as one in the Spirit, our unity is in Jesus Christ.

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