

Faith Lutheran Church

Sunday, April 18, 2021

Third Sunday of Easter



Welcome

Blessed be the Holy Trinity + one God, the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth,
our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving For Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

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.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn: ELW #377 (*verses 1 & 2*)

“Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!”

Opening Prayer

Please join me in the Prayer of the Day:

Holy and righteous God, you are the author of life, and you adopt us to be your children. Fill us with your words of life, that we may live as witnesses to the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Readings and Psalm

- Acts 3:12-19
- Psalm 4
- 1 John 3:1-7

Health and forgiveness through the risen Jesus

The Lord does wonders for the faithful. (Ps. 4:3)

The revealing of the children of God

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 24:13-16, 28-48

Today we hear about two accounts of Jesus' appearance after his resurrection: First, Jesus appears to two disciples while they walk to Emmaus. They do not recognize Jesus until He breaks bread with them, at which point He vanishes. The two disciples then returned to Jerusalem to exclaim Jesus' resurrection to the other disciples. Second, Jesus opens the minds of the disciples to understand him as Messiah. Jesus convinces them that he has been raised and sends them on a mission to proclaim the message of repentance and forgiveness.

¹³Now on that same day (Resurrection Day) two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.



³⁶While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among [the disciples] and said to them, "Peace be with you." ³⁷They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled."

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon

Christ has risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Last week we read John's account of Jesus appearing to His disciples in a locked room, and bringing peace to them. We also read about Doubting Thomas and how his doubt helped him to challenge his faith. Doubting Thomas also gave us some important lessons last week.

In today's Gospel text Luke presents the same account with little variation. Luke doesn't mention Thomas, but Luke has some different parts of the story of what happened from the Easter morning until night.



Something interesting to notice here is that: All Easter stories from different Gospel accounts begin with tears, confusion, fear, but end with hope and purpose. That is why it is important for us today, that we tell the resurrection stories, from the empty tomb to Jesus' appearance to His disciples several times. So that we can be encouraged and instill hope.

Our Gospel lesson for today is a beautiful illustration of how the resurrection story overcomes tears, confusion, and fear and brings a message of hope and purpose. It is the second of two significant resurrection appearances of Jesus in Luke Chapter 24, joined by a powerful moment of witness by His disciples.

Last week's reading witnesses Jesus' appearance to His disciples by showing His hands and side and asked Thomas to touch His wounds. . . . and believe. This is so powerful, that Jesus asked His disciples, including Thomas, to believe in the resurrection message brought by the women from the empty tomb.

Now in today's Gospel text, Jesus joins two other disciples on the road to Emmaus. In this account our Lord Jesus changes the direction of these two men, who had been looking backward in sadness until Jesus reorients them to look to the future, underscoring His words with a dramatic act. the breaking of bread and eating with them. In that moment Jesus opened their minds and hearts to understand the scriptures, and what has been prophesied about His death and resurrection. In that same moment the two disciples came to understand the resurrection of faith. The real presence of Christ. . . . His death and resurrection, the hope and the purpose.

As the disciples and Jesus continue their journey on the road of Emmaus, Jesus agrees to stay the night with them, at dinner Jesus takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them. . . . and they recognize Him immediately. At that point Jesus suddenly disappears from their presence. So they jump up and run all the way back to Jerusalem to tell the others that they have seen the risen Lord! And as they are still witnessing Jesus' resurrection story and His appearance to them. . . . Jesus once again appears to them out of nowhere and greets them with Peace. What a powerful moment this would have been in the lives of His disciples.

In the same way, we meet Jesus every time we break the bread at the altar, or when we are at the baptismal font. I believe Jesus appears to us in the bread and wine proclaiming peace to us. This is the most valuable thing that we have to offer as people of faith, and especially as Lutherans.

In fact, what Luther teaches us in the Small Catechism, through his explanation of the 8th commandment: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor, not only we are not supposed to tell lies about our neighbors, or betray or slander them, but that we are to come to their defense, speak well of them always and interpret everything they do or say in the best possible light. That means. . . . we should always think the best of one-another. And I guess we all try our best to be nice and helpful to each other, and our neighbor. That is what the real purpose of the resurrection story is.

But in today's world we witness people interpreting the scriptures according to their own convenience. They use the scriptures to justify horrible acts of terror and violence. Some people use these interpretations to excuse their own prejudice, and some use it to exploit or exclude whole segments of society. Scriptures are also interpreted against a woman's position in society, of course these all seem to be in the past, but we still continue to use some portions of scriptures to defend our point. I believe we all stand guilty of misusing God's Word against our neighbor. The purpose of the resurrection story is to re-examine ourselves. . . . to mend our ways to be faithful to God and to one another.

The Bible says Jesus often found Himself in correcting the religious leaders of His time, because he did not use the scriptures in any of the aforementioned ways. Rather, Jesus Himself is the perfect revelation of his Abba (Father), and brought light, life, and understanding of God's never ending love and grace for the whole world. So when Jesus appeared to His disciples and opened their hearts and minds to understand the scriptures, it was to understand he was revealed in and through them and in that divine revelation, peace, wholeness, restoration, and forgiveness are found.

Jesus commands His disciples to be the witnesses of these things to the world. This is not just for those present in that locked room on that first Easter night, but to each one of us today. . . . all those who are watching us online and those attending in-person. . . . in fact, this Good News is for the whole creation. As Jesus continues to visit us in the bread and wine and at the baptismal font to give new hope and purpose for our lives.

Today we all are witnesses to the resurrection story. We should boldly proclaim how Jesus still continues to visit us in reading, singing, (although we are not singing at this time), listening, and forgiving. Because we are the witnesses of His resurrection story.

This is quite remarkable! The resurrected Christ breaks bread, brings peace to their troubled hearts, restores their faith, and turns their tears and confusion into new hope filled with purpose.

Luke's Easter account is less of an empty tomb then it is about food shared around the table. It appears that Jesus spent Easter day or night eating food with His disciples, calling everyone not to the empty tomb but to the place where bread is broken, and food is shared.

I am sure we all,.... including myself, spent Easter day sharing our best food and joyous moments with our family and friends. This act is not only a defining memory for us, but it is the way we personally experience the Risen Christ. So let us seek to be rooted in Christ and in God's unconditional love.

May the power of the resurrected Christ enable us to understand His love and do His acts.

Amen.

Hymn of the Day: ELW #579 (verses 1 & 2)

"Lord, you give the great commission"

Blessing The peace of the lord be with you always. **and also with you. Amen.**

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love. (*A brief silence.*)

Living God, in the midst of Easter joy we are still filled with questions and wondering. Open our hearts and minds as we encounter the scriptures, so that the church embodies repentance and forgiveness in the name of Jesus to all nations. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, for our beautiful planet earth, that we would courageously do all that we can to fight against the devastation of climate change and global warming and fulfill our calling to be God's stewards and caretakers of the planet. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all, the nations hunger and thirst for your righteousness. Many call on you for guidance and strength. Answer their hopes with the peace of Christ and give your lovingkindness to national, state, and local leaders of people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Healing God, you hear the cries of those in need and answer them in their distress. Grant to those who are sick and suffering your compassion and nurse them back to health and wholeness especially Beverly Tankersly, Pastor Matthew Lamb, Connie Mattson, Lori Strickland, Eric Marken, Eva Mohr, Al Picotte, Bill Duff, Bill Vaneffen, Lois Stoppel, Teri DePlonty, Janet Rolston, Jane Hansen, Ken Randall, Linda Doran, and Carter Goetz. For all who are grieving for loved ones especially the family and friends of Maxine Burkhardt (*Gail Knight's sister*). For whom and what else do we pray, silently or aloud? (*pause*). Be close to the hearts of the lonely. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving Parent, you have given us such love that we should be called the children of God. Reveal yourself to us so that we in this community of faith will become more and more like you in our mutual love and bold witness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Merciful God, for our schools: students, teachers, staff, and parents, that students will learn in ways that are safest for everyone involved in their education. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all times and ages, those who have died in you now see you as you are. We thank you for their lives among us. Assure us of the peace you have promised, that we may join them in everlasting life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Offertory Prayer *(please join in prayer)*

Let us pray

God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Lord's Prayer

I invite you to join in praying the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us...

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

Benediction

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. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Sending Hymn: ELW #389 *(verses 1 & 2)*

“Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing”

Sources:

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

❖ **In-person Worship Services at Faith has resumed!**

We urge everyone to follow the guidelines set forth to ensure the safety of everyone in attendance. We hope to see you there!

❖ **Pastor Rita is available for any pastoral needs by phone, email, and Zoom!** ❖

If you would like to speak with Pastor Rita, please call or email her at (312) 478-6212 or critawilliam@gmail.com From there if you'd like to set up a Zoom meeting, just ask!

❖ **CALLING ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN!**

We would love to share pictures on our Facebook page of the Sunday school activities done by you! If you take a picture of your activities and send them to Sean in the church office at faithlc1966@att.net, we'll post those for the congregation to see.

❖ **Vacation Bible School Information will be coming shortly!!!** ❖

❖ **Quarters for Hunger boxes are available in the lobby. Pick one up if you'd like to donate to the ELCA's World Hunger campaign. We will be collecting through the end of April and sending the offering to the Synod just before Synod Assembly on May 10-15th. If you would like to make a donation by check, you may do so by writing a check out to Faith Lutheran Church with a memo of "World Hunger" and we will add that to our total** ❖

❖ **SYNOD ASSEMBLY INFORMATION** ❖

We would like to encourage our members to participate in the Synod Assembly this year. It is completely online, free, and there is no need to register. You will be able to view Worship services on Monday, May 10th and Thursday, May 13th, in between those, you can participate in workshops from Tuesday, May 11th to Thursday, May 13th. The assembly concludes with the business meeting on Saturday, May 15th. More information on these exciting events is available by contacting the church office. More information can be found on the Synod Assembly website: nglsynod.org/assembly/

❖ Please utilize the church website frequently for updates and activities.

❖ **Online giving is here!**

You can now make an electronic contribution on our website: www.faithlutheransaultstemarie.org Scroll down to just above our videos. There, you will find a green button that says "Online Giving". Click that and enter in your information, and Faith will receive your contribution. If you would like any help going over this process, please call the church office and Sean would be happy to help you.

❖ **Watch Faith's Worship Service Live on Sundays on our Facebook page!**

You can catch our Service at 10:20am every Sunday at www.facebook.com/FaithLC1966 . You can also find us online by searching for **FaithLC1966** in any browser. If you have any questions or comments, please call the church office at (906) 632-7246.