

TODAY'S BULLETIN

As We Gather: A Startling New Reality

Those who followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem had hopes and fears, but their experience was within what they expected. So, Isaiah's prophecy, which we shall hear again today, was one of those things that didn't seem to apply, for it was too much of a change to take seriously. And the news from the angel at the tomb went far beyond that! Life after death challenged every understanding so directly that the women were startled into fear-driven silence—at least for a time. That very day others would hear the news and soon many would see Jesus Himself, as Paul tells us in the Epistle. Today is a day to embark on a life based on the startling new reality that death is not the final word for anyone with faith in Christ. How then shall we live before we see Him ourselves?

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: Our verse is taken from Mark 16:6

And (the angel) said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here."

THURSDAY BIBLE CLASS: Join us this coming Thursday for our noontime Bible Class where we will review Jesus' resurrection from the dead. As always, please bring your lunch. See you there!

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE: A new food pantry needs sheet is available on the table in the narthex. Please pick one up when you leave today!

READINGS FOR EASTER 2:

- Acts 4:32–35 (Believers use everything they have to help one another.)
- 1 John 1:1—2:2 (God is light; He forgives our sins.)
- John 20:19–31 (Thomas professes Jesus as his Lord and God.)

HYMNS FOR NEXT WEEKEND:

- "Scatter the Darkness, Break the Gloom" - Hymn 481
- "O Sons and Daughters of the King" - Hymn 470
- "This Joyful Eastertide" - Hymn 482



Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church

New Milford, NJ
LCMS — New Jersey District

Saturday
March 30, 2024
Easter (Observed)

Observance of Easter

Blended Church Service - Divine Services 3, 4, and Creative Worship

Welcome & Church Announcements

Moment of Prayer

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Confession and Absolution

P: We cannot enter God's presence as we are. Our sinful condition falls short of the glory of God. Let us therefore give voice to those sins, confessing our faults and failures to one another and to God Himself.

C: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P: Rejoice and be glad! God has not merely overlooked your faults; He has not missed your failures; and He knows the frailty of the human condition. Rather, He became one of us as Jesus, who died to pay for every sin or yours and your sinfulness itself. Jesus not only paid the penalty; on this day our heavenly Father proclaimed to all the world that He accepted the payment. Your sins are forgiven indeed!

In the stead and by the command of our risen Lord Jesus Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Salutation and the Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Heavenly Father, Lord of Life, Creator of all things, by Your mighty power You raised Your Son, our Savior, to life from death. We cannot understand this startling reversal, but pray that You keep us ever mindful of this good news so that we may live each day in triumphant gladness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 25:6–9

(When the Lord swallows up death, it will be like having the best feast ever prepared.)

L: The Old Testament Reading for the observance of Easter is taken from Isaiah, Chapter 25:

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

And he will swallow up on this mountain
the covering that is cast over all peoples,
the veil that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.

It will be said on that day,
“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.
This is the Lord; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 15:1–11

(Paul, persecutor of Christians, is one of many people who saw Jesus alive after death. The news is of primary importance for people of faith.)

L: The Epistle Reading is taken from 1st Corinthians, Chapter 15:

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of

whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel Reading

Mark 16:1–8

(The women are so shocked by the news of the resurrection that they initially tell no one.)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 28th Chapter:

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

A: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Today's Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed good, right, and salutary that we should in every time and place thank and praise You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever-living God. But today we praise You especially for the glorious resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; for He took our sins to the cross and yet arose, destroying death in the process and opening eternal life to us.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You did not spare Your only Son, but gave Him into death that we might have life. Though we cannot understand Your love or comprehend eternity, we cannot keep the startling news to ourselves. Move us, we pray and strengthen us through this Sacrament to serve as Your witnesses.

C: **Give us opportunity, use our gifts, and move us by Your Holy Spirit to tell the startling news of Jesus' victory over death until faith gives way to sight and we gather around the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end.**

P: Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

The Words of Our Lord

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My \pm body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My \pm

blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

P: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

C: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

The Lord’s Prayer

A: **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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Pax Domini

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **Amen.**

Distribution

Post-Communion Prayer

P: We give thanks, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, that You have refreshed us through this gift of life, forgiveness, and salvation. Strengthen us by this Sacrament to announce this gracious Good News so that many may join us at the Lamb’s high feast; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Benedicamus and Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

Moment of Prayer