



First St. John Lutheran Church

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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl
Annette Slater - Music Director
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EASTER ORDER OF WORSHIP – CELEBRATION SERVICE

Prelude

Ringing of the Bell *(Please stand)*

P: Christ is risen.

C: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: He gave us new life and hope by raising Jesus from the dead.

P: Rejoice, then, even in your distress.

C: We shall be counted worthy when Christ appears.

P: God has claimed us as his own.

C: He called us from our darkness into the light of his day.

P: Christ is risen.

C: He is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

Opening Presentation

Processional *"Jesus Christ is Risen Today!"*

No. 365

LIGHTING THE PASCHAL CANDLE

P: The Light of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

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

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: This is the day when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell and rose victorious from the grave.

C: How blessed is this day when earth and heaven are joined and humanity is reconciled with God.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: God of grace and glory,

C: you have brought us through the night of sin into the light of Jesus' resurrection. Yet our lives are still shadowed by sin. Make us alive in Christ, O God. Make us new as you make all things new. Rescue us from evil and the gloom of sin, renew us in grace, and restore us to living in your holiness, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.

P: Rejoice with all creation around God's throne! The light of the risen Christ puts to flight all evil deeds, washes away sin, restores innocence to the fallen, casts out hate, brings peace, and humbles earthly pride. Jesus Christ loves you and (+) frees you from your sins by his blood. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever!

C: Amen.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share the peace of the Lord.

Passing of the Peace (concludes with the congregation singing)

*I Worship You, Almighty God;
There is none like You.
I worship You, O Prince of Peace;
That is what I want to do.
I give You praise
For You are my righteousness.
I worship You, Almighty God;
There is none like You.*

Greeting

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

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Bell Choir

Announcements

FIRST READING: Acts 10:34-43

Peter's sermon, delivered at the home of a Roman army officer named Cornelius, is also a summary of the essential message of Christianity: Everyone who believes in Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection fulfilled the words of the prophets, "receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Peter began to speak to the people: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all.

³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

On this day the LORD has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Ps. 118:24)

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his mercy endures forever.

²**Let Israel now proclaim,
"His mercy endures forever."**

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.

¹⁵**There is a sound of exultation and victory
in the tents of the righteous:**

¹⁶"The right hand of the LORD has triumphed! The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD has triumphed!"

¹⁷**I shall not die, but live,
and declare the works of the LORD.**

¹⁸The LORD has punished me sorely,
but he did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹**Open for me the gates of righteousness;
I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the LORD.**

²⁰"This is the gate of the LORD;
he who is righteous may enter."

²¹**I will give thanks to you, for you answered me
and have become my salvation.**

²²The same stone which the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

²³**This is the LORD's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.**

²⁴On this day the LORD has acted;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

SECOND READING: Colossians 3:1-4

Easter means new life for us as well as for Christ! The Lord has risen to become our life, which is no longer linked to the uncertainties of this world but is securely "hidden" with Christ in God.

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

As the children return to their seats, the congregation will sing:

"Children of the Heavenly Father," verses 1 – 3 No. 781

1. Children of the heav'nly Father safely in his bosom gather,
Nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e'er was given.
2. God his own doth tend and nourish, in his holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things he spares them, in his mighty arms he bears them.
3. Neither life nor death shall ever from the Lord his children sever;
unto them his grace he showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth.

Gospel Acclamation (please stand)

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my path. (Repeat)*

GOSPEL: Luke 24:1-6

Christ's resurrection is an earthshaking story. News of it spreads with urgency.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

MESSAGE

Pastor Rayl

Message Song "Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds" No. 367

(Please stand)

Apostles' 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

Pastoral Prayer (Each petition concludes with this response)

P: Hear us, O Lord,

C: your mercy is great.

(Please be seated)

The Offering "Crown Him With Many Crowns" Elvey, arr. Wilson

"Sanctuary" (please stand)

*Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary,
Pure and holy, tried and true;
With thanksgiving I'll be a living
Sanctuary for You.*

Offering Prayer

P: Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

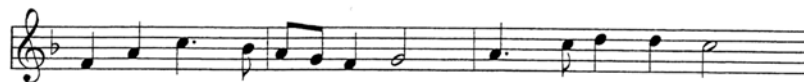
C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

P: It is indeed our right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of



the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

P: You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful, God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

P: In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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.

P: 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.

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

The Lord's Prayer (*prayed by all*)

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.

Invitation to Communion

P: The reign of God is at hand. Come, taste the joy prepared for you.

(Please be seated)

The Communion (*distribution will be continuous*)

"All baptized Christians, believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, bringing to us the gift of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to gather at the Lord's table. Infants, children and others who have not been baptized are welcome to come to receive a blessing."

(When coming to receive Communion, please fill out a Communion registration card located in the pew rack and give it to the usher.)

Communion Hymns - During the distribution of Communion the following hymns will be sung by the congregation:

- "Soul, Adorn Yourself With Gladness"* No. 488
- "I Received the Living God"* No. 477
- "Bread of Life From Heaven"* No. 474

(After all have returned to their seats)

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and sustain you in God's grace.

C: Amen.

Prayer after Communion

P: O God, the host at every meal, at this table you spread out a feast for all peoples, the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Send us from this banquet to invite others into these good

things, to let justice roll down like waters, and to care for the least of our sisters and brothers; through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and our Savior.

C: Amen.

Benediction

P: The blessing of the Lord God Almighty, the blessing of (+) Christ the Lamb who was slain, and the blessing of the Holy Spirit of truth be among you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Alleluia! Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Closing Song

"Thine Is the Glory"

No. 376

Postlude

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Darold Henninger, Kevin Ruedy

READER

Sue TenEyck

ACOLYTES

Emma Kalmbach, Aly Walendzak

SOUND BOARD

Don Holmes

FEATURED TRUMPETS

Adam Ladd, Emily Lipper

Known by Name

In both Matthew and John, the risen Christ first appears to Mary Magdalene. Who was Mary Magdalene, and what does the risen Jesus' appearance to her mean to us?

We know very little of Mary Magdalene from the gospels, beyond the fact that she is usually listed first among the women who followed Jesus. The mere fact that she was a woman led to her testimony being discounted early on. In the second century a philosopher named Celsus mocked Christian belief in the resurrection as being based on a story told by a hysterical woman! The theologian Origen replied to this charge, not by defending Mary Magdalene, but by saying that lots of prominent men were witnesses as well.

God, however, was not concerned to limit the pool of witnesses to those who would impress the philosophers. Jesus listened to, and loved, women and children, Samaritans and Romans, men on the margins and solid citizens. For Jesus, each of these had a name to be spoken with respect and love. He called women as well as men to be his followers; a woman without a proper husband was the first to spread the word for him in Samaria. What mattered was not whether the world would judge them as people of authority, as people to be listened to; what mattered was that Jesus had listened to them and they had listened to Jesus.

Easter dawns, and the risen Jesus appears to women as well as to men, to deniers and deserters as well as to those who stood by the cross, to doubters as well as to those who believed at first sight. Some will find their testimony discounted due to how society sees them. But Jesus doesn't discount any one of them. The risen Christ continues to know and love us, not by status or accomplishment or merit, but by name.