

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 16, 2023

IN THE NAME OF JESUS, WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S!



THE ENTRANCE RITE

PRELUDE

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

Setting: Robert Buckley Farlee

WELCOME

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

ENTRANCE HYMN #487

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

- 1 Come, you faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness!
God has brought His Israel
Into joy from sadness,
Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters,
Led them with unmoistened foot
Through the Red Sea waters.
- 2 'Tis the spring of souls today:
Christ has burst His prison
And from three days' sleep in death
As a sun has risen;
All the winter of our sins,
Long and dark, is flying
From His light, to whom is giv'n
Laud and praise undying.

- 3** Now the queen of seasons, bright
With the day of splendor,
With the royal feast of feasts
Comes its joy to render;
Comes to gladden faithful hearts
Which with true affection
Welcome in unwearied strain
Jesus' resurrection!
- 4** For today among His own
Christ appeared, bestowing
His deep peace, which evermore
Passes human knowing.
Neither could the gates of death
Nor the tomb's dark portal
Nor the watchers nor the seal
Hold Him as a mortal.
- 5** Alleluia! Now we cry
To our King immortal,
Who, triumphant, burst the bars
Of the tomb's dark portal.
Come, you faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness!
God has brought His Israel
Into joy from sadness!

CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 151

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

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.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

KYRIE

p. 152

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God,

C: grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST LESSON *(Be seated)*

Acts 5:12–23

Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 148 *(Sung responsively)*

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his hosts!

Praise him, sun and moon,

praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens,

and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD!

For he commanded and they were created.

And he established them forever and ever;

he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the LORD from the earth,
you great sea creatures and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and mist,
stormy wind fulfilling his word!

Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
Beasts and all livestock,
creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and maidens together,
old men and children!

Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.
He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near to him. Praise the LORD!

SECOND LESSON

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

(10:30) CHILDREN'S SERMON

ALLELUIA VERSE (Stand)

LSB 156

Alleluia.
Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 20:19–31

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 20th chapter
Glory to You, O Lord.

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld."

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ

SERMON (Be seated)

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. Dear friends in Christ:

Here we are in the joy and grace filled season of Easter. But let's begin the sermon this morning by taking a quick glance back at Lent.

The Lenten season just past was about Christ's journey to the cross. Jesus, as we observed, went boldly and obediently to the cross for the purpose of winning our salvation. And in our journey of observing this, we recalled that Jesus once told us to take up our crosses and follow him. This means that our Lenten journey was one of going to the cross as well.

Since Lent is a journey to the cross, the Easter season is then a journey from the cross. From the cross we begin a new journey led by our resurrected Lord.

But what kind of journey is it? And where does the journey take us? In our second reading today, St. Peter gives us an answer. He tells us that this is a new-life journey leading to our true home. He says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you." Our true home – given as an inheritance – is the heaven that awaits. And this is all possible because we have been born again through the resurrection of Jesus.

Have you ever been away from home and yearned to go back? Sure you have; we all have. A young person goes off to college, filled with excitement and apprehension, but then yearns for the holidays when she can get back home and see her family and friends. Likewise, if you've served in the military, served overseas, or been in combat, you know the yearning for home. Even when you simply go on a vacation, as enjoyable as it might be, you eventually say: "It'll be good to get back home."

In some ways, the appeal of a return home is simple rest. Home is a place that is familiar – and in it we feel safe and secure with our surroundings and routines. But there is a greater appeal of

home... a greater joy than just rest. And this is the joy of being in the presence of the people we love.

That's the idea behind the heavenly home that awaits. Yes, it will be a place of peace and rest. But mostly, it will be a place where we know and feel love. And that love will be given, and perfected, by our Lord Jesus, who loves us.

Speaking of love, that's where Peter goes next in our reading, did you notice? He says: "Though you have not seen Him, you love Him."

And here we should stop and ask if that's in fact true. Do you love Him? Do you have feelings of affection and desire toward him? You may know about him in your head, but that's not the same thing. Do you love him?

Years ago I heard a story about a married couple off on a ride together in their car. The husband was driving, and all seemed to be quiet and peaceful. But then the wife made a statement lamenting the loss of the romance they had when they were younger. And as an example she said: "Do you remember how close we used to sit to one another when we were driving?" The husband thought about this for a moment, then said: "Well, I haven't moved away."

I know, cars now have bucket seats. Not fair. But the story is just meant to get us thinking about Jesus. Do you love him? Or have you perhaps moved away?

Each of us can answer that question only for ourselves. But I'm guessing that we could all say that we don't love him as we ought. Sometimes our love is strong, but other times we move away.

The Easter season invites us to renew our love for Jesus. And that's because it takes us on a journey from the cross to the heavenly home that awaits. In that heavenly home is the one who loves us beyond all others. He's there waiting for us.

Furthermore, along this journey we will find that we are given great gifts. One of these is the gift of the Holy Spirit. We heard about this in today's Gospel lesson. There Jesus said to his disciples, immediately after rising from the dead: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

With this knowledge of our destination and our giftedness, our love for Jesus will grow closer to the place where it should be. Take this journey seriously and you'll love Jesus more and more,

because you'll be more and more convinced that Jesus is providing you what you need the most.

And this journey, by the way, is not simply the seven weeks of the church's Easter season. Rather, it is the journey of life as a Christian. It is the journey of one who lives from the Easter message and embraces its teachings and promises.

For our sermons and Bible classes during the weeks of this Easter season we will focus on the readings from Peter's first epistle. In this letter, Peter wrote to people who had a great yearning for home – a yearning so strong that most of us can't really appreciate it. They didn't have an earthly home the way you and I do. They lived in the land we today call Turkey, but most of them were not citizens of any nation. They were mostly poor, with few rights and little status. Some were even slaves, despised and subject to beatings. What's more, their religion assured that they were outsiders. Unlike us Christians in America, they were a small minority in that society. They would have had yearnings for a home like we can't imagine.

St. Peter couldn't change their status before men. But he did invite them to see their lives as a journey to their true home. Peter told them how blessed they were that Jesus was leading them on such a journey.

Peter says the same thing to us today. "Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls." Our journey is toward salvation. Although our circumstances are different than those

people long ago, we're yearning for deliverance just like them. The troubles we have, the ills that beset us, all the unwanted stuff that sin causes in our lives . . . we're journeying toward our full salvation when the former things will be no more.

Who can imagine what that true home will be like? St. Paul once said: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9; NIV). We don't know exactly what it will look like. But we know it will be wonderful. So keep yearning for home!

If we were to read on, we'd hear Peter say: "Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully." In other words, they didn't just slap down some thoughts meant to grab our attention or meet a deadline. They "searched and inquired carefully."

The Scriptures – the Old and New Testaments – tell us with great accuracy and insight about the grace God gives to you and to me. Peter says that the ages have focused on what we hear in the life and ministry of Jesus. Specifically he says that the prophets

were “inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories” (v.11). The prophets knew the importance of Christ’s suffering. And just as much, they knew of his subsequent glories – his resurrection for sure, but also his ascension to his rightful place of power and the glorious kingdom he would rule.

The Christian life is all about Jesus. During this Easter season we rehearse again what the Scriptures say about the new life we have been given. We hear a few of the stories of his post-resurrection appearances. We read from epistles like the one from Peter, which coach up those first Christians and do the same for us. And we read from the Book of Acts, which tells of those first Christians in action – including the sermons they gave and the miracles which supported them.

We will take this Easter journey with the journey to the cross in our memory. We won’t forget the messages of Lent. And we certainly won’t forget the message of Christ crucified.

Yet we will let the message of Easter predominate. Without Easter our journey toward eternity is a literal dead end. With Easter, there is life and the salvation of our souls.

The scriptures radiate Christ’s resurrection and His ascension, what Peter calls “the subsequent glories.” If you and I dig in at this time, how can we not grow in our love of Jesus? How can we not more and more yearn for our true home?

So let’s use this Easter season to love Jesus more and more, knowing that his resurrection is leading us to our true home. God didn’t want those first hearers of Peter to settle in too much. And he doesn’t want us to settle too much into our present lives either. A little discontent, a desire for something better, a desire for our true home is good. It makes us appreciate how blessed we are.

Psalm 73 leads us to say: “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:25–26). We’re not there yet, but we are yearning.

“Though you have not seen him, you love him.” These words from Peter remind us of the Gospel story we will hear next Sunday. Jesus, after his resurrection, appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus. And the men did not recognize him at first. But when he taught them,

their hearts were set ablaze with love for him. And when he broke the bread at their table, then they knew it was him.

Jesus, we love you. You are with us now, and you're leading us home. Don't let us move away!

In the name of Jesus. Amen

HYMN OF THE DAY #470 (Stand)

O Sons and Daughters of the King

- 1 O sons and daughters of the King,
Whom heav'nly hosts in glory sing,
Today the grave has lost its sting!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 2 That Easter morn, at break of day,
The faithful women went their way
To seek the tomb where Jesus lay.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 3 An angel clad in white they see,
Who sits and speaks unto the three,
"Your Lord will go to Galilee."
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 4 That night the apostles met in fear;
Among them came their master dear
And said, "My peace be with you
here."
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

- 5 When Thomas first the tidings heard
That they had seen the risen Lord,
He doubted the disciples' word.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 6 "My piercèd side, O Thomas, see,
And look upon My hands, My feet;
Not faithless but believing be."
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 7 No longer Thomas then denied;
He saw the feet, the hands, the side;
"You are my Lord and God!" he cried.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
- 8 How blest are they who have not seen
And yet whose faith has constant
been,
For they eternal life shall win.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

- 9 On this most holy day of days
Be laud and jubilee and praise:
To God your hearts and voices raise.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**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.**

OFFERING

*Offerings support the church's mission work – both here and through our many partners. Offerings may be placed in the box at the sanctuary entrance or sent to the church through our website or the mail. **Fellowship Cards** help us welcome new people and track participation. Please fill one out and place it in the offering box following the service.*

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

The response to each petition will be:

**“let us pray to the Lord:”
“Lord, have mercy.”**

- 1 Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
And fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
That we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and the dreams of all;
Unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with Your presence, and give us
A foretaste of the feast to come.**



SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

LSB 160

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good right and salutary...evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

LSB 161

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LSB 161

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

LORD'S PRAYER

**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

LSB 163

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

AGNUS DEI

LSB 163

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

THE COMMUNION (Be seated)

The Communion Assistant will come forward to receive first, then those from the pulpit side – by order of pew, front to back. Communicants will come up the center aisle and return via the side aisle. When all from the pulpit side have communed, the baptismal font side will commune in the same manner. We ask that the wine be consumed away from the tray table. Empty cups should be dropped into the receptacles.

- 1** These things did Thomas count as real:
The warmth of blood, the chill of steel,
The grain of wood, the heft of stone,
The last frail twitch of flesh and bone.
- 2** The vision of his skeptic mind
Was keen enough to make him blind
To any unexpected act
Too large for his small world of fact.
- 3** His reasoned certainties denied
That one could live when one had died,
Until his fingers read like braille
The markings of the spear and nail.
- 4** May we, O God, by grace believe
And thus the risen Christ receive,
Whose raw imprinted palms reached out
And beckoned Thomas from his doubt.

PRAYER (Stand)

BENEDICTION

- 1 He's risen, He's risen, Christ Jesus, the Lord;
He opened death's prison, the incarnate, true Word.
Break forth, hosts of heaven, in jubilant song
And earth, sea, and mountain their praises prolong.
- 2 The foe was triumphant when on Calvary
The Lord of creation was nailed to the tree.
In Satan's domain did the hosts shout and jeer,
For Jesus was slain, whom the evil ones fear.
- 3 But short was their triumph; the Savior arose,
And death, hell, and Satan He vanquished, His foes.
The conquering Lord lifts His banner on high;
He lives, yes, He lives, and will nevermore die.
- 4 O, where is your sting, death? We fear you no more;
Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden's door.
For all our transgressions His blood does atone;
Redeemed and forgiven, we now are His own.
- 5 Then sing your hosannas and raise your glad voice;
Proclaim the blest tidings that all may rejoice.
Laud, honor, and praise to the Lamb that was slain:
With Father and Spirit He ever shall reign.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

He's Risen, He's Risen
Setting: Kenneth T. Kosche

Those serving:

Sunday, April 16, 8:00 a.m.:

Greeter: Michael Chamberlain

Comm. assist: Jim Easterly

Reader: Norm Williams

10:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Marian Robinson

Comm. assist: Dan Buuck

Reader: Arthur Erbert

Acolyte: Noah Starck

Acknowledgments

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