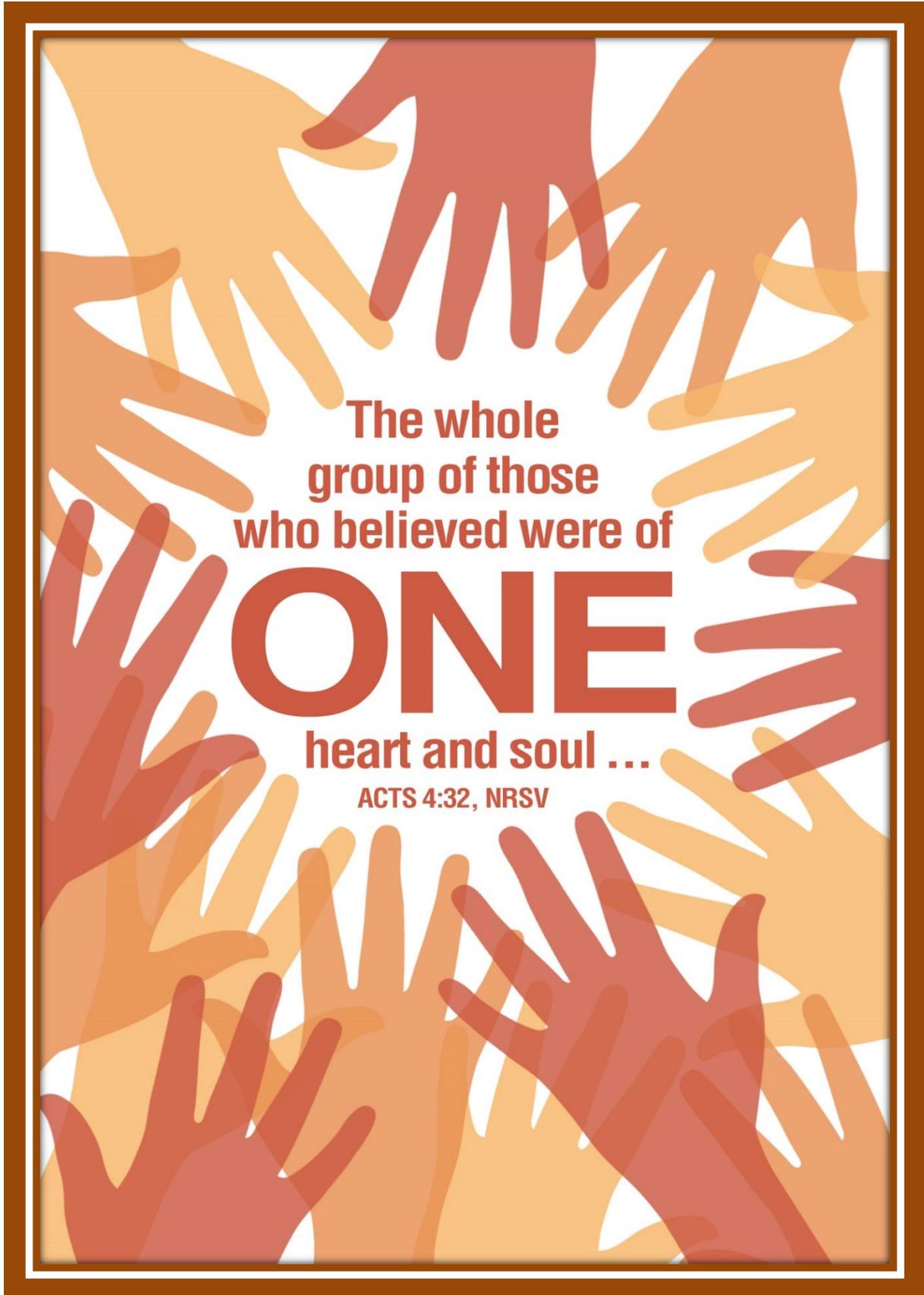


ONE IN CHRIST LUTHERAN PARISH

◆Bethany ◆Immanuel ◆Lunder ◆Silver Lake ◆Winnebago



Easter

April 11, 2021



ONE IN CHRIST LUTHERAN PARISH

◆ Bethany

◆ Immanuel

◆ Lunder

◆ Silver Lake

◆ Winnebago

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Every member of the Parish

Bill Peters

Randy Baldwin

Easter 2

April 11, 2021

CHRIST IS RISEN!

We joyfully welcome all who gather here this morning to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. A special welcome to all guests and visitors. From our sin we expected judgment, from the cross we expected death, but on this morning we celebrate the empty tomb, the risen Lord,

and the gift of God's grace - forgiveness, salvation, and life everlasting.

HALLELUJAH!

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Gideon Presentation

Roger Solomonson

✠ GATHERING ✠

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the People of God

CONFESSING OUR SINS

We gather here as a fellowship of people who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord. One of the major marks of this fellowship is the sense of joy we experience as we gather to worship God, to give thanks for Jesus Christ and to witness to the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Yet, we admit that there are times when we feel afraid, abandoned, and lonely; when faith leads to doubt and questions rather than a sense of joy or peace of mind. Lord Jesus Christ, unlike those first disciples, we cannot touch you or see you, and so it is all too easy to become downcast and given to despair.

Forgive us when, like the disciples, we find the truth of Easter hard to believe.

Come to us, risen Christ, come through the closed doors of our hearts and minds and take away our fears and doubts;

Come to us, risen Christ, breathe on us and fill us with the joy and peace of your presence.

Bless us all as people who have not seen you,

But who believe that you are truly the risen Christ, Son of God. Amen

***EXPERIENCING GOD'S GRACE – THE GOOD NEWS**

Hear the good news: "If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" And so I declare to you: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

*GATHERING SONG

Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!"

*Hallelujah! Jesus lives! He is now the Living One;
from the gloomy halls of death Christ, the conqueror, has gone,
bright forerunner to the skies of his people, yet to rise.*

*Jesus lives! Why do you weep? Why that sad and mournful sigh?
He who died our brother here lives our brother still on high,
lives forever to bestow blessings on his church below.*

*Jesus lives! And thus, my soul, life eternal waits for you;
joined to him, your living head, where he is, you shall be too;
with the Lord, at his right hand, as a victor you shall stand.*

*Jesus lives! Let all rejoice. Praise him, ransomed of the earth.
Praise him in a nobler song, cherubim of heav'nly birth.
Praise the victor king, whose sway sin and death and hell obey.*

Text: Carl B. Garve, 1763-1841; tr. Jane Borthwick, 1813-1897, alt.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

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.

SHARING THE PEACE

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

"Glory to God..."

*Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.*

*Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.*

*For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, with joy we celebrate the day of our Lord's resurrection. By the grace of Christ among us, enable us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

✠ **WORD** ✠

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

The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we play in the mystery of Christ's presence, mostly through the glorious Gospel of John. Today we gather with the disciples on the first Easter, and Jesus breathes the Spirit on us. With Thomas we ask for a sign, and Jesus offers us his wounded self in the broken bread. From frightened individuals we are transformed into a community of open doors, peace, forgiveness, and material sharing such that no one among us is in need.

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 4:32-35

While the apostles testified to others about the resurrection of Jesus, the early Christian community shared what they owned or sold their possessions to help their fellow believers who were in need.

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 John 1:1--2:2

The opening of this letter serves as a reality check. The reality of God is light, but our confessed reality has been sin. God cleanses us from our sinful reality through Christ's death so that we live in fellowship with Christ and walk in God's light.

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

^{2:1}My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ²and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!"

*Halle, halle, hallelujah. Halle, halle, hallelujah.
Halle, halle, hallelujah. Hallelujah, Hallelujah.*

GOSPEL READING

John 20:19-31:

The story of Easter continues as the risen Jesus appears to his disciples. His words to Thomas offer a blessing to all who entrust themselves in faith to the risen Lord.

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Bill Peters

SONG OF THE DAY *“Now the Vault of Heaven Resounds”*

*Now all the vault of heav’n resounds
in praise of love that still abounds:
“Christ has triumphed! He is living!”
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!
Repeat their song of glory here:
“Christ has triumphed! Christ has triumphed!”
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

*Eternal is the gift he brings,
therefore our heart with rapture sings:
“Christ has triumphed! He is living!”
Now still he comes to give us life
and by his presence stills all strife.
Christ has triumphed! He is living!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

*Oh, fill us, Lord, with dauntless love;
set heart and will on things above
that we conquer through your triumph;
grant grace sufficient for life’s day
that by our lives we truly say:
Christ has triumphed! He is living!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

*Adoring praises now we bring
and with the heav’nly blessed sing:
“Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!”
Be to the Father, and our Lord,
to Spirit blest, most holy God,
all the glory, never ending!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876-1947, alt.

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***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.**

BLESSING OF SEEDS AND SOIL

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

Weather permitting, we will re-gather outside

LITANY OF DEDICATION

Let us give thanks to God: For the beauty of your world, the glory of starlit skies, the wonder of the changing seasons, the ever new miracle of stirring life in field and forest

We give you thanks, O God.

For the privilege of sharing with you in the act of creating the good things of earth for your children and for your nearness in all the processes of agricultural life.

We give you thanks, O God.

For the Christ of the country road, who walked and served in the pleasant land of Galilee, and who today walks the country roads of the world in partnership with all who till the soil,

We give you thanks, O God.

For widening horizons of rural life, the open doors in which entering we may serve the rural peoples of the world, and walk the byways with Christ,

We give you thanks, O God.

That it may please you speedily to grant a just and lasting peace in all the earth, that all peoples may again beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, that they may all live together in fellowship and tranquility in the lands you have given them

We beseech you to hear us, O Lord.

To the recreation of the beloved community bound together by ties of love in every countryside, in which all people shall share with joy in sowing the seed and reaping the harvest of the Kingdom of God,

We dedicate our hands and minds, O Lord

To a renewed appreciation of the Holy Earth and its resources, material and human.

We dedicate our hands and minds, O Lord.

Accept our thanksgiving, hear our prayers and intercessions, graciously use the gifts of mind, body, and life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LITANY OF BLESSING

Brothers and sisters in Christ; Today we seek God's blessing as we gather with thankfulness for his wondrous creation. We especially seek God's blessing at this time of planting and so we have brought with us signs of this season.

We dedicate our equipment, our seed, our time, and our selves to the glory of God.

All your works praise you. O Lord.

and your faithful servants bless you.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You

make the whole earth for your glory; all creation praises you. We lift our voices to join the songs of heaven and earth. of things, seen and unseen. You stretched out the heavens like a curtain; you divided the day from night; you appointed times and seasons for work and rest, for tearing down and for building up. Be with us now and bless the work of those who labor in the fields. Grant us faith to know your gracious purpose in all things and continue your blessings to us through the bounty of your creation.

Amen.

Let the people praise you, O God:

let all the peoples praise you

The earth has brought forth her increase;

may God, our own God, give us his blessing.

May God give us his blessing,

and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

BLESSING OF THE SEED

God you have given us these seeds

They have a past. They are the fruit of the past. They have a present. They are to be planted into your soil. They have a future. They are to bear fruit for the harvest. May the miracle of life within these seeds burst forth yielding a bountiful harvest. Bless these seeds and those who plant them.

BLESSING OF EQUIPMENT

God you have provided us with this equipment and technology

These machines and this technology empower us to work the land, sow the seed, and harvest its abundance many times one hundredfold. Gracious Lord, be with us now and bless us as we set apart this equipment to your glory and praise. Grant us diligence in maintenance, safety and caution in use, and patience during breakdowns. Give us the faith to know your gracious purpose in all things, give us joy in them, and lead us to the building up of your kingdom. Bless this equipment and those who use these tools and technology.

BLESSING OF THE SOIL

God you have created and given us this soil.

The soil serves as the medium for the seed to grow, it cleans water, it regulates climate, it provides warmth, nourishment and support so that new life may emerge. Bless this soil that it may feed and nourish the seed. Bless those who work this soil and harvest the produce.

BLESSING OF THE WATER

God, this water is your creation.

Water gives sustenance and nourishment to the soil and the seed. Bless the soil and the seed with gentle rain. Bless this water. Let it come as rain at the right time, in the proper amount so that the seed may flourish and grow. In your mercy send us favorable weather so that the harvest will be bountiful.

✠ **SENDING** ✠

God blesses us and sends us in mission in the world

BLESSING

May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit bless the pastures and meadows, all growing grass and green fields. May the soil be wholesome and the crops good. May the weather be favorable and the workers of good heart. And may God who gives breath and life to the sower, multiply the seed sown and increase its fruits. May God be with us and among us and around us now and forevermore.

Amen

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. He is Risen!.

Thanks be to God. He is Risen Indeed!

† † † † † † †

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From Fear to Freedom

The disciples had good reason to be afraid. Their teacher, perceived as a threat to social, political, and religious order, had just been crucified; now with rumors swirling about his mysterious resurrection, it wasn't clear if Jesus' followers would face the same dire fate on a cross. Today, most of us, fortunately, can live without fear regarding when and where we are able to worship. At the same time, when we take a moment to look at the world around us, it doesn't take long to notice what a strong influence fear has on our lives.

Fear not of things like tornadoes or spiders or bats, but rather fear of things that keep our hearts closed off from others and God and that keep our truest selves locked up inside. As it was for the disciples in today's reading, our unaddressed fears can get in the way of our recognizing what Jesus is doing in our midst. They turn us in toward ourselves rather than outward toward those who could be blessed by our gifts and who need our care and love. They keep us from growing in our relationship with God and as the people God has created us to be.

Although it can be scary to acknowledge our fear of being inadequate or of losing control or of being alone, or whatever our deepest fear may be, when we do, that's when something powerful can happen. A sense of peace and joy is never far away. Not only are we released from our fear, but giving voice to our fears can set others free from theirs as well.

When Jesus appeared to those first disciples locked together behind closed doors, he came offering peace, and he breathed on them the Holy Spirit. In that moment their lives were changed—forever, and for good. The same is true for us when we dare to surrender our fears to God and embrace God's future for us with courage.