

Easter/ Resurrection Sunday April 4th, 2021

Christ is Risen indeed, and we are risen to worship also!

Today we will worship and give glory to God with the sacrament of Holy Communion so you may wish to have a piece of bread or cracker, wine, juice or water to participate.

St. Mark's will begin worshipping every week starting April 18 in 2 weeks. After worship we will have our annual meeting. We need 27 people to attain a quorum.

If you have not yet heard, I am sad to tell you that Ed Schnulle died in Christ on Maundy Thursday. Private family services were held yesterday.

We begin our worship with Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

All: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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

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.

All: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

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.

All: Amen.

First Reading: Acts 10:34-43

Peter crosses the immense religious and social boundary that separates Jews from Gentiles in order to proclaim the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, so that God's forgiveness in Jesus' name would reach out to all people.

³⁴Peter 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.”

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God's mercy endures forever.

²Let Israel now declare, “God's mercy endures forever.”

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

¹⁵Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous: “The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!”
¹⁷I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.
¹⁸The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.
¹⁹Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.
²⁰“This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter.”
²¹I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.
²²The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.
²³By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.
²⁴This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

The core of the Christian faith and Paul’s preaching is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As the crucified and risen Christ appeared to the earliest of his followers, so we experience the presence of the Risen One in the preaching of this faith.

¹Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, ²through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain. ³For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been 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. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark 16:1-8

The resurrection of Jesus is announced, and the response is one of terror and amazement.

All: Glory to you O Lord

¹When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint [Jesus’ body]. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one

another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?”⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back.⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.⁶ But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him.⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.”⁸ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The word of the Lord

All: Praise to you O Christ

Sermon

Mark 16 1 to 8

There are different versions of the Easter story. In Mark’s version today, there is no resurrection. In Mark’s version the tomb is empty, and the women flee in fear! For Mark, Easter begins with fear. At least the way Mark tells it.

Early in the morning, three women come to the tomb bringing precious herbs and oils to wash the body of their Lord Jesus . They hope anointing the body of Jesus which was the ritual of the Jewish people. The women question how they will move the stone and when they arrive at the tomb, they find that the stone has been rolled away. The tomb is empty--vacant, except for a man who is definitely not Jesus; and suddenly, they are afraid. They fear more trouble has come after all they have witnessed. First, Jesus' life is stolen, and now, even his body has been taken. There is a feeling of fear and panic for the women. Who is this man? An angel? We assume he is. Mark does not say although Mark uses angels to make announcements often.

Sensing the distress of the three women, the young man robed in white offers some shocking news as a comfort to them. *"Do not be alarmed," he says, "you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."* This is, of course, the Easter proclamation. He has been raised; he is not here. This is the hopeful message that we have been waiting for. The stone is

rolled back. The tomb is empty, not Christ's body was stolen, but because he has left to go to Galilee. So why are the women still afraid? After hearing the young man's declaration, Mark tells us that the two Mary's and Salome *"fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid."*

A lot of scholars think that this verse, this hurried departure from the empty tomb is the conclusion of Mark's Gospel. It seems a funny way to end, doesn't it? Is that any way to finish "the greatest story ever told"...with people running away in amazement and fear?

After the pandemic and the politically chaotic year that we have made out way through, we celebrate this Resurrection Sunday with the promises of new life overcoming death! We need Easter right now! We are tired of fear and confusion. We want to go with Peter and the disciples to Galilee to hear the words of grace and mercy from Jesus. We want to see the risen savior also! Thank goodness there are other gospels that give us the joy of Easter.

Our synod offered an online mini retreat for pastors last month. It has been a challenging year wanting to keep our communities safe while proclaiming the good news of the hope Jesus gives us. I signed up right away. Our leader was the Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell, and she shared some insights that we are all sowers of seeds of faith. She spoke of heartbreak and depression. Then she taught the story of the sower that went out to sow seed. She told a story about looking ups and down main street where she lives and noticing that some buildings fall down, and others stand up. That things fall down, and other things rise up. Scripture calls us to rise up and grow. It is springtime and things are rising up all around us. The grass, flowers and soon the fields will be full of corn and beans. She shared a prayer by John Soos that seemed to be a prayer of Springtime, a prayer of Resurrection to me. Here is the prayer:

To be of the earth is to know

the restlessness of being a seed, the darkness of being planted

the struggle toward the light, the growth into the light

the love of being food for someone, the scattering of your seeds

the decay of the seasons, the mystery of death and the miracle of birth.

God planted Jesus on this earth and through the darkness, he rose up toward the light and was the light.

We worship on this Holy day and sit at the empty tomb with the women, where there is great tension and fear. Like the women and the disciples, we want order and an ending to our stories. As in life, we often live out of order and situations can be endless.

As we peer into the tomb on this Easter morning, we also hear the proclamation “*He has been raised; he is not here!*” That is the good news! That is the gospel of Mark! Christ was raised from the death and promises us a resurrection like his. We are Easter people We continue to grow in faith and sow seeds of faith. Alleluia! Amen.

We share our faith in the words of the 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.

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.

Praise to you for your power revealed in the resurrection! Fill your church with the power of your love that is stronger than death. Send us to tell the good news wherever death holds sway.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Praise to you for your life at work in the resurrection! Fill all of creation with your life. Bring it to blossom and flourish; use it to remind us of your persistent grace. Cultivate our care for what you have made. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Praise to you for the peace made possible in the resurrection! Fill the nations with your peace. Draw together people of all nations and languages; reveal new possibilities and inspire new beginnings. Be with those keeping the peace who serve in the military *especially Logan, JJ, Bryan, Dustin, Brad and Travis*. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Praise to you for the hope of the resurrection! Fill all in need with hope: those who are afraid or confused, *especially those in care faculties that we know Sibyl, Tammy, Trudy, Jessica, Hazel, Jeanne, Linda, Ed and Marian* and those who are sick or suffering *especially Merla Brooks, Kent Anders, Richard Hose and Brad Shippert*, those suffering from corona virus and those who are dying, and those who grieve (*especially the family and friends of Ed Schnulle who died in Christ last Thursday*). Assure them of your promises.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Praise to you for the joy of your resurrection! Fill this assembly with joy as we are called your beloved in baptism. Multiply that joy so that we share it at home, at work, and in our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Praise to you for your faithfulness revealed in the resurrection! Fill us with trust, that we join with all who have gone before us in proclaiming: “your mercy endures forever!”

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.**

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

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

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the power of the Holy Spirit we pray

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

The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied.

Preface

It is indeed 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.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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. 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Take your bread/cracker

The body of Christ given for you

Take you juice/wine/water The blood of Christ shed for you
The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

Prayer after Communion

Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.
Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses,
that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Blessing

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.

All: Amen.

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

All: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!