

ORDER OF WORSHIP

EASTER CELEBRATION WORSHIP

March 31, 2024 10:00 a.m.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 8100 Shady Grove Rd. Mechanicsville, VA 23111

SAINTPAUL-LCMS.COM 804.427.7500

LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Regular Sunday Schedule

Sunday School – 9:15 a.m. Worship – 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Rodney E. Bitely, Pastor Mr. Bill Moats, Choir Director Mr. Roger Sethmann, Organist Mr. Eric Burcham, Guest Organist Mr. Kent Gall, Trumpet Mrs. Debbie Harris, Church Secretary

A Word About Communion

We Lutherans believe in the Real Presence, namely that Christ's body and blood are actually there with the bread and wine in a very special way (1 Cor. 10:16). Because we want to honor Christ and to grow closer to Him through this precious gift of forgiveness we practice close communion. Our faith in Christ brings us closer to Him and to each other. This sacrament is His way of keeping us close, that is, in union or communion with Him and fellow Christians. In order to build closeness, please read below before communing.

- I confess my sins to God and rely on Jesus Christ to save me from them.
- I believe that Christ is really present in this Sacrament and that with the bread and wine I actually receive His true body and blood.
- I intend, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to amend my sinful life and live a life that is pleasing to God.



As We Gather

Those who followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem had hopes and fears, but their

P – Pastor

 \mathbf{A} – Assistant/Reader

 \mathbf{C} – Congregation

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?

Prelude

Stand

Resurrection Gospel

Matthew 28:1-10

St. Matthew's account of Jesus' resurrection.

P A reading from Matthew, chapter 28.

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

Opening Sentences

- P Alleluia! [Christ Jesus] has abolished death
- **C** and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Alleluia!
- **P** Alleluia! Christ is risen!
- **C** He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

2 Timothy 1:10b

457 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today sus Christ Al 1 Je is ris'n to - day. le lu ia! 2 Hymns of praise then let sing, Al lu ia! us le _ pains which He en - dured. 3 But A1 the le 1u ia! _ $\triangle 4$ Sing we to our God a - bove, Al le 1u ia! _ Our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al le _ lu _ ia! Un - to Christ, our heav'n - ly king, Al le _ hu ia! sal - va - tion have pro-cured; Our Al le -1u ia! Praise e - ter - nal His love: A1 as le lu ia! Who did the cross, Al once up _ on le lu ia! Who en - dured the cross and grave, Al le lu ia! sky He's king, Now a - bove the Al le lu ia! Praise Him, all heav'n-ly Al ia! ye host. le lu _ Suf - fer A1 to re deem our loss. le _ lu ia! ia! Sin - ners deem and save. A1 lu to re le -_ _ Where the A1 1u ia! an - gels ev - er sing. le _ Ghost. ia! ther, Son, and Ho - ly Al lu Fa le -Text: tr. Lyra Davidica, 1708, London, alt.; (sts. 1-3): Latin, 14th cent.; (st. 4): Charles Wesley, 1707-88 Tune: Lyra Davidica, 1708, London Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

Matthew 28:19b; 18:20

 \mathbf{P} In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession & Absolution

Psalm 124:8; Psalm 130:3-4; Luke 18:13; [John 20:19-23]

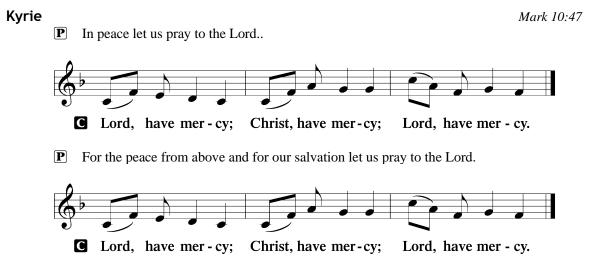
- **P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- **C** who made heaven and earth.
- P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
- **C** But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

Implies P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

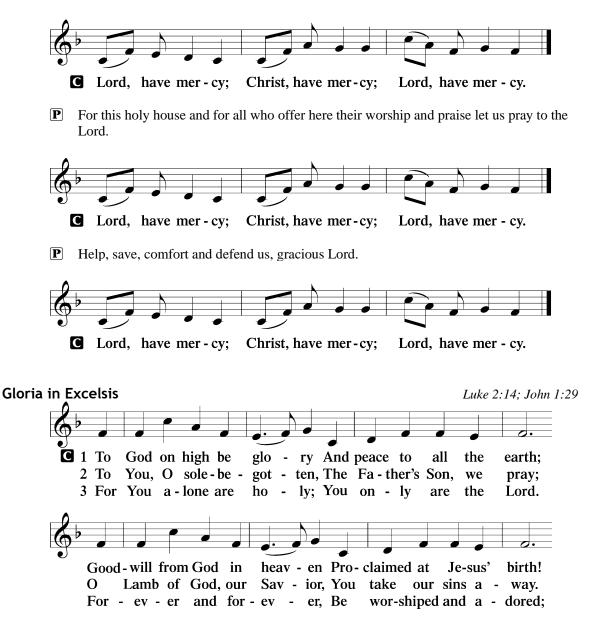
Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

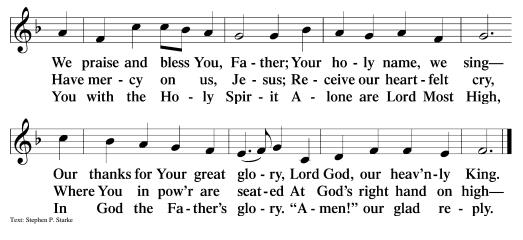
- P O almighty God, merciful Father,
- **C** I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.
- P 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.
- **C** Amen.

Service of the Word



P 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.





Introit

Exodus 15:2a, 6, 13, 17–18; antiphon: v. 1b

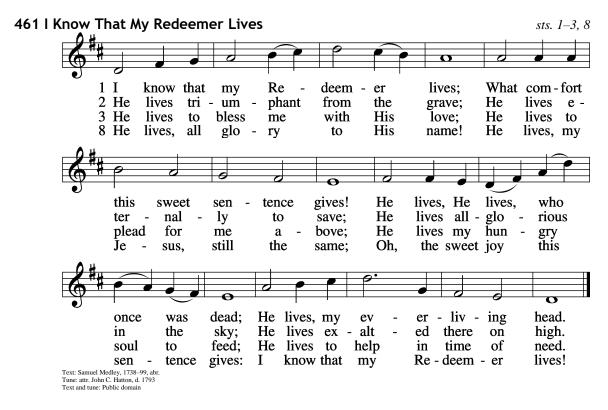
- **P** I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
- **C** the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.
- **P** The LORD is my strength and my song,
- **C** and he has become my salvation.
- P Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
- **C** your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.
- P You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed;
- **C** you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.
- P You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain,
- **C** the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode,
- **P** the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.
- **C** The LORD will reign forever and ever.
- **P** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
- **C** as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
- **P** I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
- **C** the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **C** And also with you.
- ▶ Let us pray... Almighty God the Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have overcome death and opened the gate of everlasting life to us. Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of our Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by Your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- **C** Amen.

-7-

Easter Day



Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 25:6–9

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

A The Old Testament Reading is 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."

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

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.

A The Epistle is from 1 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Choral Anthem - "Christians, Celebrate and Sing"

by Lloyd Larson

Stand

Gradual

adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

- **P** Christ has risen from the dead.
- **C** [God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor.
- P He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
- **C** he has put all things under his feet.

Holy Gospel

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 sixteenth chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and 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.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

C 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.

Children's Message

Sit

All children, preschool age through elementary school, are invited to come forward for a special message.



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Sermon - Mark 16:1-8, "Alleluia!"

"And he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here.'" Mark 16:6

Stand

Prayer of the Church

- **P** In peace let us pray to the Lord:
- **C** Lord, have mercy.
- ▶ For the gift of divine peace and of pardon, with all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the holy Christian Church, here and scattered throughout the world, and for the proclamation of the Gospel and the calling of all to faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

- **P** For this nation, especially for President Biden and Governor Youngkin, for our cities and communities, and for the common welfare of us all, let us pray to the Lord:
- **C** Lord, have mercy.
- **P** For seasonable weather and for the fruitfulness of the earth, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

■ For those who labor, for those whose work is difficult or dangerous, for our military and police, *especially*..., and for all who travel, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For all those in need, for the hungry and homeless, for the widowed and orphaned, and for all those in prison, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

- ▶ For the sick and dying and for all those who care for them, *especially*..., let us pray to the Lord:
- **C** Lord, have mercy.
- **P** For . . . [additional bids for prayer may be offered] . . . let us pray to the Lord:
- **C** Lord, have mercy.
- **P** Finally, for these and for all our needs of body and soul, let us pray to the Lord:
- **C** Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Sit

Offering

Voluntary

Stand



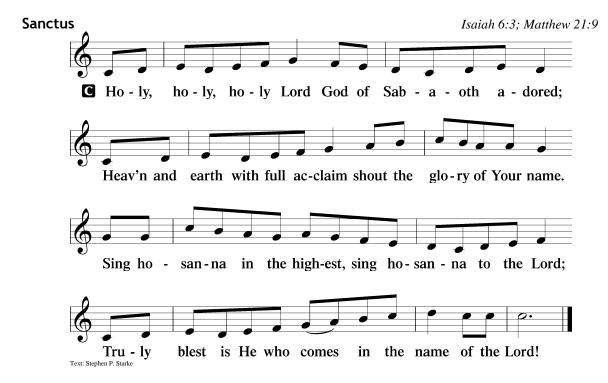
Service of the Sacrament

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.

2 Timothy 4:22; [Colossians 3:1]; [Psalm 136]

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



Lord's Prayer

C 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.

The Words of Our Lord

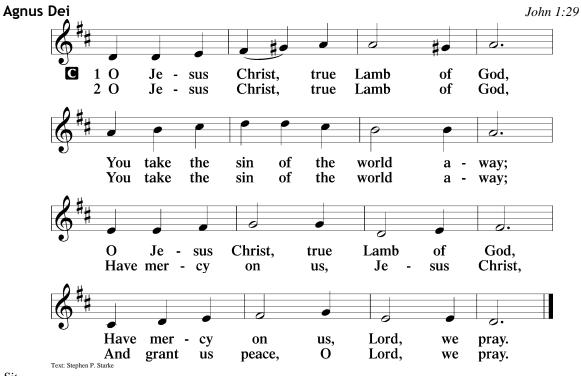
P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + → body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

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

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.



Sit

Distribution

The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first and then distribute them to those who come to receive, saying:

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

Amen.

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.

Amen.

A Note About Communion:

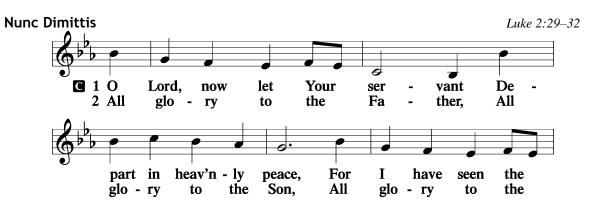
This morning we will follow a practice known as "Continuous Communion." As you approach the front of the center aisle the Pastor will serve the Host (bread). Proceed then to one of the two Elders, one will be serving the "Individual Cups" and the other the "Common Cup". Then return to your seat. The Ushers will be there to guide you through Communion.

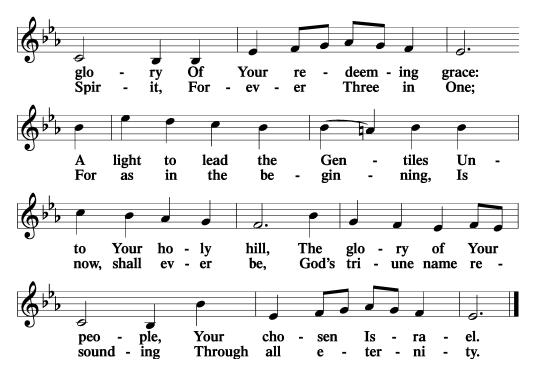
If you have children who are not yet Confirmed in the Lutheran Church, feel free to bring them up with you and the Pastor will give them a blessing.

After all have Communed, Stand

Communion Dismissal

- The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen and preserve you in the one true faith from this life and into life everlasting. Depart + in peace. Serve the Lord.
- **C** Amen.
- P Alleluia! Christ is risen!
- **C** He is risen indeed! Alleluia!





Post-Communion Collect

▶ Let us pray... We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

С Amen.

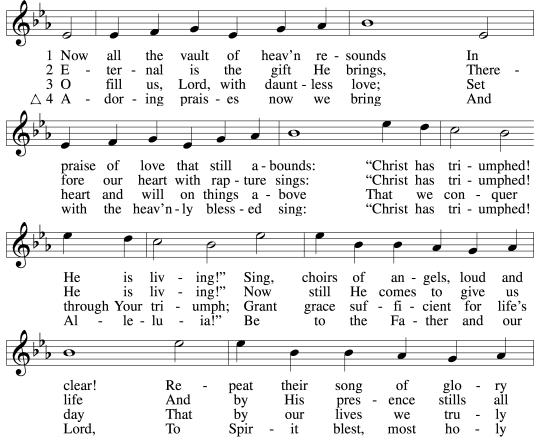
Benediction

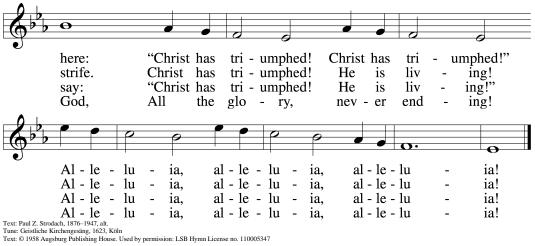
- **P** Let us bless the Lord.
- **C** Thanks be to God.
- The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
- **C** Amen.

Numbers 6:24-26

- P Alleluia! Christ is risen!
- **C** He is risen indeed! Alleluia!
- **P** Go in peace.
- **C** Serve the Lord!

465 Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds





Postlude

We would like to thank Kent Gall, trumpet, for adding to our worship today.

Acknowledgments

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





A Congregation Sharing Christ's Salvation By Grace... Through Faith... Revealed in Scripture... Alone.