



# EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

March 31, 2024

## INTRODUCTION

Christ is risen! Jesus is alive, and God has swallowed up death forever. With Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, we may feel astonished and confused, unsure of what to make of the empty tomb. But this is why we gather: to proclaim, witness, praise, and affirm the liberating reality of Christ's death and resurrection. In word and feast, we celebrate God's unending love, and depart to share this good news with all the world. Alleluia!

**Grace Lutheran Church**

A congregation of the ELCA

## **PRESERVICE MUSIC**

### **CHOIR SINGING**

## **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **EASTER HYMN: #365 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today**

## **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the wellspring of grace, our  
Easter and our joy.

**C: Amen.**

P: Look, here is water!

**C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

P: Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us. We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and water became the essence of life. Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers. The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day. Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom's land. In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life. Look, here is water!

**C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

P: At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people. We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY (Read in unison)**

**C: 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. Amen.**

**EASTER PRAISE:                   *“Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” ELW #172***

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!

## **READINGS**

### **FIRST READING: Acts 10:34-43**

<sup>34</sup>Peter began to speak to [the people]: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup>but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup>You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup>That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup>how 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. <sup>39</sup>We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup>but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup>not 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. <sup>42</sup>He 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. <sup>43</sup>All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

## **CHOIR SINGING**

### **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

<sup>1</sup>Now 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, <sup>2</sup>through 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.

<sup>3</sup>For 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, <sup>4</sup>and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most

of whom are still alive, though some have died. <sup>7</sup>Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. <sup>9</sup>For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup>But 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. <sup>11</sup>Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

**EASTER PRAISE:**                    ***“Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” ELW #172***

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!

**THE HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 24:1-12**

P: The Holy Gospel of Luke.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. <sup>2</sup>They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup>but when they went in, they did not find the body. <sup>4</sup>While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. <sup>5</sup>The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. <sup>6</sup>Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup>that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." <sup>8</sup>Then they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup>and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup>Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup>But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup>But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

P: The Gospel of the Lord!

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

## **EASTER HYMN: #366 The Strife is O'er, the Battle Done**

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**C: We may weep through the longest nights.**

**We may stare at the empty tomb with more questions than answers. We may run our fingers over the burial cloths and still long for more. But today, we are a people of hope.**

**We believe in new beginnings.**

**We believe that the God who created the world is stronger than death. We believe that Jesus abides among us, healing, teaching, and leaving fingerprints throughout this world.**

**We believe that a tomb could not hold him.**

**We believe that the sun does rise.**

**We believe that Peter was there with questions, awe, and faith the size of a mustard seed.**

**We believe that the story is not over yet, for God is among us.**

**Today we are a people of hope.**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

**P: . . . God of grace,**

**C: hear our prayer.**

### **EASTER PRAISE:                    “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” ELW #172**

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!

### **SHARING OF THE PEACE OF THE RISEN LORD**

*Please share a sign of peace with those around in whatever way you are most comfortable.*

**P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.**

**C: And also with you.**

### **OFFERING**

*If you have brought your offering with you today, please place it in the basket in the back as you leave. You may send your giving to the church office or give through the link on our website.*

**P: Let us pray.**

Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

**C: Amen.**

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

P: God declares that we are Easter people!

**C: We are here because Jesus Christ has died; Jesus Christ has risen; and Jesus Christ will come again.**

P: The risen Christ is present in bread and wine.

**C: We are the body of Christ who wish to celebrate his resurrection presence among us. Holy God, we thank you for your perfect plan to save all humankind from death and sin. We praise you for the saving action of Jesus Christ and his gift of forgiveness.**

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION** (*In the night in which he was betrayed . . .*)

P: Come, Holy Spirit, and grant us together as your forgiven people who feast together in resurrection celebration of the One who has come among us and the One who will come again.

**C: Amen!**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

### **SHARING THE MEAL**

P: The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table.

**(Follow instructions given. Ushers will direct you.)**

**COMMUNION HYMN: #377 Alleluia! Jesus is Risen!  
#369 Christ the Lord is Risen Today; Alleluia!**

### **COMMUNION BLESSING**

P: Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together.  
Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name.

**C: Amen.**

**EASTER HYMN #382 Christ is Risen! Alleluia!**

**BENEDICTION**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**C: He is Risen indeed!**

P: Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

**C: Thanks be to God! Alleluia!**

**SENDING MUSIC**



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**Organist: Heather Vlasak**

**Synod Authorized Minister: Kris Stauffacher**

**Custodian: Dave Clark and crew**



**Come Grow  
in Grace**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ADULT FORUM** will take place next Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am in the Conference Room. The topic is Christian Nationalism and was chosen by participants of last month's forum. This topic organically addresses the intersection of faith and politics. If you prefer not to participate in this type of conversation, please wait to join us another time. The next forum will take place on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The topic will be chosen at the April forum. If you would like to suggest a topic, please let Kris know.

**LEARN TO PREVENT, RECOGNIZE, & REACT RESPONSIBLY TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** April 13, 2024 from 1:30-4:00 PM at Elroy United Methodist Church, 125 Royall Ave. Presented by Hope House of South Central Wisconsin. Register for this free training at [tinyurl.com/3w43ywhx](https://tinyurl.com/3w43ywhx) or call Jess at 608-356-9123

**HEALING SERVICE** Rev. Dione Stepanek, Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Evangelical Mission, will worship for us for the healing service on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. She will provide an update on the work of our Synod and the ELCA as a church body.

**GRACE'S CONTINUOUS GARAGE SALE** resumes on Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> (weather permitting). Contact Karen Nelson at 608-547-4108 to arrange a drop off. Contact Mary Miller at 608-479-1493 to volunteer. Thank you for supporting this ministry.

**SAVE THE DATE** Grace's Annual Mother-Daughter Banquet will take place on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. More details coming soon!

**GRADUATE SUNDAY** We will honor those graduating from high school this year on Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup> during worship. A cake reception will follow worship. Plan to join in blessing our graduates in their next adventures and celebrating this important milestone.

**WE PRAY FOR:** Karl Hagen, Kandy Hagen, Suzanne Soltvedt, John Thompson, Dorothy Klipstein, Ethel Mae Baldwin, Holly Hinzpeter, Hunter Clark, Hank Benthauser, Bob Brod, Megan Braund, Ed Miller, David Denter, Lynne Rudy, Henry Schmid, Helen Milne, Joy Bever, Anna Preuss, Allison Rotering, Amy VandeMark, and Johnathan Thomas Spencer