

THURSDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF EASTER

THURSDAY, 1:30 P.M., APRIL 15, 2021

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.



Welcome to guests and visitors! *This pamphlet will guide your worship today. The assembly's parts are indicated by **C** and bold font. The vertical line in the left margin indicates when the assembly stands as each is able.*

About Holy Communion with Saint John Lutheran Church

"It is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and received there" (Augsburg Confession, Article X)· "A person who has faith in these words, 'given for you' and 'shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,' is really worthy and well prepared." "Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament" (The Small Catechism, Part VI)· "This church practices Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcomed to Communion" (The Use of the Means of Grace, Principle 50)·

EASTER GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

A welcome and introduction to the day are made.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

SAINT JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)

302 N. Parker Dr., Janesville, WI 53545

Office Tel. (608) 752-3159

saintjohnlutheran@sbcglobal.net

www.sjlc-elca.org

Pastor: Rev. Bond Haldeman

Mobile Tel. (608) 208-0283

pastor.bond@sbcglobal.net

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

☩ We thank you, O God.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

☩ We bless you, O God.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

☩ We praise you, O God.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

☩ Amen.

ENTRANCE PSALM (139)

¹Lord, you have searched me out and known me;
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.

**☩ ²You trace my journeys and my resting-places
and are acquainted with all my ways.**

³Indeed, there is not a word on my lips,
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

**☩ ⁴You press upon me behind and before
and lay your hand upon me.**

⁵Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

**☩ ⁶Where can I go then from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?**

⁷If I climb up to heaven, you are there;
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

**☩ Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

GREETING

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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

This is the feast of victory for our God.

**☩ Alleluia. Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power and riches and wisdom and strength,
and honor and blessing and glory are his.**

This is the feast of victory for our God.

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

This is the feast of victory for our God,

**☩ for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia. Alleluia.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

☩ And also with you.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.

FIRST READING: Acts 5:27-33

²⁷When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us."

²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

³³When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.

The word of the Lord.

☩ Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY: Psalm 34:1, 15-20, 22

¹I will bless the Lord at all times;
the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth.

**☩ ¹⁵The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,
and God's ears are open to their cry.**

¹⁶The face of the Lord is against those who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.

**☩ ¹⁷The righteous cry, and the Lord hears them
and delivers them from all their troubles.**

¹⁸The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.

**☩ ¹⁹Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but the Lord delivers them from every one.**

²⁰God will keep safe all their bones; not one of them shall be broken.

**☩ ²²O Lord, you redeem the life of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Jesus said, "Have you believed because you have seen me?"

☪ Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 3:31-36

The holy gospel according to John.

☪ Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³²He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. ³³Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified this, that God is true. ³⁴He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. ³⁶Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

The gospel of the Lord.

☪ Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Silence for reflection may follow the sermon.

MUSICAL OFFERING

EASTER GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

☪ Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

☪ And also with you.

The assembly remains in place, as the service continues.

NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**☒ We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.

☞ Your mercy is great.

The prayers conclude: In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you . . . through Jesus Christ our Lord.

☞ Amen.

OFFERING PRESENTATION

Offerings are received at the door as one enters. The offering is presented for the work of Christ's Church, here and throughout the world.

OFFERTORY

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

☞ Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Alleluia! An angel of the Lord came and rolled back the stone.

☞ The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid.

I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

☞ He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Alleluia!

OFFERING PRAYER

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☞ Amen.

The table is set.

DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

The minister continues, concluding: ... and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (SANCTUS)

**☩ Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. . . .

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

☩ Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life . . .

Grace our table with your presence.

☩ Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. . . .

Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

☩ Come, Holy Spirit.

With your holy ones of all times and places . . .

we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

☩ Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to 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 receive from this table.
Eat and be satisfied.

☪ Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION SONG (AGNUS DEI)

**☪ 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.**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Please remain seated where you are. The communion elements will be brought to you. The host is received in your open hand. The wine will be taken by you from an individual glass. Carefully place your empty glass on the pew until end of worship.

BLESSING & POST-COMMUNION PSALM (118)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

☪ Amen.

¹Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures forever.

☪ ²Let Israel now proclaim, "His mercy endures forever."

⁵I called to the Lord in my distress;
the Lord answered by setting me free.

☪ ⁸It is better to rely on the Lord than to put any trust in flesh.

¹⁰All the ungodly encompass me;
in the name of the Lord I will repel them.

**☪ ¹¹They hem me in, they hem me in on every side;
in the name of the Lord I will repel them.**

¹³I was pressed so hard that I almost fell, but the Lord came to my help.

**☪ ¹⁴The Lord is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.**

¹⁵There is a sound of exultation and victory in the tents of the righteous:

**☞ ¹⁶“The right hand of the Lord has triumphed!
The right hand of the Lord is exalted!
The right hand of the Lord has triumphed!”**

¹⁷I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.

**☞ ²¹I will give thanks to you, for you answered me
and have become my salvation.**

²²The same stone which the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

☞ ²³This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

²⁴On this day the Lord has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

☞ ²⁵Hosanna, Lord, hosanna! Lord, send us now success.

²⁶Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;

**☞ ²⁸“You are my God, and I will thank you;
you are my God, and I will exalt you.”**

²⁹Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures forever.

**☞ Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

At the conclusion, the assembly responds:

☞ Amen.

BLESSING

Response after the blessing:

☞ Amen.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please check web-sites and printed materials for further information.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

☩ Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news.

☩ Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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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.