

**Grace Lutheran Church Worship Service**  
**April 12, 2020**

**THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are raised with him to new life. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.*

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and planted us in a well-watered garden. In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave us water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life. We praise you for your salvation through water, for the water in this font, and for all water everywhere. Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. Satisfy the thirsty, and give us the life only you can give. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**KYRIE**

*Lord, have mercy: Lord, have mercy.*

*Christ, have mercy: Christ, have mercy.*

*Lord, have mercy: Lord, have mercy.*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**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.”

### **PSALM: 118:1-2, 14-24**

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for the | LORD is good;  
God’s mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>**Let Israel | now declare,  
“God’s mercy endures forever.”**

<sup>14</sup>The LORD is my strength | and my song,  
and has become | my salvation.

<sup>15</sup>**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents | of the righteous:  
“The right hand of the | LORD acts valiantly!**

<sup>16</sup>The right hand of the LORD| is exalted!  
The right hand of the | LORD acts valiantly!”

<sup>17</sup>**I shall not | die, but live,  
and declare the works | of the LORD.**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD indeed punished me sorely,  
but did not hand me over to death.

<sup>19</sup>**Open for me the | gates of righteousness;  
I will enter them and give thanks | to the LORD.**

<sup>20</sup>“This is the gate | of the LORD;  
here the righteous may enter.”

<sup>21</sup>**I give thanks to you, for you have | answered me  
and you have become | my salvation.**

<sup>22</sup>The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief | cornerstone.

<sup>23</sup>**By the LORD has | this been done;  
it is marvelous | in our eyes.**

<sup>24</sup>This is the day that the | LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be | glad in it.

### **SECOND READING: Colossians 3:1-4**

*Easter means new life for us as it first meant new life for Christ. His resurrection reshapes the entire focus and motivation for our lives since we are now hidden with the risen Christ in God.*

<sup>1</sup>If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup>for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 28:1-10**

<sup>1</sup>After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and

the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup>For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup>But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." <sup>8</sup>So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup>Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

## **SERMON**

### **Resurrection**

Matthew 28:2: "Suddenly there was a great earthquake: for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it."

Have you ever experienced an earthquake? My family moved to Elmendorf AFB outside Anchorage, Alaska, in the Fall of 1964, after the Good Friday earthquake that same year. That earthquake was 9.2 magnitude, exploding 10 million times more energy than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima during WW II. We experienced after-shock tremors all three years we lived there. Matthew says Easter is an earthquake that shook *the whole world*.

Resurrection is an earthquake because you can't explain resurrection. Resurrection explains us. The disciples, and we, are in the tight death-grip of "facts." What are those facts? Fact: all that lives, dies. Face facts. It may be a somber world, but it is our world where things stay tied down and what dies stays dead.

But the facts don't work anymore. Not since Easter. Because Easter is about God. Easter is not about resuscitating a dead body. That's not resurrection. Easter is about God. God who creates a way when there is no way, God who makes war on evil until evil is undone, God who brings life out of death for Jesus — and for us.

Easter is about God. And that is both wonderful and scary. Because when God brings new life, God brings it whether we want it or not. Think about that a moment. Because what God did on Easter by opening the tomb is what God did on Christmas in a young woman's womb. God made a new way when there was no way. The same angel who told Joseph, "Name the baby Emmanuel, God With Us," was the angel who told the women, "Don't be afraid. He isn't here. He's been raised." Little baby God With Us grew up, got crucified, made the earth shake, and today is moving to bring the whole world to God's heart. Yes, even in the midst of a deadly pandemic.

On the cross the world did all it could to Jesus. At Easter, God did all God could for the world. And the world shook. You can't explain that. You witness it. You participate in it.

Jesus' death wasn't something God planned or willed for Jesus. Crucifixion was the inevitable, predictable consequence for Jesus saying the things he said, doing the things he did, and being the reflection of God's unstoppable love for all people. The world always crucifies people who threaten the power structures. That's the fact.

But on Easter God gave us a new fact. God took the cross, the worst we could do, and turned death into life. And the earth shook. On Easter God offered us a new world. Christ came back to forgive the very disciples who deserted him. God's new world of life is about forgiveness, not vengeance. And the earth shook.

Jesus picked up a piece of bread and ate it, and you could see the nail prints in his hands. God's world is about life, not death. And the world shook.

The women went to the tomb to write one more chapter in the long, sad story of death's last word. And the earth heaved, an angel appeared, the stone was rolled away, Rome's soldiers shook. The angel plopped down on the stone in one final act of defiance of death and said to the soldiers, those who represented the world powers: "Be afraid. Everything you build your world on is being shaken." Then the angel turned to the women and said, "Don't be afraid. You're looking for Jesus? He isn't here." Nobody went home the same. Amen.

### **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**

*Prayers reflect the wideness of God's mercy for the whole world—  
for the church universal, its ministry, and the mission of the gospel;  
for the well-being of creation;  
for peace and justice in the world, the nations and those in authority, the community;  
for the poor, oppressed, sick, bereaved, lonely;  
for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit;  
for the congregation, and for special concerns.*

*Additional prayers may be added.*

*Prayers of thanksgiving for the faithful departed may include those who recently have died.*

*End the prayers with these or similar words:*

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

**OFFERING:**

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you.

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

**BLESSING**

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**