

SECOND SUNDAY in EASTER WORSHIP

April 19, 2020

Cross of Glory Lutheran Church
Brooklyn Center, MN

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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. 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.

GATHERING HYMN #367 verses 1, 2 & 4

1 Now all the vault of heav'n resounds
in praise of love that still abounds:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!
Repeat their song of glory here:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

4 Adoring praises now we bring
and with the heav'nly blessed sing:
"Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!"
Be to the Father, and our Lord,
to Spirit blest, most holy God,
all the glory, never ending!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

"Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds"

2 Eternal is the gift he brings,
therefore our heart with rapture sings:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Now still he comes to give us life
and by his presence stills all strife.
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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.

KYRIE Pages 98-99

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

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.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen, amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE page 101

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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.

PSALM 16

¹Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;

I have said to the LORD, "You are my Lord, my good above all other."

²**All my delight is in the godly that are in the land,
upon those who are noble among the people.**

³But those who run after other gods
shall have their troubles multiplied.

⁴**I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods,
never take their names upon my lips.**

⁵O LORD, you are my portion and my cup;
it is you who uphold my lot.

⁶**My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;
indeed, I have a rich inheritance.**

⁷I will bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
my heart teaches me night after night.

⁸**I have set the LORD always before me;
because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.**

⁹My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.

¹⁰**For you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor let your holy one see the pit.**

¹¹You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures for--
evermore.

ANTHEM **Rise Up, My heart, with Gladness ~ J.S. Bach**

*Rise up, my heart, with gladness and hear the news today.
Now let all gloom and sadness be gone without delay.
Lifeless our Savior lay. So, too, shall we one day.
But we shall know God's love,
And rise to heaven above.*

*With joy the foe had shouted, when Christ was laid in the tomb.
But now the foe is routed. His joy is turned to gloom.
Christ gains the victory. Through Him we all are free.
He who was born to save
Has triumphed over the grave.*

GOSPEL **John 20:19-31**

The holy gospel according to St. John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

“He Comes Through Locked Doors”

John 20:19-31

Several years ago, the Saturday Evening Post ran a cartoon showing a man about to be rescued after he had spent a long-time ship-wrecked on a tiny deserted island. The sailor in charge of the rescue team stepped onto the beach and handed the man a stack of newspapers. “Compliments of the Captain,” the sailor said, “He would like you to glance at the headlines to see if you’d still like to be rescued!”

Sometimes the headlines do scare us. I’m sure that’s how the disciples felt that first Easter evening. For three years they had devoted their lives to Jesus. They had left home and family, jobs and security to follow him. But now the one they had followed had died- a cruel death on a cross no less. And they are caught in a whirlpool of anxiety. They could be accused of stealing his body. Or they could be punished- even killed- for guilt by association with Jesus. The headlines didn’t look good for Jesus’ disciples. They feared what might happen to them now and so they huddled together in a room with the door to the room tightly locked.

Fear is the kind of thing that most people are familiar with, isn’t it? The disciples feared the Jews. Today, people’s fears can range from fear of the future, to fear of one’s savings running out, to fear of being alone or fear of health issues or relationship issues. During this time of the Covid-19 pandemic, our reasons for fear and anxiety can even be more pronounced. Like the disciples our fears can leave us shut out and locked in!

One of the most embarrassing experiences that I’ve had as a pastor happened in my first years of ministry. It’s one of those experiences that you just want to forget, but you can’t! I had been invited to some parishoner’s home for dinner one evening. As the evening wore on, I asked to use the restroom. In trying to leave the restroom, however, I discovered that the door had somehow gotten stuck and would not open.

After a few tries of pulling and tugging at the door, and the help of a few choice words, I admitted I was locked in. Fearing ridicule, embarrassment and the need to resign immediately, I set aside my pride and called for help. The wife came to see what was wrong and laughed when she realized the situation. I was not laughing however. After several failed attempts by her husband to open it, he ended up going around to the outside of the house, crawled in the window and joined me in the bathroom. We stood there looking at each other for a moment and he finally said we have to break down the door. So together we threw our weight against the door and on the second try- the door gave way and we both ended up on the floor on top of the door. We had succeeded at freeing me from the John.

Fortunately, John our gospel writer describes the door and the locks as more than a door on hinges and a deadbolt lock. He is describing the interior conditions of the disciples. The locked places of our lives are always more about what is going on inside of us than around us. The disciples were locked and bound in their fears.

But nothing could keep Jesus from coming to his disciples. None of their fears are too great. None of their doors are too tightly locked. Not even their grief was too overwhelming, but Jesus came right through the locked door and stood among them. In the RSV version of the bible it says here that Jesus came and stood by them. And that’s what Christ always does for us. He stands by us-even amid our fears.

The first word that Jesus says to the disciples is “peace...peace be with you.” This is a peace that comes from God’s presence with us. While growing up in a Lutheran church, one of the soloists of the congregation often sang a song with lyrics that went like this: **No! Never alone. No! Never alone.**

Oh, he promised never to leave us- never to leave us alone! These words spoke to me as a child and now as an adult they still give me the assurance that God is with us and will never leave or forsake us. This is our peace.

Along with peace, the risen Christ gives the disciples power. Verse 22 tells us that “when he said this, he breathed on them the Holy Spirit.” This is John, the gospel writer’s version of Pentecost. That first Easter evening Jesus breathed on those disciples the Holy Spirit- the very same spirit that God breathed on you and filled you up with at your baptism.

Former presiding bishop of the ELCA Mark Hanson once said, “The Holy Spirit is the church’s oxygen. It is our very life breath as people of God. Filling us with vision and a passion to be the people of God in the world today.” Christ comes through the locked door of the disciples and gives them peace and power and also, he gives them a purpose. You see Jesus didn’t just unlock the door of the disciples’ hearts; he propels them out the door of that room to tell others so they too can be released from the grip of fear. “As the father has sent me,” Jesus said, “so I am sending you.” When the risen Christ shows up, he gives us purpose.

A bishop tells of a congregation that had been in decline for many years. It was an inner-city church with a number of homeless people around the church. They had an expensive security system but even so someone broke in. After this happened, the church was thinking that the best thing to do would be to get a better security system. At the meeting, however, an older member of the congregation stood up and said, “You know as long as I’ve been coming to this church, we’ve been trying to get people to come to this church. We try to get new members but have no luck. Seems that there are people dying to get inside. So, rather than pay for an expensive security system when we are declining, what say we just unlock the doors and see what happens?” Another person in their eighties seconded the motion!

The first night, fifteen homeless people slept on the floor of the church. The second night, thirty people slept on the church’s floor. Congregational members asked the people, “Will you just try to see that nothing happens to our beautiful building?” And it didn’t!

Soon members of the congregation realized that the people sleeping in their church were hungry. So, they got organized and prepared a simple meal each night. Then they found out that some of the people had health problems. So, a couple of nurses in the congregation were called out of retirement and they enlisted others to help them provide some health care for the homeless people. Others in the congregation stepped up and volunteered to be hosts for each evening. Many others rounded up usable clothing. Members of this congregation hadn’t had as much enjoyment in years. And guess what happened? In six months, the Sunday morning worship attendance doubled! The congregation was brought back to a newness of life!

Now the point here is NOT that a church should dismantle their security system and leave the doors to the building unlocked. The point is, look what happened when the congregation stopped focusing on getting new members and started focusing on new missions- it’s purpose!

Sometimes a congregation’s locked doors can be “I don’t want anything to change,” or “I only want my style of music and worship,” or “I only want to get to know people who are like me.” The risen Christ, however, wants to unlock our doors and propel us out to receive all and to embrace what God is doing at this time and in this day. When that congregation’s “doors” were locked, no one got it. But when they focused on their purpose/mission, look what happened! Truly the risen Christ just loves to get through locked doors!

Let us pray: Eternal God, we thank you that in our darkest hours you come to us. Thank you for coming through our locked doors-whatever those doors may be for us. In the power and presence of your Spirit, breathe into us anew your peace and power and purpose. During these days, touch us and fill us with that assurance that you will never leave us-never to leave us alone. Empower us even now to share your light and your love with others through our words and actions. Help us always to catch a vision for your mission in the world. In the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN #377 verses 1, 2 & 5 "Alleluia! Jesus is Risen"

1 Alleluia! Jesus is risen!

Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb, heaven forever!
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight!

Refrain:

Jesus is risen and we shall arise.
Give God the glory! Alleluia!

2 Walking the way, Christ in the center
telling the story to open our eyes;
breaking our bread, giving us glory:
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise.

Refrain

5 City of God, Easter forever,
golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
river of life, saints and archangels,
sing with creation to God the I AM!

Refrain

CONFESSION OF FAITH 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.**

OFFERING It is Finished

The cross is my beginning
The line drawn in the sand
The end of all my striving
Now I am born again

It is done it is finished
Christ has won He is risen
Grace is here
Love has triumphed over death
Forever

Strongholds, Bowing to the Savior
Resurrection Power
Over ev'ry circumstance, His word stands
Final and forever, It will not be shaken
He alone has won it all

Worship Team

There Jesus was forsaken
So I will never be
His grace is my salvation
The gift of God
The work of Calvary

The cross needs no addition
His mercy is complete
His love is not in question
The Son of God
Has spoken over me

It is done it is finished
Mercy won I'm forgiven
Sing His name
He is worthy of our praise, Jesus

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

This is Amazing Grace

Worship Team

Verse 1

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger
The King of Glory the King above all kings

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder
And leaves us breathless in awe and wonder
The King of Glory the King above all kings

(Yeah) (Oh) This is amazing grace
This is unfailing love
That You would take my place
That You would bear my cross
You laid down Your life
That I would be set free
Oh Jesus I sing for all that You've done for me

Who brings our chaos back into order
Who makes the orphan a son and daughter
The King of Glory the King of Glory

Who rules the nations with truth and justice
Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance
The King of Glory the King above all kings

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquered the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy worthy worthy

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world and all who are in need.

(a brief silence)

Holy One, as Jesus entered the locked room to show his disciples the beginning of a new world, so enter our hearts and move us to faith in Jesus as the Risen One. Convince us of the reality of the resurrection, and free us from all manner of fears and phobias. Give us good courage to face these days in the promise of your presence with us always. Lord in your mercy...**hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus, during your earthly ministry you showed your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations in life. Be present now to people who need your loving touch because of the COVID-19 virus. May they feel your power of healing through all who care for them at this time. Lord in your mercy...**hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, we thank you for your faithfulness in how you have guided and equipped people in their jobs and have provided in the past. It can be scary and overwhelming not knowing how bills and obligations will be met or to not be able to provide for families. As people feel financial strain during this time of uncertainty, bring them comfort and peace, reminding them that you are there for them. Provide for them in their times of need. Lord in your mercy...**hear our prayer.**

Eternal God, pour out the power of your Holy Spirit as Cross of Glory Lutheran Church meets today for the purpose of calling their next pastor. Thank you for leading the Call Committee in their decision to bring forward a candidate who will best serve at this time. Guide the hearts and minds of all as they look to you at this time. Lord in your mercy...**hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER-

Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us always to prayer. **Our father who art....**

BLESSING

May God who has brought us from death to life, fill you with great joy in believing. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH SONG The Lord Almighty Reigns

Worship Team.

Hallelujah hallelujah
Hallelujah the Lord reigns
Hallelujah hallelujah
Hallelujah the Lord Almighty reigns

He has shown His awesome power
He has triumph'd mightily
He's the victor over darkness
And the grave
He has broken chains that bound us
He has set the pris'ner free
By His own great mercy we are saved

Hallelujah hallelujah
Hallelujah the Lord reigns
Hallelujah hallelujah
Hallelujah the Lord Almighty reigns

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!