

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Easter Light—Glorious Light

April 11, 2026

AS WE GATHER

“Seeking dedicated worker. Suffering *not* optional.” If we were to read that simple line in a job posting, it certainly would give us pause. People generally want to avoid suffering at any cost. Scripture reminds us that there may be a dynamic of discomfort to faith-filled living that follows the call of the risen Savior. In his hymn text “‘Come, Follow Me,’ the Savior Spake” from the 1600s, Johann Scheffler concludes, “Then let us follow Christ, our Lord, and take the cross appointed and, firmly clinging to His Word, in suff’ring be undaunted. For those who bear the battle’s strain the crown of heav’nly life obtain” (LSB 688:5). The challenges of the twenty-first century may differ from those of the seventeenth, but they are just as real. Our Lord promises that He is always with us on our life’s journey. With Easter joy, we travel onward together toward His glorious heavenly kingdom!

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

WELCOME

VERSE

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. **Hebrews 13:20-21**

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #490 “Jesus Lives! The Victory’s Won”

Jesus lives! The vict’ry’s won! Death no longer can appall me;
Jesus lives! Death’s reign is done! From the grave will Christ recall me.
Brighter scenes will then commence; This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! To Him the throne High above all things is given.
I shall go where He is gone, Live and reign with Him in heaven.
God is faithful; doubtings, hence! This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! For me He died, Hence will I, to Jesus living,
Pure in heart and act abide, Praise to Him and glory giving.
All I need God will dispense; This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! I know full well Nothing me from Him shall sever.
Neither death nor pow’rs of hell Part me now from Christ forever.
God will be my sure defense; This shall be my confidence.

Jesus lives! And now is death But the gate of life immortal;
This shall calm my trembling breath When I pass its gloomy portal.
Faith shall cry, as fails each sense: Jesus is my confidence!

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Alleluia! We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

People: Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Pastor: I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.

People: On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate, and I will declare your greatness.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us come before God in true repentance, seeking forgiveness and amendment of our lives as we follow the Lord.

People: “With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high?”

Women: “Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?”

Men: “Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?”

People: “Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

Pastor: He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

People: **Almighty God, we confess that we are indeed sinful. By our very nature we are sinful. We have done the evil you forbid and have not done the good you demand. We do repent and are truly sorry for these our sins. Have mercy on us because of Jesus, our Savior. Grant that, by the working of the Holy Spirit, we may live out our lives on earth faithfully until that time when we, by His grace, join the company of heaven forever.**

Pastor: God has promised forgiveness to those who repent of their sins and turn to Him for grace. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and at His command, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. May our gracious God, lead you to greater faith and obedience, and bring you to live with Him eternally in His glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

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

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God. *Refrain*

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are His. *Refrain*

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

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. *Alleluia. Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord’s resurrection may by your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

(Be seated)

BAPTISM SONG #740 “I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb”

I am Jesus’ little lamb, Ever glad at heart I am;
For my Shepherd gently guides me. Knows my need and well provides me,
Loves me ev’ry day the same, Even calls me by my name.

Day by day, at home, away. Jesus is my staff and stay.
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me, Into pleasant pastures leads me:
When I thirst, He bids me go Where the quiet waters flow.

Who so happy as I am, Even now the Shepherd’s lamb?
And when my short life is ended, By His angel host attended,
He shall fold me to His breast, There within His arms to rest.

BAPTISM of Mason Michael McCarthy

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Josuph James McCarthy

Angelo Matthew McCarthy

☩ WORD ☩

FIRST READING *Acts 5:29–42* (The apostles proclaim the Good News about Jesus, the Christ.)²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.”³⁰ The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”³³ When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.³⁴ But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while.³⁵ And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you are about

to do with these men. ³⁶For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. ³⁷After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; ³⁹but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!” So they took his advice, ⁴⁰and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴²And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 Peter 1:3–9* (We are born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Christ.)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CHIMES *“Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia”*

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 20:19–31* (Jesus appears to His disciples gathered behind locked doors.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twentieth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” ²²And when 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 withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.” ²⁴Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, 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 in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.” ²⁶Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, 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; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, 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 believed.” ³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S SONG & CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

"This Is the Day" AGPS #241

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord hath made, that the Lord hath made.
I will rejoice, I will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it,
This is the day that the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.
This is the day, this is the day that the Lord hath made.

SERMON HYMN #470 "O Sons and Daughters of the King" Stanzas 1-5

O sons and daughters of the King, Whom heav'nly hosts in glory sing,
Today the grave has lost its sting!

Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

That Easter morn, at break of day, The faithful women went their way
To seek the tomb where Jesus lay. Refrain

An angel clad in white they see, Who sits and speaks unto the three,
"Your Lord will go to Galilee." Refrain

That night the apostles met in fear; Among them came their master dear
And said, "My peace be with you, here." Refrain

When Thomas first the tidings heard That they had seen the risen Lord,
He doubted the disciples' word. Refrain

SERMON "Doubts and Disappointments...and the Blessings of Believing" **John 20:19-31**

HYMN #471 "O Sons and Daughters of the King" Stanzas 6-8

"My piercèd side, O Thomas, see, And look upon My hands, My feet;
Not faithless but believing be." Refrain

No longer Thomas then denied; He saw the feet, the hands, the side;
"You are my Lord and God!" he cried. Refrain

How blest are they who have not seen And yet whose faith has constant been,
For they eternal life shall win. Refrain

OFFERING As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord God, like Thomas we wrestle with faith amid doubts and fears; fill us with faith that we join with him in the conviction that Christ is our Lord and God.

People: Grant us your Holy Spirit, that believing, we may see, and seeing, we may rejoice in your Son and the power of His resurrection.

Pastor: Lord of the Church, we rejoice in the extension of Christ's kingdom through the waters of Holy Baptism. Bless Joseph, Angelo, and Mason as they are baptized into Christ, and bless their parents, Corey and Kayte, to raise them daily in the Christian faith.

People: Fill us with faith to rejoice in the gift of Baptism and welcome warmly all those who are baptized members of God's family.

Pastor: Gracious Lord, give courage to all pastors as they preach and teach the Word, that all who hear may believe. Bless Pastor Schneider as he prepares to serve here at St. Paul's. Bless our Together in Mission Partner, Pastor Chuck Ferry and family.

People: Prosper the work of all who serve Christ, that many may believe and live in righteousness and godliness until the day Christ returns as Judge and Lord of all.

Pastor: Give peace, Lord, to our homes and enliven them by Christ's resurrected life. Let the forgiveness of sins reign among husbands and wives, parents and children.

People: Assure those who live alone that they, too, are your children and part of your family, upheld by your right hand.

Pastor: Lord God of hosts, you have added believers to the Lord Jesus in all times and places, from those receptive and hostile alike. Shepherd the nations, and bring all peoples to embrace the Gospel of the resurrected Christ.

People: Curb wicked rulers and break their power, that all would be brought to the feet of Jesus in worship.

Pastor: Lord of life, we rejoice in your gift of life and especially join with the Hoffmann's as they celebrate the birthday of their son, Eric.

People: Bless us to rejoice in life and all the gifts you bestow upon us.

Pastor: Gracious Father, as your Son's wounds brought gladness and peace to the troubled disciples, give your presence and comfort to the troubled in our midst especially Michael, Barb, Marlene, Katherine, Zach, Carole, Kathy, Dan, Maxine, Pam, Marilyn, Dorothy, Janet, Jerry, Paula, Debbie, Janice, David, Helga, Dick, Margie, Anna, Charlene, Guy, Jill, Cathy and Sarah. Comfort also those who weep and grieve, especially Larry and Carol Hoffmann as they remember Judy and Don.

People: Grant all who grieve hope in the Lord and even the blessed joy of Easter morning.

Pastor: O Lord, preserve your Holy Communion and your Son's blessed Supper among us. Give contrition and faith to those who gather at this altar.

People: Unite us in our confession of your truth, and so bring us worthily to eat and to drink Christ's body and blood for forgiveness and life.

Pastor: O Lord, heavenly Father, give us all things good and beneficial to us and to our salvation, and keep us from all things harmful; through Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, O Lord our God, whose love daily attends us and whose peace blesses us in countless ways. Grant us your Spirit, gracious Father, that we worthily receive the bread and wine, that is the true body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, as a gift, guarantee, and pledge of the full salvation He has won for us. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. Unite us with all who gather with us at your Table here and with all in your glorious presence who now feast at your eternal table in the courts of heaven. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and singing:

SANCTUS

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Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory,
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

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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.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

HYMN #464 "The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done"

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the victor's triumph won;
Now be the song of praise begun. Alleluia!

The pow'rs of death have done their worst,
But Christ their legions hath dispersed.
Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!

The three sad days have quickly sped,
He rises glorious from the dead.
All glory to our risen Head! Alleluia!

He broke the age-bound chains of hell;
The bars from heav'n's high portals fell.
Let hymns of praise His triumph tell. Alleluia!

Lord, by the stripes which wounded Thee,
From death's dread sting Thy servants free
That we may live and sing to Thee. Alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

HYMN #488 "He Is Arisen! Glorious Word"

He is arisen! Glorious Word! Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
The gates of heav'n are open. My Jesus did triumphant die,
And Satan's arrows broken lie, Destroyed hell's fiercest weapon.
O hear what cheer!
Christ victorious, Rising glorious, Life is giving.
He was dead but now is living!

HYMN #633 "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing"

At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to our victorious King,
Who has washed us in the tide Flowing from His piercèd side. Alleluia!

Praise we Him, whose love divine Gives His sacred blood for wine,
Gives His body for the feast--Christ the victim, Christ the priest. Alleluia!

Where the paschal blood is poured, Death's dread angel sheathes the sword;
Israel's hosts triumphant go Through the wave that drowns the foe. Alleluia!

Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Paschal victim, paschal bread;
With sincerity and love Eat we manna from above. Alleluia!

Mighty Victim from the sky, Hell's fierce pow'rs beneath You lie;
You have conquered in the fight, You have brought us life and light. Alleluia!

Now no more can death appall, Now no more the grave enthrall;
You have opened paradise, And Your saints in You shall rise. Alleluia!

Easter triumph, Easter joy! This alone can sin destroy;
From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free, Newborn souls in You to be. Alleluia!

Father, who the crown shall give, Savior, by whose death we live,
Spirit, guide through all our days: Three in One, Your name we praise. Alleluia!

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. Grant, O Lord, that the lips which have sung your praise in the sanctuary may glorify you in the world, that the ears which have heard the voice of your songs may be closed to the voice of clamor and dispute, that the eyes which have seen your great love may also behold your blessed hope, that the tongues which have confessed your name may ever speak the truth, and that the bodies of all who have tasted of your Son's living body and blood may be restored to newness of life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #480 “He’s Risen, He’s Risen”

He’s risen, He’s risen, Christ Jesus, the Lord;
He opened death’s prison, the incarnate, true Word.
Break forth, hosts of heaven, in jubilant song
And earth, sea, and mountain their praises prolong.

The foe was triumphant when on Calvary
The Lord of creation was nailed to the tree.
In Satan’s domain did the hosts shout and jeer,
For Jesus was slain, whom the evil ones fear.

But short was their triumph; the Savior arose,
And death, hell, and Satan He vanquished, His foes.
The conquering Lord lifts His banner on high;
He lives, yes, He lives, and will nevermore die.

O, where is your sting, death? We fear you no more;
Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden’s door.
For all our transgressions His blood does atone;
Redeemed and forgiven, we now are His own.

Then sing your hosannas and raise your glad voice;
Proclaim the blest tidings that all may rejoice.
Laud, honor, and praise to the Lamb that was slain:
With Father and Spirit He ever shall reign.

Preacher & Liturgist
Lector
Organist

Pastor Harold Bender
Jodi Drew
Deaconess Carole King

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