



NORTH/WEST LOWER MICHIGAN SYNOD ELCA

# SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

*Sunday, April 11, 2021*

## **Thanksgiving For Baptism**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,  
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,  
for these waters where you make us new, leading us  
from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us  
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,  
like rains to our thirsting earth,  
like streams that revive our souls,  
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in  
fear. Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.

Send us companions on our journey as we share your  
life.

Make us one, risen Christ. Cleanse our hearts. Shower  
us with life.

To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Gathering Song**

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing (ELW 362)

### **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.

### **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

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 4:32-35**

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one  
heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of  
any possessions, but everything they owned was held in  
common. With great power the apostles gave their  
testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and  
great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy  
person among them, for as many as owned lands or  
houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was  
sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was  
distributed to each as any had need.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalms: Psalm 133**

How good and how pleasant it is,  
when kindred live together in unity!

**It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar of his robe.**

It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the hills of Zion. For there the Lord has commanded the blessing: life forevermore.

### **Second Reading: 1 John 1:1-2:2**

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel: John 20:19-31**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

When 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." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So 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." A 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." Then 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." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But 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**

The Rev. Rosanne Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop

### **Hymn of the Day**

We Walk By Faith (ELW 635)

### **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**

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

You shower your church with grace, O God. Unite the whole church on earth, so that with one heart it testifies to the resurrection of Jesus Christ with power and love. Lord, in your mercy. **Receive our prayer.**

You proclaim the blessing of life forevermore. Like dew upon the mountains, refresh your creation. Restore waters, cleanse the air, and provide revitalizing moisture to parched land. Give your whole creation the promise of new life. Lord, in your mercy. **Receive our prayer.**

You direct the nations, O God. Guide all in authority, that they shepherd their peoples in the ways of your love. Defeat in us our impulse to war. Bestow the peace of Christ upon those in authority and breathe upon them the Holy Spirit. Lord, in your mercy.

**Receive our prayer.**

You place within the heart of the church a spirit of sharing. Give us the power of your generous Spirit, that we provide for the needs of others. Announce your peace to those who are lonely, hurting, suffering, or afraid. Lord, in your mercy. **Receive our prayer.**

You give us fellowship with one another in the church. Shine the light of the risen Christ in our life together, so that we live in love for one another and our joy may be complete. Lord, in your mercy.

**Receive our prayer.**

You share the gift of eternal life. In thanksgiving and remembrance, we recall the lives and gifts of those who now live in endless joy. Unite us with them in resurrection hope. Lord, in your mercy. **Receive our prayer.**

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**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.**

**Blessing**

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of all grace <sup>✠</sup> bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

**Sending Song**

Thine is the Glory (ELW 376)

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

Jesus Christ is Risen Today (ELW 365)

We give thanks for all those who participated!

**The North/West Lower Michigan Synod Staff**

The Rev. Rosanne Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop  
The Rev. David Sprang, Assistant to the Bishop and  
Director of Evangelical Mission  
Rebecca Bossenbroek, Director of Finance  
Chelsey Satterlee, Director of Communications  
Sandy Schlesinger, Vice President  
Sue Sprang

**Prince of Peace, Portage**

The Rev. Rachel Laughlin  
Janet Hill, Organ  
Prince of Peace Sanctuary Choir, Vocals

**Trinity Lutheran, Midland**

The Rev. Gerald Ferguson, The Rev. Danielle Shealy  
The Trinity Lutheran Chancel Choir, Vocals  
Patti Bowen, Organ  
Brenda Hayden, Music Director

**The Association of Lutheran Church Musicians**

I Know that My Redeemer Lives (Church Triumphant)  
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LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*April 11, 2021*

**Sharon Weller** announced her resignation from her positions as Music Coordinator/Choir Director and Administrative Assistant. Her last day on staff at Bethlehem was Sunday, April 4th.

We give thanks for all the wonderful work, music and ministry Sharon has shared with us these last few years. She has helped our congregation through our many challenges during the COVID pandemic as well as the many changes to help our church move forward technologically to allow for our parishioners to have a choice to view our services at home. We wish Sharon all the best, and may God bless her and keep her always. Sharon, you will be missed!

**Altar Flowers have returned!** Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service. You may use the sign-up poster in the Narthex by signing on the date you request. Then fill out a pink slip with the necessary information and place it and a check for \$40 (payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church or BLC) in the Administration Assistant's mailbox near the church office entrance. You may select either "in honor" or "in memory" or "to celebrate". If someone has already signed on the date you would like, feel free to add your name – we welcome more than one on a Sunday.

**Today's altar flowers are donated by:** *Craig and Maureen Bauer, Thanks for the blessings of a wonderful family both here and in heaven.*

**"Zoom Bible Study"** gathering via Zoom is on a break right now. Our next study will start on April 21<sup>st</sup> and will be on Paul's letter to the Philippians from Augsburg Fortress. Besides the thought-provoking discussions, we also have great conversation and fellowship. Please contact Pr. Paul if you are interested in joining.

**The BLC book club** continues to meet the 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm via ZOOM. On Apr 27 we will discuss the book "My Name is Lucy Barton" by Elizabeth Strout. If you would like to participate and are not already on the email list, just send your email address to [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net).

**It's time to take the plunge and volunteer!** Join us for a very special day of underwater-themed faith-filled fun! Our one day outdoor VBS program called Great Bible Reef is planned to take place on Sunday, June 27th! The Christian Education Committee and Annie are in search of volunteers who can assist with cool crafts, fun songs, zany games and school of friends. Volunteer participation is crucial if we are going to have VBS this summer. Please reach out to Annie Slabaugh at [annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:annie.slabaugh@bethlehemtc.org) or 616.551.6418 to get more info and sign up.

**The APRIL issue of the STAR is ready!** This is an early publication so we can include Holy Week and Easter information. Feel free to check online at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org) < About Us > "The Online Bethlehem Star" or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>

The outdoor **"Shooting STAR Dispenser" at BLC is now full** with several paper publications, including the April STAR and the current week's worship folder/bulletin. If you would like a copy of a DVD, please contact the church and one will be produced for you.

**Drive My Way**, the driver's ed school using Bethlehem's facility is in need of experienced driver's ed teachers. If you are experienced or know someone who is experienced, please contact Mark or Ashley Ingraham, the Father/Daughter Team; Drive My Way Driver Education; (231)492-6612. Time and pay are negotiable.

**Christ in Our Home Devotionals for available for April/May/June.** They can be picked up at the name tag table on Sunday mornings, from the STAR box below the outside mailbox, or during parking lot communion. The newest *Living Lutheran* magazine is also available in the same locations.

**A big thank you** to those who have turned in Oleson's receipts. For 2020, we received a total of \$545.66. Please continue saving your Oleson's receipts for Bethlehem. Please drop them off in the bin under the mailbox counter. Thanks.

**Calling all Knitters!!** There is an overabundance of yarn skeins in the bin under the mailboxes in the narthex. PLEASE feel free to grab some to make hats, mittens, prayer shawls, etc.! The yarn is sorted according to kind, so you can be sure to find something appropriate for whatever project you have in mind. Questions? Call Betty R. (947-1013)

**Keep "Hope Spreading":** Don't forget our blog "Hope Spreads Further" is still going strong! We've had many very inspiring entries and hope to read more. We invite you to help us build this blog or just read current entries at <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/hope-spreads-further>. Reach out to *Pastor Paul* at [paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org) or *Sharon* at [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org) if you'd like to contribute to the blog!