



*Second Sunday of Easter
Sunday, April 12, 2026
Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA
Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope, and Love*

Introduction

In today's gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gathering around word and meal, and in our everyday lives. Throughout the coming Sundays of Easter the first two readings will be from the Acts of the Apostles and the first letter of Peter. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

**PRELUDE
BELL
WELCOME**

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Please stand as you are able

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

- P: God is near to all who call on God.
C: **We call in God in truth.**
P: Let us speak God's praise.
C: **All creation will bless God's name forever.**

- P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.
C: **Amen.**

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:**

- P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Merciful God,

C: Give us the willingness to be honest with ourselves, with one another, and with you about the ways in which we have caused harm in this world. Give us the openness to see where our actions or failures to act have led to pain in those closest to us and in those far away. Do not let us sink further into self-harm through self-blame and hatred, but give us the courage to set right our wrongs, and to return to you again and again for forgiveness.

P: The risen God has raised you to newness of life in Jesus' name. You are in Christ a new creation, and God forgives you every wrong. Celebrate with all of creation a world redeemed, and lavish the love you have received on all that is.

C: Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN: “*That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright*” (ELW 384)**

**1 That Easter day with joy was bright;
the sun shone out with fairer light
when, to their longing eyes restored,
th'apostles saw their risen Lord!**

**2 O Jesus, king of gentleness,
with constant love our hearts possess;
to you our lips will ever raise
the tribute of our grateful praise.**

**3 O Christ, you are the Lord of all
in this our Easter festival,
for you will be our strength and shield
from ev'ry weapon death can wield.**

**4 All praise, O risen Lord, we give
to you, once dead, but now alive!
To God the Father equal praise,
and God the Spirit, now we raise!**

***GREETING:**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

KYRIE: *sung* (ELW pg. 213)

Kyrie eleison: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christe eleison: **Christ, have mercy.**

Kyrie eleison: **Lord, have mercy.**

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE: “*Glory to God*” (ELW pg. 213)**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God’s people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God’s people on earth.**

**Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
receive our prayer.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,**

and peace to God's people on earth.

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest;
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on earth,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY/BLESSING OF THE QUILTS:**

P: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You made the whole earth for your glory; all creation praises you.

C: **We lift our voices to join the songs of heaven and earth in thanksgiving for the many blessings you have given us.**

P: Renew in us the commitment to use our gifts in the service of others, and especially of those in need.

C: **Let us be your hands to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, comfort the weary and outcast, welcome the stranger, care for creation, and be loving neighbors to all people.**

P: Bless these quilts and the hands that have crafted them. May those who receive them find dignity in their use and comfort in their warmth, and may these gifts be a sign of your love to all people.

C: **You have taught us what it is to live in community with one another in sacrificial love. Give us hearts for service so that all might have their needs met, and be freed to give back for the good of others and of all creation.**

P: To you, O God, be glory and honor through your Son, Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in your church and in the world, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Please be seated

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING: ACTS 2:14a, 22-32

After the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles on Pentecost, Peter preaches the gospel to the gathered crowd. He tells them that Jesus, who obediently went to his death according to God's plan, was raised from the dead by God. Finally, he appeals to scripture, quoting Psalm 16:8-11, to show that Jesus is the Messiah: though crucified, the risen Jesus is now enthroned.

^{14a} Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]: ²² “Fellow Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know ²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. ²⁴ But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵ For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One experience corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ ²⁹ “Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’ ³² “This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.” Here ends the first reading.

PSALM 16 ~ Congregation reads the bold

In your presence there is fullness of joy. (Ps. 16:11)

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.

³ But 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 up-on my lips.

⁵ O 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.

⁷ I 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.

⁹ My 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.

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

SECOND READING: 1 PETER 1:3-9

This epistle was written to encourage Christians experiencing hardships and suffering because of their faith in Christ. The letter opens by blessing God for the living hope we have through Christ's resurrection even amid difficult circumstances and surroundings.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ⁴and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, ⁷so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸Although you have not seen him, you love him,

and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy,⁹ for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Here ends the second reading.

Please stand as you are able

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: “Alleluia” (ELW pg. 205)

**Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.
Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.
Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.**

GOSPEL READING: JOHN 20:19-31

The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. But one of their number is missing, and his unbelief prompts another visit from the Lord.

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” ²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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.” ²⁶ 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.” ²⁷ 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.” ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ 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.” ³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue 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...
Thanks be to God!

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S TIME & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: "We Walk by Faith" (ELW 635)

- 1 We walk by faith and not by sight;
with gracious words draw near,
O Christ, who spoke as none e'er spoke:
"My peace be with you here."**
- 2 We may not touch your hands and side,
nor follow where you trod;
but in your promise we rejoice,
and cry, "My Lord and God!"**
- 3 Help then, O Lord, our unbelief;
and may our faith abound
to call on you when you are near
and seek where you are found:**
- 4 For you, O resurrected Lord,
are found in means divine:
beneath the water and the word,
beneath the bread and wine.**
- 5 And when our life of faith is done,
in realms of clearer light
we may behold you as you are,
with full and endless sight.**

Text: Henry Alford, 1810-1871, alt.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

L: Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silence.

L: Almighty God, you give life to the dead and call into existence things that do not exist. Breathe your Spirit upon us, that our faith may be renewed day by day. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: Maker of heaven and earth, your mercies are new every morning. Open us to the wonders of creation, from the beauty of flowers to the complexity of subatomic particles. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: God of peace, in every place where conflict rages, sow seeds of calm and openness to reconciliation. Strengthen the resolve of leaders and citizens to work for peace in their nations. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: Healing God, come alongside all who are doubting, fearful, or suffering in any way especially Jerry, Cheryl, Chris, Bruce, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Wayne, Dale, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Kathy, Allison, Becky, Kim, Cadence, and Sara. Reveal to them your presence and assure them of the inheritance you have prepared for them. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: Giver of joy, let this assembly be a place of genuine love and mutual affection. Deepen our care for one another and help us to embody your forgiving and sacrificial love. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: Eternal One, we give thanks for saints who were faithful unto death and have joined the church triumphant. Inspire us by their witness and bring us with them into your glorious presence. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

C: Amen.

Please stand as you are able

***APOSTLES' CREED: (ELW pg. 217)**

**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**

***PEACE:**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Please be seated

OFFERING

*We thank you for our gifts of time, talent, and treasure that help this
congregation, to continue our ministry together, and to make Christ known in
our communities and the world.*

OFFERING HYMN:

"Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds" vs. 1 (ELW 367)

**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!**

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876-1947, alt.
Text © 1958 Service Book and Hymnal, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Please stand as you are able

***OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P: Loving God,

C: **We offer these gifts out of the abundance you have first given us. Accept them, we pray, and use them to bear witness to your life-changing power, that all might come to love you and their neighbors as themselves. Amen.**

***LORD'S PRAYER: *sung* (CLH 632)**

Our Father, which 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 debts,

as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

***BLESSING:**

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,

Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,

and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,

✚ bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

***SENDING SONG: "*Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!*" (ELW 380)**

1 Hallelujah! Jesus lives!

**He is now the Living One;
from the gloomy halls of death
Christ, the conqueror, has gone,
bright forerunner to the skies
of his people, yet to rise.**

- 2 Jesus lives! Why do you weep?
Why that sad and mournful sigh?
Christ who died our brother here
lives our brother still on high,
lives forever to bestow
blessings on his church below.**
- 3 Jesus lives! And thus, my soul,
life eternal waits for you;
joined to Christ, your living head,
where he is, you shall be too;
with the Lord, at God's right hand,
as a victor you shall stand.**
- 4 Jesus lives! Let all rejoice.
Praise him, ransomed of the earth.
Praise him in a nobler song,
cherubim of heav'nly birth.
Praise the victor king, whose sway
sin and death and hell obey.**
- 5 Hallelujah! Angels, sing!
Join with us in hymns of praise.
Let your chorus swell the strain
which our feebler voices raise:
Glory to our God above
and on earth his peace and love!**

Text: Carl B. Garve, 1763-1841; tr. Jane L. Borthwick, 1813-1897, alt.

***DISMISSAL:**

- P: Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!**
C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

IN OUR PRAYERS

Jerry Anderson Chris & Bruce Carter Kristy Fyhrie
Larry Sather Joan Burquest Dennis Rosenquist
Lois Rosenquist Ricky Hart Sara Skoglund
Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser
Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner
Dale Flemming – father of Laurie Ratajesak
Jerry Pogose – father of Chuck Pogose
Gary Borst – friend of the Andersons
Shirley Nesges – friend of the Thoms
Bev Lorine – mother of Mandy Arvidson
Joyce Muyres – friend of the Thoms
Bev Guse-Ohlrech – friend of the Pedersons
Allison Dotzler – friend of Kathy Mittag
Cadence Smith – friend of Mandy Arvidson
Becky Yttrie – friend of the Townsends
Kim Casavan – friend of Mandy Arvidson
Wayne Lund – uncle of Mike Townsend
Kathy Wilkins – friend of the Thoms
Family and Friends of: Sarah Pomeranz, David Anderson, Ron Myren, Katie Jahnke, Dave Bendix, Megan Sheen, Colleen Burquest, Chad Way, and Doug Tvedt

THIS WEEK AT ESTHER

Sunday, April 12th – *Second Sunday of Easter*

Sunday Fellowship Before & After Worship

8:30 am – WELCA

9 am – Sunday School

9:15 am – Choir Practice

10 am – Worship led by Pastor Bowman and Blessing of the Quilts

11 am – VBS Planning Meeting at church

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

Wednesday, April 15th

6 pm – Confirmation: Meal: Ruth Circle

Saturday, April 18th

Conference 8 Spring Meeting at Bethesda in Alexandria

Sunday, April 19th – Third Sunday of Easter

Sunday Fellowship Before & After Worship

9 am – Sunday School

9:15 – Choir Practice

10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by Pastor Dennis Preston

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

NEWS AND NOTES

VBS Planning Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 12th following worship. All are welcome!

The Widows & Singles Share & Care Group of Immanuel will meet on Friday, April 17 at 1:30 pm at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Parkers Prairie. There will be an Easter devotion followed by a jigsaw puzzle or visiting and snack. Anyone wanting to bring a snack item to share is welcome to do so.

We will be mailing cards for our troops for Armed Forces Day on May 16th. There are cards to color in the Narthex. **Please have them back by April 19th.** Thank you to Emma Arvidson for designing them!

The Esther Caring Ministry will have packaged meals available in the kitchen freezer for you to take to anyone who could use a meal to nurture their body and spirit.

If you would like to donate a meal, please:

- Place the meal in an airtight, freezer-safe container
- Label the meal with its name and any major allergens
- Include the date the meal was prepared and frozen
- Provide cooking instructions (whether it needs to be fully cooked, for how long and at what temp, or just needs to be thawed and reheated)

Meals will be kept in the freezer for no more than three months, so please place newer items toward the bottom to help with rotation.

Caring Ministry Meeting will be on Monday, April 27, 6:30 pm at Dick and Luella Thom's home. ALL are invited to attend!

BEHOLD THE NEW HAS COME! SUMMIT 2026

DATES: Friday-Saturday, May 1-2, 2026

TIMES: Arrival by 6:30pm on Friday - 5:00pm Saturday

LOCATION: First Lutheran Church, Detroit Lakes

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Pastors/Deacons/SAMs of the Behold the New Has Come Project Cohort
- Behold Vision Team members from each congregation

What is the event about? This Summit is A THRESHOLD

MOMENT for the Behold Project!

- A gathering to see, name, and imagine
- A place where leaders experience the church AS A SENDING COMMUNITY
- A moment of shared identity across congregations
- Creating the Vision and Strategy
- Tapping into the power of positive stories

Please contact SAM Jewel Townsend if you are interested in attending with her.

Parkers Prairie High School Student Council is planning for its annual Day of Caring on Friday, May 22nd. The students of PPHS will be ready, willing, and able to help out in the community. If you would like help with spring clean up or have a special project that needs to get done in the Parkers Prairie, Urbank, and Milona area, contact PPHS Student Council Advisor David O'Brien at dobrien@pp.k12.mn.us.

What a Mess! VBS at Esther will be held June 14th-18th starting each evening with supper at 5:30 pm with lessons, music, crafts, and worship from 6-8 pm. For more information contact the church office at secretary@estherlutheran.net. Be sure to invite friends, grandkids, cousins, and neighbors to join in the fun!

Note from the Council: Looking for donations of flowers for the graves. Also, if anyone is interested, please make up some wooden cross stakes for the flowers. We need to replace many of the ones we have. Any questions, please ask any member of the Council.

Check out the Esther Calendar on our website to stay up to date on everything happening!

**Go to:
estherlutheran.com and click on
“Esther Calendar.”**

We believe everyone has a unique and valuable place in God's family and we welcome all to share in the community of faith here at Esther. If you would like to become a member please contact Mandy in the church office at 218-338-2171 or secretary@estherlutheran.net or Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503 or jewellht17@gmail.com

Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA

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