



Third Sunday of Easter
Sunday, April 19th, 2026
Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA
Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope, and Love

INTRODUCTION:

Today's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord's day.

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: Our risen savior joins us on the road.

C: **We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.**

P: Jesus who was hidden is revealed in the breaking of bread.

C: Our eyes are opened and our hearts burn within us! Alleluia!

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: "As We Gather at Your Table" (ELW 522)**

**1 As we gather at your table,
as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence;
let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story
till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet
how to make Love's vict'ry known.**

**2 Turn our worship into witness
in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,**

**bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion
to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image
in the world you died to save.**

- 3 Gracious Spirit, help us summon
other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome
those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us
nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels
to repeat the sounding joy.**

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

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***GREETING:**

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

KYRIE: *sung* (ELW pg. 203)

- 1 Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.
We come to hear your living Word; it saves us from despair.**
- 2 Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.
Pour out your grace and make us whole, that new life may begin.**
- 3 Have mercy on us, Lord; make sin and shame depart.
Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!**

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE: "*Glory Be To God In Heaven*" (ELW pg. 204)**

- 1 Glory be to God in heaven;
peace, goodwill to all the earth.
Mighty God of all creation,
Father of surpassing worth:
we exalt you, we adore you,
we lift high our thanks and praise.**

**Saints and angels bow before you;
here on earth our songs we raise.**

**2 Glory be to Christ forever,
Lamb of God and Lord of love.
Son of God and gracious Savior,
you have come from heav'n above;
on the cross you died to save us;
now you reign at God's right hand.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us;
in your promise firm we stand.**

**3 Holy One we now acclaim you;
Lord alone, to you we call;
Holy One in faith we name you,
throned on high, yet near to all:
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit,
in the Father's splendor bright.
For the peace that we inherit,
glory be to God on high!**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: O God,

**C: Your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of
bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming
work, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated

Special Music – Esther Harmony

WORD

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

FIRST READING: ACTS 2:14a, 36-41

*Today's reading is the conclusion of Peter's sermon preached following the giving
of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The center of his
preaching is the bold declaration that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord
and Christ.*

^{14a}Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]: ³⁶“Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” ³⁸Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” ⁴⁰And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. Here ends the first reading.

PSALM 116:1-4, 12-19 ~ Congregation reads the bold
I will call on the name of the Lord. (Ps. 116:13)

¹I love the Lord, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication,

²**for the Lord has given ear to me whenever I called.**

³The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me; I came to grief and sorrow.

⁴**Then I called upon the name of the Lord: “O Lord, I pray you, save my life.”**

¹²How shall I repay the Lord for all the good things God has done for me?

¹³**I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.**

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God’s people.

¹⁵**Precious in your sight, O Lord, is the death of your servants.**

¹⁶O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

¹⁷**I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord.**

¹⁸ I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God's people,

¹⁹ **in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING: 1 PETER 1:17-23

The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.

¹⁷If you invoke as Father the one who judges impartially according to each person's work, live in fear during the time of your exile. ¹⁸You know that you were ransomed from the futile conduct inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰He was destined before the foundation of the world but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. ²¹Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your trust and hope are in God. ²²Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual affection, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. 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: LUKE 24:13-35

The colorful story of Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

¹³Now on that same day two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself

came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” ¹⁹He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.” ²⁵Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. ²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread. **The Gospel of the Lord... Thanks be to God!**

Please be seated

CHILDREN’S TIME & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: “Abide, O Dearest Jesus” (ELW 539)

**1 Abide, O dearest Jesus,
 among us with your grace,
 that evil may not harm us**

- nor we to sin give place.
- 2** **Abide, O dear Redeemer,
among us with your word
and thus now and hereafter
true peace and joy afford.**
- 3** **Abide with heav'nly brightness
among us, precious Light;
your truth direct and keep us
from error's gloomy night.**
- 4** **Abide with richest blessings
among us, bounteous Lord;
let us in grace and wisdom
grow daily through your word.**
- 5** **Abide, O faithful Savior,
among us with your love;
grant steadfastness and help us
to reach our home above.**

Text: Josua Stegmann, 1588-1632; tr. August Crull, 1845-1923

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

Last Response Sing: “O Lord Hear My Prayer” (ELW 751)

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: Living Savior, just as you journeyed with the disciples to Emmaus, accompany us on our journey of faith. Gather us at your table, that we recognize you in the breaking of the bread. Merciful God,

C: **Receive our prayer.**

L: Almighty God, you provide for the needs of all creation. Bless the fields that are being prepared for planting and send favorable weather so that the soil may yield an abundant harvest. Merciful God,

C: **Receive our prayer.**

L: Healing Savior, your resurrection brings hope to a hurting world. Heal those who are sick especially Jerry, Cheryl, Chris, Bruce, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Dale, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Kathy, Allison, Becky, Kim, Cadence, and Sara. Strengthen the weary, give courage to the despairing, and comfort the dying. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: Gracious One, you have made us your own through the gift of baptism. Unite us in genuine love for one another and uphold this community in your name. Merciful God,

C: Receive our prayer.

L: Eternal Light, we give thanks for all who have nurtured your church's life in ages past. Bring us at last with them to the brightness of 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: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer:
when I call, answer me.**

**O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer:
come and listen to me. 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. 2 (ELW 367)

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!

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: God of the journey,

C: **We offer with grateful hearts only what you have first provided to us out of your generous abundance—our financial resources, our time and energy, and our own hearts. Accept and use them in love and service to all in need. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.**

Please stand as you are able

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING: *spoken* (ELW pg. 206)**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift our hearts to the Lord.

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

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise!

***THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION: *sung* “Remember Now My Children”**

**The night of His betrayal, our Lord took bread.
He broke it and he blessed it, and then he said,
“My body given for you is what this means,
remember now my children what you have seen.”**

**And then He took the chalice, and raised it high.
“My body broken for you, a full supply...
a covenant, a promise, a cleansing stream.
Remember now, my children, what you have seen.”
We share this food together, remembering Christ;
we share a common treasure and know the price;
we share it without measure, a gift of love;
we share our life forever, with God above.**

*** THE LORD’S PRAYER: *spoken***

**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.**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: Jesus, who reveals himself in the breaking of the bread, invites you now to this meal in which he is fully present. Come and dine with him and your siblings in his holy name, and be fed and nourished for life's journey.

COMMUNION

The acolytes, ushers, organist and those assisting with communion should come forward at this time and receive communion. Following the assistants, we celebrate Holy Communion around the altar. The ushers will direct you. We welcome all to the Lord's Table where we experience the unity that God intends for all people.

COMMUNION HYMN: "Day of Arising" (ELW 374)

- 1 Day of arising,
Christ on the roadway,
unknown companion walks with his own.
When they invite him,
as fades the first day,
and bread is broken, Christ is made known.**

- 2 When we are walking,
doubtful and dreading,
blinded by sadness, slowness of heart,
yet Christ walks with us,
ever awaiting
our invitation: Stay, do not part.**

- 3 Lo, I am with you,
Jesus has spoken.
This is Christ's promise, this is Christ's sign:
when the church gathers,
when bread is broken,
there Christ is with us in bread and wine.**

- 4 Christ, our companion,
hope for the journey,
bread of compassion, open our eyes.
Grant us your vision,
set all hearts burning
that all creation with you may rise.**

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953
Text © 1996 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

COMMUNION HYMN: “*O Bread of Life from Heaven*” (ELW 480)

- 1 O bread of life from heaven,
O food to pilgrims given,
O manna from above:
feed with the blessed sweetness
of your divine completeness
the souls that want and need your love.**

- 2 O fount of grace redeeming,
O river ever streaming
from Jesus' wounded side:
come now, your love bestowing
on thirsting souls, and flowing
till all are fully satisfied.**

- 3 We love you, Jesus, tender,
in all your hidden splendor
within these means of grace.
Oh, let the veil be riven,
and our clear eye in heaven
behold your glory face to face.**

Text: Latin hymn, c. 1661; tr. Hugh T. Henry, 1862-1946, sts. 1, 3; tr. Philip Schaff, 1819-1893, st. 2

Please stand as you are able

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:**

P: Holy One,

C: Through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, 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: “Thine is the Glory” (ELW 376)**

1 **Thine is the glory,
risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry
thou o'er death hast won!
Angels in bright raiment
rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes
where thy body lay.**

Refrain

**Thine is the glory,
risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry
thou o'er death hast won!**

2 **Lo, Jesus meets thee,
risen from the tomb!
Lovingly he greets thee,
scatters fear and gloom;
let his church with gladness
hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord now liveth;
death hath lost its sting!**

Refrain

**Thine is the glory,
risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry
thou o'er death hast won!**

3 **No more we doubt thee,**

glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee;
aid us in our strife;
make us more than conqu'rors,
through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan
to thy home above.

Refrain

Thine is the glory,
risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry
thou o'er death hast won!

Text: Edmond Budry, 1854-1932; tr. R. Birch Hoyle, 1875-1939

***DISMISSAL:**

P: Go in peace. Praise the Lord!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

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

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

Kathy Wilkins – friend of the Thoms

Family and Friends of: Sarah Pomeranz, David Anderson, Katie Jahnke, Colleen

Burquest, Doug Tvedt, Alma Robinson, Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns, and Wayne

Lund

THIS WEEK AT ESTHER

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

Wednesday, April 22nd

6 pm – Confirmation: Meal: Naomi Circle

Sunday, April 26th – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Sunday Fellowship Before & After Worship

9 am – Sunday School

10 am – Worship led by the Confirmation Students

11 am – VBS Planning Meeting

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

Monday, April 27th

6:30 pm- Caring Ministry at Dick & Luella Thom's home

NEWS AND NOTES

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!

VBS Planning Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 26th following worship. All are welcome!

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!

Wear a hat to worship on Sunday, May 3rd to celebrate the Kentucky Derby!

Women's Night Out will be on Monday, May 11th at Double Eagle Golf Course in Eagle Bend, Mn. More info to come!

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 Miliona area, contact PPHS Student Council Advisor David O'Brien at dobrien@pp.k12.mn.us.

There will be a Gift of Planning Event on Tuesday, June 9th at 6 pm at Esther. It is about planning now and for our eventual end of life. Christy Hart will be sharing a NOK (next of kin) box idea. Lind Family Funeral Home will talk about the end of life from the funeral home perspective. SAM Jewel Townsend will share packets she created for people to fill out ahead of time for their family to have on file at the church. We will grill burgers and hotdogs so please bring a dish to share!

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

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