



## **Sight over Blindness**

*The Third Sunday of Easter*

# BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

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*May 1, 2022*

## **SERIES THEME: *VICTORIOUS***

To the world he seemed like a defeated man: opposed and killed by his enemies, his followers scattered in fear. Yet three days after Jesus' death he rose victorious from the dead. Nothing would ever be the same. The rest of eternity is now a victory march for the risen Christ. During Easter, we should not think of ourselves as passive observers in Christ's victory. We are more than fans cheering for our favorite athlete! Rather, we are active participants in Christ's triumph. Just as his death was our death, so also his life is our life. Buried with Christ in baptism, our life is now hidden with him on high. The victory is ours, now and forever.

Easter is more than a day. It is an entire joyful season. The six solemn weeks of Lent are eclipsed by seven weeks of unbridled joy. These seven weeks correspond to the period of fifty days on the Jewish calendar between Passover and Pentecost. The Church reserves its highest praise for the Easter season. We do not merely watch from the sidelines as Christ marches in victory over sin, death, Satan, and hell. We join in the festal procession!

## **THEME OF THE DAY: *SIGHT MARCHES VICTORIOUS OVER BLINDNESS***

A recent survey asked Americans which of the five senses they would least like to lose. 77% chose sight. Navigating life blind poses a plethora of challenges that the sighted do not face. This is why Scripture often uses the concept of blindness as a metaphor for how hard it is to navigate life without a correct understanding of Christ. Spiritual blindness can take many different forms. In some cases, it is hostile opposition to the message of Jesus. In others, spiritual blindness might be demonstrated in confusion about Jesus' true identity. No matter the specific form spiritual blindness takes, Easter has the power to replace it with sight. Easter allows us to see where we sinners stand with a holy God. It enables us to see the path through life that is worth pursuing (as opposed to those that lead to a dead end). Spiritual sight gives us the ability to see who holds our future in his hands and who is worth our eternal worship.

**Worship Leader**

Pastor Mark A. Haefner

**Organist/Pianist**

**Acknowledgments**

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## **Hymn: 445 He's Risen, He's Risen**

*Stand*

### **Invocation**

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

**Amen.**

### **Confession**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just  
and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins**

**with his innocent suffering and death.**

**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

### **Absolution**

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## Lord, Have Mercy

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.**

## Glory to God in the Highest

*Tune: HYMN TO JOY*

1 Glo - ry be to God in heav - en, peace to those he  
2 On - ly Son of God the Fa - ther, Lamb who takes our

loves so well. On the earth let all his peo - ple speak his  
sin a - way, now with him in tri - umph seat - ed— for your

grace, his won - ders tell: Lord, we praise you for your glo - ry,  
mer - cy, Lord, we pray: Je - sus Christ, most high and ho - ly,

The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp). The melody is a simple, ascending and then descending line, typical of the 'Hymn to Joy'.

might - y Fa - ther, heav - en's King; hear our joy - ful  
Sav - ior, you are God a - lone in the glo - ry

ad - o - ra - tion and ac - cept the thanks we bring.  
of the Fa - ther with the Spir - it, Three in One!

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## THE WORD

### Salutation

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God, by the humiliation of your Son, you lifted up this fallen world from the despair of death. By his resurrection to life, grant your faithful people gladness of heart and the hope of eternal joys; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

### First Reading

*Acts 9:1–22*

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the high priest <sup>2</sup>and asked him for letters to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any men or women belonging to the Way, he might bring them to Jerusalem as prisoners.

<sup>3</sup>As he went on his way and was approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup>He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

<sup>5</sup>He asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

He replied, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. <sup>6</sup>But get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you need to do."

<sup>7</sup>The men traveling with him stood there speechless. They heard the voice but did not see anyone.

<sup>8</sup>They raised Saul up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes, he could not see anything. They took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup>For three days he could not see, and he did not eat or drink.

<sup>10</sup>There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

He answered, "Here I am, Lord."

<sup>11</sup>The Lord told him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. In fact, at this very moment he is praying. <sup>12</sup>In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he can regain his sight."

<sup>13</sup>Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man and how much harm he did to your saints in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>And he has authority here from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

<sup>15</sup>The Lord said to him, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup>Indeed, I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

<sup>17</sup>Ananias left and entered the house. Laying his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, whom you saw on your way here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>18</sup>Immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized. <sup>19</sup>And after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days. <sup>20</sup>Immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

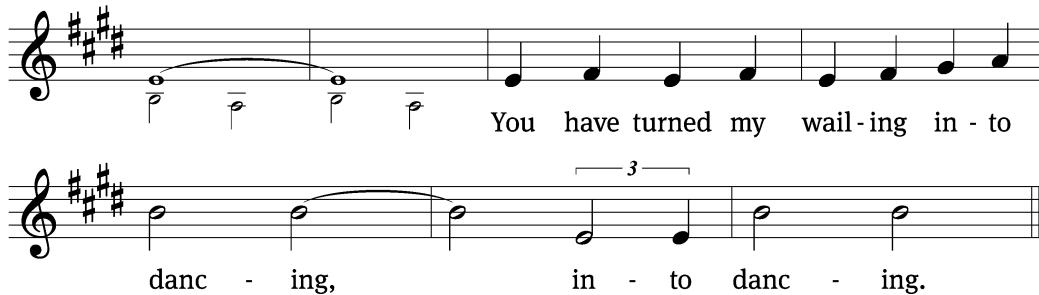
<sup>21</sup>All who heard him were amazed and said, "Isn't this the one who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? Didn't he come here for this very purpose: to bring them as prisoners to the chief priests?" <sup>22</sup>But Saul continued to get stronger and kept confounding the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm of the Day: 30A You Have Turned My Wailing into Dancing**

*Refrain*



*Tone*



I will exalt you, LORD, for you lifted me out / of the depths  
and did not let my enemies gloat / over me.

LORD my God, I called to / you for help,  
and you / healed me.

You, LORD, brought me up from the realm / of the dead;  
you spared me from going down / to the pit. *Refrain*

Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful / people;  
praise his / holy name.

For his anger lasts only a / moment,  
but his favor lasts a / lifetime;  
weeping may stay / for the night,  
but rejoicing comes in the / morning.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son  
and to the Holy / Spirit,**

**as it was in the be- / ginning,  
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

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## Second Reading

*Revelation 5:11–14*

<sup>11</sup>And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels who were around the throne and around the living creatures and the elders. Their number was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands upon thousands. <sup>12</sup>With a loud voice they were saying:

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive  
power and riches and  
wisdom and strength and  
honor and glory and blessing.

<sup>13</sup>I also heard every creature that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever.

<sup>14</sup>The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders bowed down and worshipped.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## Gospel Acclamation

*2 Timothy 1:10*

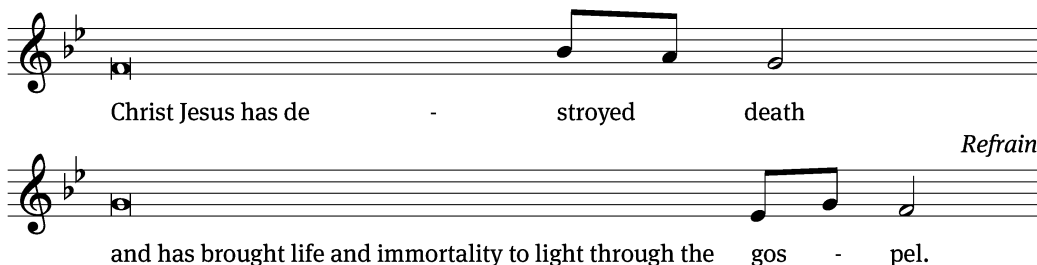


*Refrain*





### Tone



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## Gospel

*John 21:1–14*

After this, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. This is how he showed himself: <sup>2</sup>Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. <sup>3</sup>Simon Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing."

They replied, "We'll go with you."

They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. <sup>4</sup>Early in the morning, Jesus was standing on the shore, but the disciples did not know it was Jesus.

<sup>5</sup>Jesus called to them, "Boys, don't you have any fish?"

"No!" they answered.

<sup>6</sup>He told them, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." So they cast the net out. Then they were not able to haul it in because of the large number of fish.

<sup>7</sup>The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard, "It is the Lord!" he tied his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the sea. <sup>8</sup>But the other disciples came in the little boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about one hundred yards. <sup>9</sup>When they stepped out on land, they saw some bread and a charcoal fire with fish on it. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught."

<sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter climbed aboard and hauled the net to land, full of large fish, 153 of them. Yet even with so many, the net was not torn.

<sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, "Come, eat breakfast."

None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord.

<sup>13</sup>Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them, and also the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

**Hymn of the Day: 459 Christ the Lord Is Risen Again**

**Sermon**

*Stand*

**Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.**

**The third day he rose again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.**

**From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Be seated*

## **Profession of Faith – Patricia Kroeker**

### **Prayer of the Church**

Lord of life, fill our hearts with joy during this Easter season, for you have risen and conquered the grave. Imprint the message of victory on our hearts and implant it in our minds. Through the good news of your resurrection renew our hope and revive our faith. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

By baptizing us into your name, you have connected us to your death and rising. You have put our sin to death and have given us a new life. Enable us each day to think of ourselves as dead to sin and alive to you, so that we may walk in newness of life in all we do. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

In this fallen world, death and sorrow surround us. Touch the hearts of those who grieve the loss of a Christian they love. Direct their eyes to your empty tomb and ease their pain by reminding them that their loved ones will one day rise again. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Lord, many people grieve without hope. Let the message of resurrection reach them and awaken faith in their hearts. Use us as your instruments to bring the word of life to their souls and the message of hope to their hearts. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Stay by the side of all who are suffering. In your wise mercy, heal those who are sick, receiving treatment for illness, recovering from illness or surgery, or hurting in body or mind. Remind them that your victory over death is a fact, and comfort them with your promise to raise them and give them and all believers new, glorified bodies like yours. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

### *Special Prayer Requests*

Risen Savior, feed our faith with the message of your resurrection. Come to us in your Word and in the feast of your Sacrament to sustain and strengthen us until we feast with you in eternal glory.

**Amen.**

## **Offering**

**Hymn: 576 Amazing Grace**

## **Prayer**

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**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 Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

**Amen.**

**Hymn: 454 Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen**