

He Lives to Take Me From Death to Life

Easter Sunday

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

April 9, 2023

SERIES THEME: HE LIVES!

Life is full of either/or moments where you face an unavoidable choice between two alternatives. Some of those moments are relatively insignificant. Either I have the chicken, or I have the fish. Other times, they shape the course of your life. Either I accept this new job offer, or I keep my current job for the remainder of my career. Either I accept his marriage proposal, or.... Some either/or moments are bigger than others. Here is the biggest either/or of them all. Either Jesus is still dead, or Jesus rose. One might ask, "How does that either/or affect me?" Because Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and Savior from sin. He said the proof is that he would rise from the dead. "The Son of Man must suffer many things ... be killed and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). Thus, if Jesus remains dead, he is both failure and fraud. However, if Jesus rose from the dead, he proves he is who he claimed to be— the Messiah. And he did what he came to do—save us. Either Jesus is still dead, or Jesus rose. That means, either Jesus is a complete waste of your time, or he is your only hope for salvation. If Jesus is still dead, it is completely logical that you should want nothing to do with him. If Jesus rose, it is only logical that he becomes the center and greatest priority of your life. Either Jesus is still dead, or Jesus rose. This season of Easter is a 50-day-long celebration of the fact that the Holy Spirit has answered that either/or for us. We believe this life-changing truth. Christ is risen! He lives! Throughout this season, we explore what that means.

THEME OF THE DAY: HE LIVES TO TAKE ME FROM DEATH TO LIFE

A dead Jesus would do no one any good. But a resurrected Jesus? That would change everything; that would make Easter the most important event that has ever happened. Today God wants us to know with certainty that Jesus lives. Because if Jesus lives, then so will his believers. God had told his Church what was going to happen. Jesus told his disciples what would transpire in Jerusalem. The disciples were slow to believe the Easter truth. But God ensured that his people had witnesses to proclaim that Jesus lives again. He suffered and died according to Scripture (Second Reading), he fulfilled the sign of Jonah (First Reading), and it was attested to by angels (Gospel). Christ is risen indeed! Mankind is redeemed! Jesus has removed the fear of eternal death. Jesus has transformed physical death. It is not punitive. For the believer, it is the pathway into Paradise. Jesus has made us spiritually alive by giving us faith in his resurrection. Jesus lives! So, in every possible way, Jesus takes us from death to life.

Worship Leader

Pastor Justin Wilkens

Organist/Pianist

Quinton Corwin

Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 438 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Stand

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

Amen.

Confession

CW 154

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

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.

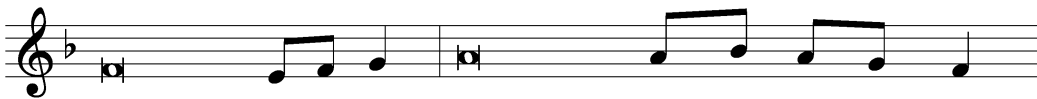
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory Be to God on High

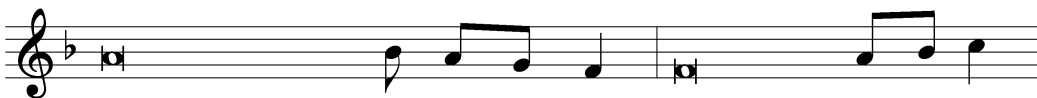
CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



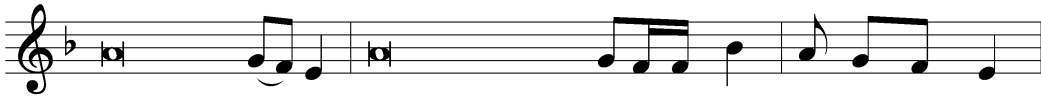
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



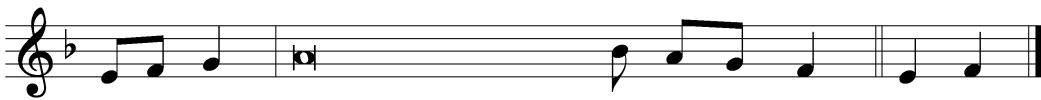
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, by the glorious resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, you conquered death and opened the gate to eternal life. Grant that we, who have been raised with him through Baptism, may walk in newness of life and ever rejoice in the hope of sharing his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be dominion and praise now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Jonah 2:2–9

Jesus compared himself to only one Old Testament prophet, the one who escaped certain death after three days in the belly of a fish.

² He said the following:

In my distress I called to the Lord,
and he answered me.

From the belly of the grave I cried out,
and you heard my voice.

³ You threw me into the depths,
into the heart of the seas.

The currents swept around me.

All your breakers and your waves swept over me.

⁴ I said, "I have been driven away from your sight.

Nevertheless, I will once again look toward your holy temple."

⁵ Waters engulfed me so that I was near death.

The deep surrounded me.

Seaweed was wrapped around my head.

⁶ To the roots of the mountains I sank down.

The earth locked me behind its bars forever.

But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord, my God.

⁷ When my life was ebbing away, I remembered the Lord.

My prayer came to you, to your holy temple.

⁸ Those who cling to worthless idols forsake the mercy that is theirs.

⁹ But I, with a shout of thanksgiving, will indeed sacrifice to you.

What I have vowed, I will certainly pay in full.

Salvation belongs to the Lord!

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: 458 Christ Is Arisen

Gospel

Matthew 28:1–10

The women go to Jesus' tomb, hearts full of disappointment. A dead Jesus does no one any good. But they would learn from the angel that Jesus had crossed over from death to life.

Jesus Has Risen

¹ After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. ² Suddenly, there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and going to the tomb, he rolled away the stone and was sitting on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so terrified of him that they shook and became like dead men. ⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here. He has risen, just as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead! And look, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.' See, I have told you!"

⁸ They hurried away from the tomb, with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!"

They approached, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him.

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go, tell my brothers that they should go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 439 Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands

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

Prayer of the Church

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Lord of life, fill our hearts with joy this day, 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. [We pray especially for...*here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] 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.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

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

Offering Hymn: 460 Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven

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: 441 I Know That My Redeemer Lives

sts. 1–4, 8

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 9:00 AM Easter Breakfast, 10:30 AM Worship

Sunday: 9:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School, 10:30 AM Worship

Bethel Voters Meeting April 23rd

The next voters meeting will take place on April 23rd following our worship service.

Ladies Aid Meeting April 11th

The Ladies Aid will meet this upcoming Tuesday April 11th at 10:00 AM.

Trinity Funds Request

The \$10,000 supplementary fund has been depleted for the year and Trinity is asking for congregations and members in the association to support the school if they are able. They are thankful for all of the support that has been given to Trinity already.

We also keep Mr. Owen, principal at Trinity, in our prayers as he has received a call to serve as 5th-8th Grade Teacher and Principal at Zion Lutheran Grade School in Chesaning, Michigan.

New Church Directory

Over the course of these next weeks (Today-May 14th) please find a time following a worship service or schedule a day to have Beverly Bornschlegl take your picture to go into the upcoming church directory.

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.bethelyork.com on the member connect tab or scan this code.



Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bethelyork



Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Worship 74, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,854.90, Given \$1,977.25. **To God be the glory!**

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