



Season of Easter  
*Service of the Word*  
Joy in Christ Lutheran Church

*At Easter, we rejoice in the empty tomb—Jesus’s resurrection. Easter is the day Jesus rose from the dead after being crucified. The empty tomb means that Jesus’s words rang true. He fulfilled the promises of Scripture and conquered sin and death. Had Jesus not risen from the dead, the world would have seen Him as just a prophet or teacher instead of who he is: the Son of God, the Messiah.*

*Jesus overcoming death is the reason we know His name today. It’s the foundation of all Christianity. With His death and resurrection, Jesus opened heaven to all of us. Because of Easter, we know that no matter what sufferings we experience or what sins we struggle with, God is always with us.*

***Easter is everything.***

*And its significance is clear from the start in the Bible.*

*You won’t find Easter candy or decorations for sale at the supermarket much past Easter Sunday. While the secular world moves on from bunnies and chocolate, the Church continues to celebrate Easter long after the final ham leftovers are eaten.*

*The Easter season is the second-longest liturgical season. Only ordinary time is longer. The Church celebrates the Easter season (also known as “Eastertide”) for 50 days, culminating with the feast of Pentecost, where Scripture (Acts 2:1–31) tells us that the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles.*



*Joy in Christ Lutheran Church acknowledges that indigenous peoples and nations, including the Osage, Quapaw, and Caddo, have stewarded through generations the lands and waterways of what is now Hot Springs Village and Central Arkansas. We honor and respect the enduring relationship that exists between these peoples and nations and this land.*

*The assembly rises in body or in spirit.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!**

Water! Water! We praise you, O God, for water— the lakes, rivers, and hot springs, the rain that nourishes animals and plants, the water for drinking and bathing. We praise you, O God, for water. **We praise you, O God, for water.**

We praise you, O God, for our water stories— a flood that cleansed the earth, the sea that drowned the enemy, a river that healed leprosy. We praise you, O God, for water. **We praise you, O God, for water.**

We remember the waters of Jesus— baptized in the Jordan River, calming the Sea of Galilee, drinking from Jacob's Well, healing at the pool of Bethesda, washing the disciples' feet. We praise you, O God, for water. **We praise you, O God, for water.**

We praise you, O God, for this font, for through this water you have birthed us into the family of Christ, bathed us in forgiveness, and enlivened us in the Spirit. We praise you, O God, for baptism. **We praise you, O God, for baptism.**

O God, you are the Ocean, sustaining this earth. O God, you are the River, saving us from death. O God, you are the Fountain, granting us health and well-being. We praise you, O God, today, tomorrow, forever. Amen, and amen. **Amen, and amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN** (*Refer to the hymn board for the hymn number*)

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.**

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.**

We commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to you,

through Christ our Lord. To you, O Lord.

(ELW p.149) This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power, riches, wisdom and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.**

**Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Prayer of the Day** *(see bulletin insert)*

*The assembly is seated.*

*The readings are printed in the bulletin insert.*

**First Reading**

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm** *(read responsively)*

**Second Reading**

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly rises in body or in spirit.*

*(ELW p. 151)* **Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

**Gospel Reading**

The holy gospel according to \_\_\_\_\_. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*The reading*

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**SERMON**

*The assembly rises in body or in spirit.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *(Refer to the hymn board for the hymn number)*

With the whole church, let us confess our faith:

**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.**

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

Risen Savior, you have conquered death and opened the gates of everlasting life. **Dispel our doubts and fears and renew our faith and hope in you.**

Life-giving God, the created world rejoices in Christ's victory over death. May all the earth be renewed by the light of Jesus' resurrection, **and may we be faithful stewards of all you have made.**

Gracious God, in the midst of the world's violence, you call us to another way. Give us courage and wisdom to confront and to change that which is not life-giving for all people and **make us full participants in your project of transforming the world.**

Gentle Shepherd, like the women at the empty tomb, many grieve or feel lost and afraid. Draw near to those who are ill or in pain *especially...and those we now name aloud or in our hearts.* (Pause) Grant hope to those who despair and **reveal yourself to all as the Risen One.**

Faithful God, we thank you for the living hope you give us through Christ's resurrection. Bless this community, **that we may boldly proclaim Christ's victory over death in word and deed.**

Eternal One, we give thanks for all who have died and now share in the joy of your resurrection. **Bring us, with them, to the unending feast of your victory.**

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.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

*The assembly is seated.*

*The work of this congregation is made possible by individuals like you. Because the church receives no outside operating support, your generosity truly sustains our mission and ministries. Your tax-deductible offering gift will be received with joy and thanksgiving in any of the following ways:*



*As the plate is passed. • By scanning the QR code at the right. • By mail at a later time  
Thank you for your generosity.*

*To use the QR code, open your cell phone or tablet camera and hold it over the shape.  
Tap the link or small box that appears and you will be taken to our secure donation page.*

*The assembly rises in body or in spirit.*

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise.**

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**Amen.**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us sing the words Jesus taught us:



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,  
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.  
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we  
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al  
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,  
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.  
**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN** (*Refer to the hymn board for the hymn number*)

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**