



THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church
2323 E. 12th St. The Dalles, OR 97058
Telephone: (541) 298-8385 / gorgelutherans.com

Rev. Rob Lawson, Pastor (760) 715-3993
E-mail: rlawson0651@gmail.com
Mrs. Kristen Lawson, Organist

WELCOME IN THE NAME OF OUR BLESSED LORD! We are pleased you are here, gathered around the Gospel in Preaching and the Sacraments! **GUESTS** – If we can assist you in any way with questions about our confession of faith, spiritual struggles,

understanding our liturgical service, or any other need, please let us know. It is our prayer that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will strengthen and comfort you.

CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT: Bethany Lutheran Church confesses all the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired word of God without any errors. We also hold, without any reservation, to the teachings of the Evangelical-Lutheran Confessions contained in the 1580 Book of Concord. We confess these teachings to be the correct interpretation of Scripture and a true explanation of the one, holy, catholic (universal) and apostolic faith.

PASTORAL CARE AND GUESTS AT THE LORD'S SUPPER: Scripture and our Confessions teach that the Lord's Supper "is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine" (Small Catechism). We are concerned about the spiritual welfare of all who commune at the Lord's Table. *If you are a guest and desire to commune, please speak to the pastor before the service.* Our altar is open to those who confess oneness with us in doctrine, are active members of sister churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and are not under church discipline in another congregation. In Christ, Pastor Lawson

APRIL 20, 2025 † 11:00 A. M.

† In the Name of Jesus †

Prayer before Worship: Lord God, heavenly Father, You delivered Your Son for our offenses, and raised Him again for our justification: We beseech You, grant us Your Holy Spirit, that He may rule and govern us according to Your will; graciously keep us in the true faith, defend us from all sins, and after this life raise us to eternal life; through the same, Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Blessing of the Paschal Candle

Salutation & Collect

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: O God through Your Son, the Cornerstone You have kindled in Your faithful the fire of Your splendor: Sanctify us, and grant that by this Paschal festival, we may be so inflamed by heavenly desires, that we may with pure minds be able to arrive at the feast of everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The Pastor traces the sign of the cross on the Paschal Candle, saying:
Christ Jesus, the same yesterday and today; The beginning and the end;

He traces the Greek letters, Alpha and Omega, saying:
The Alpha; And the Omega;

He traces the year, saying:
His are the seasons; And the ages; To Him, glory and dominion; Now and forever. Amen.

Lighting the Candle, he says:
May the Light of Christ, risen in glory from the dead, scatter all the darkness of our hearts and minds.

P: O Almighty God, we beseech You: may the abundant infusion of Your blessing † descend upon this lighted candle, and bless the hearts of Your faithful people with the fire of Your love that, burning with desire for life with You, we may be found rightly prepared to share in the Feast of the Light which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

P: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

C: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The Divine Service: Rite Two
Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary: p. 60

The Liturgy of the Word

Hymn of Invocation: *The Lutheran Hymnal, 202, Welcome, Happy Morning!*

C: "Welcome, happy morning!" Age to age shall say;
Hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!"
Lo, the Dead is living, God forevermore!
Him, their true Creator, all His works adore.
"Welcome, happy morning!" age to age shall say;
Hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!"

**Maker and Redeemer, Life and Health of all,
Thou from heaven beholding human nature's fall,
Of the Father's Godhead, true and only Son.
Manhood to deliver manhood didst put on.
"Welcome, happy morning!" age to age shall say;
Hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!"**

**Thou, of life the Author, death didst undergo,
Tread the path of darkness, saving strength to show.
Come, then, True and Faithful, now fulfil Thy word;
'Tis Thine own third morning--rise, O buried Lord!
"Welcome, happy morning!" age to age shall say;
Hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!"**

**Loose the souls long prisoned, bound with Satan's chain;
All that now is fallen raise to life again.
Show Thy face in brightness, bid the nations see;
Bring again our daylight; day returns with Thee.
"Welcome, happy morning!" age to age shall say;
Hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!"**

Introit

Tone 1



Antiphon (**Pastor**) When I awake, I am still with You. `Alleluia:/ You have laid Your hand upon me. `Alleluia!

Such knowledge is too wond`erful for me:/ it is high, I cannot attain it. Alleluia! `Alleluia!

Psalm (**All**) O Lord, You have searched `me and known me:/ You know my sitting down and `my rising up.

You comprehend my path and `my lying down:/ and are acquainted `with all my ways.

If I ascend into heaven, `You are *there*:/ if I make my bed in hell, behold, `You are *there*.

Even there Your `hand shall lead me:/ and Your right `hand shall hold me.

Gloria Patri (**All**) Glory be to the Father `and to the Son:/ and to `the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the be`ginning, is now:/ and ever shall be, forever`more. Amen.

Antiphon (**All**) When I awake, I am still with You. `Alleluia:/ You have laid Your hand upon me. `Alleluia!

Such knowledge is too wond`erful for me:/ it is high, I cannot attain it. Alleluia!

`Alleluia!

The Kyrie Eleison (form I): p. 63

C: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria in Excelsis: pp. 64-66

P: Glory be to God on high:

C: And on earth peace, good will toward men.

We praise You, we bless You, we worship You,

we glorify You, we give thanks to You, for Your great glory.

O Lord God, heav`nly King,

God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

You take away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

You take away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.

You are seated at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For You only are holy. You only are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the

Holy Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Salutation: p. 66

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

The Collect for the Day

P: Let us pray: Almighty God, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life: We humbly beseech You, that, as You put in our minds good desires, so by Your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament: *Isaiah 25:6-9*

P: *In those days Isaiah prophesied:* In this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees. And He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken. And it will be said in that day: "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gradual (All)

Tone 1



This is the day `the Lord has made:/ We will rejoice and `be glad in it.

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, `for He is good:/ For His mercy en`dures forever.

Choral Hymn: 398, *Hail Thee, Festival Day*

Refrain

Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
Day when our Lord was raised, breaking the kingdom of death.

All the fair beauty of earth, from the death of the winter arising!
Ev'ry good gift of the year now with its Master returns: *Refrain*

Rise from the grave now, O Lord, the Author of life and creation.
Treading the pathway of death, new life You give to us all: *Refrain*

God the Almighty, the Lord, the Ruler of earth and the heavens,
Guard us from harm without; cleanse us from evil within: *Refrain*

Jesus, the health of the world, enlighten our minds, great Redeemer,
Son of the Father supreme, Only Begotten of God: *Refrain*

Spirit of life and of pow'r, now flow in us, Fount of our being,
Light that enlightens us all, Life that in all my abide: *Refrain*

Praise to the Giver of good! O Lover and Author of concord,
Pour out your balm on our days; order our ways in Your peace: *Refrain*

Epistle: *1 Corinthians 5:6-8*

P: *Brethren:* Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia Verse

P: Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us: Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia!

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Easter Sequence: *Victimae Paschali* (“Christians, to the Paschal Victim” – 11th Cent.)

P: Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer your thankful praises!
A lamb the sheep redeemeth: Christ, Who only is sinless,
reconcileth sinners to the Father.
Death and life have contended in that combat stupendous:
The Prince of life, Who died, reigns immortal.
Speak, Mary, declaring what thou sawest, wayfaring:
“The tomb of Christ, Who is living, the glory of Jesus’ resurrection;
Bright angels attesting, the shroud and napkin resting.
Yea, Christ my hope is arisen; to Galilee He will go before you.”
Christ indeed from death is risen, our new life obtaining;
Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning! Amen. Hallelujah!

The congregation responds with the Sequence Hymn:

Sequence Hymn: *The Lutheran Hymnal 187, Christ Is Arisen*

C: Christ is arisen From the grave’s dark prison.
We now rejoice with gladness; Christ will end all sadness, Lord, have mercy.
All our hopes were ended Had Jesus not ascended From the grave triumphantly,
For this, Lord Christ, we worship Thee. Lord, have mercy.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We now rejoice with gladness;
Christ will end all sadness. Lord, have mercy.

Holy Gospel: *St. Mark 16:1-8*

P: The Holy Gospel according to † St. Mark, the 16th chapter:

C: **Glory be to You, O Lord.**

At that time when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away - for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples - and Peter - that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.” So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled

and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

P: This is the † Holy Gospel.

C: Praise be to You, O Christ.

*At the words "And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary
And was made man" all may bow out of reverence for Christ's Incarnation.*

Nicene Creed: p. 69

C: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,

**Maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
Begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
Very God of Very God,**

**Begotten, not made,
Being of one substance with the Father,
By Whom all things were made;**

**Who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven
*and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary
and was made man;*
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered and was buried;
and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;**

**And He shall come again with glory
to judge both the living and the dead;
Whose kingdom shall have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped
and glorified,**

Who spoke by the Prophets.

And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church.

**I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
And I look for the Resurrection of the dead
and the Life † of the world to come. Amen.**

Chief Hymn: 342, *O Paschal Feast, What Joy Is Thine* (Tune: 351)

**C: O Paschal Feast, what joy is thine! We praise, dear Lord, Thy name divine,
For Thou hast triumphed o'er the tomb; No more we need to dread its gloom.**

**The Three where Thou wast offered up Now bears the fruit of life and hope;
Thy precious Blood for us was shed That we might eat of heav'nly bread.**

**We thank Thee, Jesus, that Thy hand Hath freed us from sin's galling band;
No more its bondage need we fear, The year of liberty is here.**

**O Paschal Lamb, God's holy Son, Through whom redemption now is won,
Thou givest saving strength indeed In all our conflicts, all our need.**

**As Thou didst rise on Easter Day, Help us to rise from sin, we pray;
And at the end of earthly strife Raise us, O Lord, to endless life.**

Sermon: Christ is risen! Alleluia! **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Offertory: pp. 70-71

**C: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your free Spirit.
Amen.**

The Intercessions: *each petition concludes:* Lord, in Your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Hymn of Preparation: 343, *Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands*

**C: Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands, For our offenses given;
But now at God's right hand He stands And brings us life from heaven;
Therefore let us joyful be And sing to God right thankfully
Loud songs of alleluia! Alleluia!**

**No son of man could conquer death, Such mischief sin had wrought us,
For innocence dwelt not on earth, And therefore death had brought us
Into thralldom from of old And ever grew more strong and bold
And kept us in its bondage. Alleluia!**

**But Jesus Christ, God's only Son, To our low state descended,
The cause of death He has undone, Its pow'r forever ended,
Ruined all its right and claim And left it nothing but the name,
Its sting is lost forever. Alleluia!**

**It was a strange and dreadful strife When life and death contended.
The victory remained with life, The reign of death was ended;
Holy Scripture plainly saith That death is swallowed up by death,
In vain it rages o'er us. Alleluia!**

**Here the true Paschal Lamb we see, Whom God so freely gave us;
He died on the accursed tree – So strong His love – to save us.
See, His blood doth mark our door; Faith points to it, death passes o'er,
And Satan cannot harm us. Alleluia!**

**So let us keep the festival Whereto the Lord invites us;
Christ is Himself the Joy of all, The Sun that warms and lights us.
By His grace He doth impart Eternal sunshine to the heart;
The night of sin is ended. Alleluia!**

**Then let us feast this Easter Day On Christ, the Bread of heaven;
The Word of Grace hath purged away The old and evil leaven.
Christ alone our souls will feed, He is our meat and drink indeed;
Faith lives upon no other. Alleluia!**

The Liturgy of the Holy Communion

The Preface: p. 72

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up unto the Lord.

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

C: It is good and right so to do.

The Proper Preface & Sanctus: pp. 73-76

P: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God; but chiefly are we bound to praise You for the glorious resurrection of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; for He is the very Paschal Lamb which was offered for us and hath taken away the sins of the world. By His death He has destroyed death, and by His rising to life again He has restored to us everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**C: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
 Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory.
 Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
 Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He
 who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

The Lord's Prayer: pp. 77-78

P: Our Father who art in heaven,
 Hallowed by 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;

C: For Thine is the kingdom and the pow'r and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Words of Institution: pp. 78-79

*When the Pastor turns and elevates the Host and Cup, the congregation **may** bow as an act of reverent worship toward the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.*

The Pax Domini (The Peace of the Lord): p. 79

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

The Agnus Dei: pp. 79-80

C: **O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world,
grant us Your peace. Amen.**

The Distribution of the Holy Communion to the Faithful

*Prayers for “**Before Holy Communion**” and
for “**After Holy Communion**” are found on page 40 in ELH.*

Hymn of Thanksgiving: 310, *At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing*

C: **At the Lamb’s high feast we sing Praise to Our victorious King,
Who has washed us in the tide Flowing from His pierced side. Alleluia!**

**Praise we Him, whose love divine Gives His sacred blood for wine,
Gives His body for the feast – Christ the victim, Christ the priest. Alleluia!**

**Where the paschal blood is poured, Death’s dread angel sheathes the sword;
Israel’s hosts triumphant go Through the wave that drowns the foe. Alleluia!**

**Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Paschal victim, paschal bread;
With sincerity and love Eat we manna from above. Alleluia!**

**Mighty Victim from the sky, Hell’s fierce pow’rs beneath You lie;
You have conquered in the fight, You have brought us life and light. Alleluia!**

**Now no more can death appall, Now no more the grave enthrall;
You have opened paradise, And Your saints in You shall rise. Alleluia!**

**Easter triumph, Easter joy! This alone can sin destroy;
From sin’s pow’r, Lord, set us free, Newborn souls in You to be. Alleluia!**

**Father, who the crown shall give, Savior, by whose death we live,
Spirit, guide through all our days: Three in One, Your name we praise. Alleluia!**

The Collect of Thanksgiving: pp. 82-83

P: O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good.

C: And His mercy endures forever.

P: Almighty God, who gives the true Bread which comes down from heaven, even Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: Grant, we beseech You, that we who received the Sacrament of His Body and Blood may abide in Him, and He in us, that we may be filled with the power of His endless life; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Salutation: p. 84

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

The Benedicamus: p. 84

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Benediction: p. 84

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.

C: Amen. Amen. Amen.

Dismissal Hymn: 352, *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today*

**C: Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross Alleluia! Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!**

**Hymns of praise then let us sing Alleluia! Unto Christ, our heav'nly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross, and grave Alleluia! Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!**

**But the pains which He endured Alleluia! Our salvation have procured. Alleluia!
Now above the sky He's King, Alleluia! Where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!**

**Sing we to our God above, Alleluia! Praise eternal as His love: Alleluia!
Praise Him, all ye heavenly host, Alleluia! Father, Son. and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!**

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

***Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!
Happy Resurrection Day to all!***

THE PASTOR IS AVAILABLE for private Confession & Absolution, and for confidential pastoral counseling, or just to chat. Please feel free to stop in. (The Augsburg Confession teaches that “[private] Confession is not abolished among us. ... Our people are taught that they should highly prize the Absolution as being God’s voice and pronounced by God’s command. ... They are reminded what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences. ... They are taught that faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins.” Article 25)

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the solemnity of Holy Week and the Festivity of this Easter Day: to everyone who brought flowers for the altar and food for the breakfast; to Jerry Bull for taking care of yard work; to the Mary/Martha Circle for preparing this morning’s pre-service activities; to Margaret Atchison (and helpers) for all her care of the altar, and the elements and sacred vessels of the Blessed Sacrament; to the chorus for beautifying the Services; and to Kristen Lawson for all her hard work of preparing for and playing each Service. Finally, thank you to the faithful who came to the church Services during these days! *A very joyous and blessed celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord to all!*

The Evergreen Lutheran High School Choir will be at our church for a concert on next Sunday. The concert will start at 4:30pm with a meal to follow.

Cleaning at Bethany

April 21 – May 3

Rieses

Bible Studies: No Bible Study today. The Sunday study working through Genesis. The Thursday study is covering the last few chapters of 1 Chronicles before moving into 1 Kings. All are welcome and encouraged to attend one or both studies!

ELS West Coast Circuit Conference: Pastor will attending the annual ELS West Coast Circuit Conference next week at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Phoenix, AZ. He will be flying out on Tuesday, April 29 and returning on Friday, May 2.

A Church Work Day is planned for Saturday, May 3. We will be working on a landscaping project for the front yard. Please speak with Nathan Larson or Jeff Kopp for more information.

Food Collection: Pastor will be distributing the food collected during Lent this week. It will probably be later in the week, so there is still time to contribute non-perishable food items to the collection in the entryway. Thank you for your generosity.

Hope Clinic Spring Legacy Event: Hope's *Spring Legacy Event* is Friday, May 2 at Calvary Baptist Church in The Dalles from 6-8pm (check-in starts at 5:45). The Legacy Event will offer a variety of locally made desserts, coffee, tea and other drinks from 6-7pm, during which time there will also be a Silent & Live Auction. 7:15 is the Presentation & Speaker part of the evening. The featured speaker for the Event will be Evie Wendell, a 17-year-old high school senior and Oregon Right to Life Oratory Winner. Please consider partnering with Hope Medical Clinic in serving our community with the love of Christ by preserving the lives of unborn children while meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of women and their families facing unplanned pregnancy or other abortion-related concerns. Please talk to Pastor or Kristen for more info. You may also go to givebutter.com/c/Legacy25 to donate.

The New Issue of the *Lutheran Sentinel* is on the table out in the entryway. *There are four copies left.* This is our synod's bi-monthly periodical that contains informative articles and news of what is going on beyond our congregation. Please take one copy per household.

Sacred Music For the Season... "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today," "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands," "I Know That My Redeemer Lives," "Awake, My Heart, with Gladness," "He's Risen, He's Risen." You can listen 24/7 to sacred music for the 50 days of the Easter season at lutheranpublicradio.org, TuneIn, Amazon Echo, Google Home, Apple HomePod and the Lutheran Public Radio mobile app.

Feasts, Commemorations, and Events Easter Week

Easter Monday: Pastor at Bethany

Easter Tuesday: Pastor at Bethany

Easter Wednesday: Pastor at Concordia;

Easter Thursday: Bible Study at Bethany, 10:00am

Easter Friday: Pastor at Bethany

Easter Saturday: Pastor's Day Off

Next Sunday: *Quasimodo Geniti: First Sunday After the Resurrection*

Concordia Service of the Word, 9:00am

Bethany Holy Communion, 11:00am

Bethany Bible Study & Sunday School, 12:30pm

The Paschal Candle What Is It and Why?

You will notice that the large, ornamented candle is out and beside the baptismal font this morning. This candle is called the *Paschal Candle*. First thing, before the start of the Divine Service, this candle is blessed and lit (it should actually be blessed and lit first thing at the Easter Vigil on Saturday evening, but since we don't observe the Vigil...yet...we do it Easter Sunday. Then during the opening hymn the altar candles are lit from the flame of this candle.



What is a Paschal Candle?

Just as the candles of the Advent Wreath bring wonderful meaning to the celebration of Advent, so the Paschal Candle is intended to add meaningful symbolism to our celebration of Easter, Baptisms, and Christian funerals. It actually predates the Advent Wreath by over a thousand years (it was first used only 300 years after Christ, so 1700 years ago)!

The Paschal Candle is used at every service during the Easter season, from the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday to Ascension, and at Baptisms and Christian Funerals year-round. This large, ornate candle symbolizes the resurrection victory over the darkness of sin and death. It

emphasizes the presence of the resurrected Christ and the link between a believer's baptism and the resurrection (Romans 6).

The Paschal Candle is lit traditionally as the first part of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday evening. This first part of the Vigil begins outside the church building. A "new" fire is lit from which the Paschal Candle is then lit and carried in procession into a darkened sanctuary. As the candle is processed into the dark church, so Christ lights our way out of darkness. During this procession, the bearer of the candle lifts it high and sings, "The Light of Christ," to which all respond, "Thanks be to God." This responsory is sung before the procession starts, then it is sung again at the door of the church, and finally a third time when the Paschal Candle has reached its place in the church. Since we did not have an Easter Vigil this year, an abbreviated form of the *Blessing and Lighting of the Paschal Candle* began our Easter Morning Service.

The name *Paschal* comes from the Greek word for Passover: *pascha*. The early Christians used this word when referring to the Festival of the Resurrection (The term Easter came into use in later centuries). Christians in the Eastern Orthodox Communion still use this term rather than the term *Easter*.

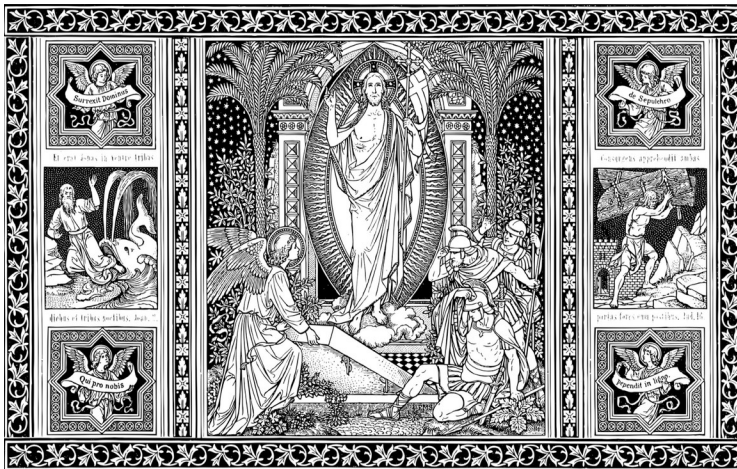
On the Paschal Candle you will notice a variety of symbols. This is the largest and most ornamented candle in the church. There is a depiction of Jesus as the Sacrificial Lamb of God. There is the cross, the altar on which the Christ the Lamb was sacrificed. If our candle were a wax candle, during the blessing, five wax nails would be pressed into the cross to symbolize the five wounds of Jesus that He showed His disciples on Easter night to prove that He was raised bodily. Since we now have a refillable oil candle with a hollow ceramic shell, the nails (or what is supposed to look like nails) are already pressed in.

There are also two Greek letters, an Alpha [Α] and an Omega [Ω], which remind us of Jesus' words in St. John's Revelation (1:8; 22:13), that He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. The year (2025) is also depicted on the candle to proclaim that the risen Christ is the Lord of our present time. The candle may also be decorated with a variety of other Easter symbols. Ours has an Easter lily in the shape of a cross on it.

The Paschal Candle traditionally is supposed to stand near the Baptismal Font to visually connect Baptism with the resurrection, proclaiming the message of Romans 6:3-5 (which is also used at the beginning of a burial service): In our Baptism we have already died and been raised with Christ.

Feel free to take a closer look at the Paschal Candle and ask any questions about it you want to ask.

Paschal Homily of St. John Chrysostom Fourth Century Bishop of Constantinople



If any be a devout lover of God, let him partake with gladness of this fair and radiant feast. If any be a faithful servant, let him enter rejoicing into the joy of his Lord. If any have wearied himself with fasting, let him now enjoy his reward. If any have laboured from the first hour, let him receive today his rightful reward. If any have come after the third hour, let him celebrate the feast with thankfulness. If any have come after the sixth, let him not be in doubt, for he will suffer no loss. If any have delayed until the ninth, let him not hesitate but draw near. If any have arrived only at the eleventh hour, let him not be afraid because he comes so late.

For the Master is generous and accepts the last even as the first. He gives rest to him who comes at the eleventh hour in the same way as him who has laboured from the first. He accepts the deed, and commends the intention. Enter then, all of you, into the joy of our Lord. First and last, receive alike your reward. Rich and poor, dance together. You who fasted and you who have not fasted, rejoice together. The table is full: let all enjoy it. The fatted calf is ready: let none go away hungry. Let none lament his poverty; for the universal Kingdom is revealed. Let none bewail his transgressions; for the light of forgiveness has risen from the tomb.

Let none fear death; for the death of the Savior has set us free. He has destroyed death by undergoing death. He has despoiled hell by descending into hell. He vexed it even as it tasted of His flesh. Isaiah foretold this when he cried: Hell was filled with bitterness when it met Thee face to face below; It was filled with bitterness,

for it was brought to nothing; It was filled with bitterness, for it was mocked; It was filled with bitterness, for it was overthrown; It was filled with bitterness, for it was put in chains. Hell received a body, and encountered God. It received earth, and confronted heaven.

O death, where is your sting? O hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen! And you, O death, are annihilated! Christ is risen! And the evil ones are cast down! Christ is risen! And the angels rejoice! Christ is risen! And life is liberated! Christ is risen! And the tomb is emptied of its dead; for Christ having risen from the dead, is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be Glory and Power, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

(Easter Day) The resurrected Jesus first appeared to a very sinful, formerly demon-possessed woman, Mary Magdalene. The hope of the resurrection is for those hopelessly lost in their sins. In one sense, we could say that this hope is especially for those who are—like the rest of us—hopelessly lost! Thanks be to God!

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, draw me into rejoicing in Jesus' resurrection and the value it gives to all humankind. Amen.*

Life Thoughts in the Church Year/One Year Lectionary – Lutherans For Life

Today's Hymn of Preparation *Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands* (ELH 343) is Martin Luther's Easter hymn. One of the finest Easter hymns ever written, it is based on an early German hymn, *Christ is Arisen* (TLH 187), which is the SEQUENCE HYMN throughout the Easter season. That hymn, in turn, is based on the ancient Easter Sequence *Victimae Paschali* (Latin: "Christians to the Paschal Victim"), sung following the triple Alleluia. Luther's strong hymn text ties Christ's Resurrection victory to the Passover, for Christ is our "true Paschal Lamb." As the blood of the lamb marked the doors of the Israelites in the first Passover, "See, His blood doth mark our door; Faith points to it, Death passes over, and Satan cannot harm us." Buried with Christ in His death in Baptism, we rise to new life with Him whose grace gives "Eternal sunshine to the heart." Today in the Divine Service, He feeds us with His Word and Supper: "Christ alone our souls will feed, He is our meat and drink indeed!" The vigorous tune of ELH 343 is based on the tune of TLH 187, which in turn is based on a Medieval chant. We will be singing both hymns throughout the Easter Season.