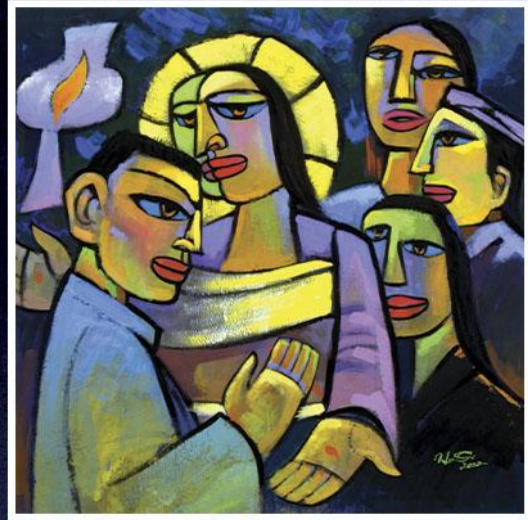


DO NOT DOUBT BUT BELIEVE

JOHN 20:27



April 12, 2026
Second Sunday of Easter
Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

Introduction to the day

In today's gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gathering around word and meal, and in our everyday lives. Throughout the coming Sundays of Easter, the first two readings will be from the Acts of the Apostles and the first letter of Peter. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

This worship is being streamed live via Facebook and will be posted to our website and YouTube page. The camera captures anyone in the first few pews of our worship space and beyond extending to the altar.

PREDLUDE
LIGHTING OF CANDLES
RINGING OF BELL
WELCOME

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The assembly stands.

Please respond with the words printed in bold.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN *Now the Green Blade Rises* (ELW 379)



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,
2 In the grave they laid him, love by ha - tred slain,
3 Forth he came at Eas - ter like the ris - en grain,
4 When our hearts are win - try, griev - ing, or in pain,



wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;
think - ing that he would nev - er wake a - gain,
he that for three days in the grave had lain;
your touch can call us back to life a - gain,



love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps un - seen;
raised from the dead, my liv - ing Lord is seen;
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

EASTER CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

We gather to celebrate the Easter promise.

Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed.

Sin and death have no power over us.

Alleluia!

Let us come and worship Him.

Let us worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Christ is risen.

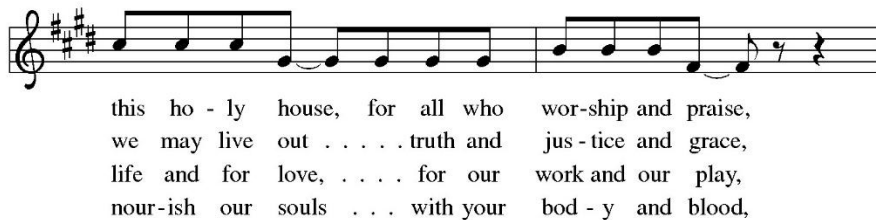
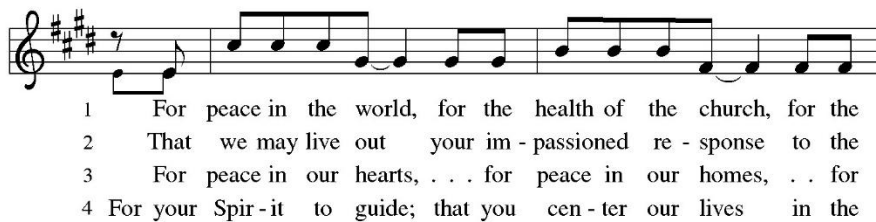
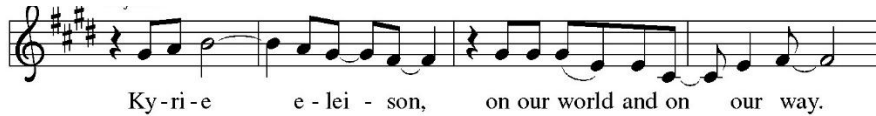
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

GREETING

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.

KYRIE



Refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

SPECIAL GREETING

Today is the annual pulpit exchange hosted by the West Branch Area Religious Council (WBARC), which consists of the following churches: Bethany Lutheran, Springdale United Methodist, St. Bernadettes Catholic, West Branch Friends, and West Branch Friends Conservative Meeting. Today, we welcome Jim Cottingham of the West Branch Friends Conservative Meeting.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

After the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles on Pentecost, Peter preaches the gospel to the gathered crowd. He tells them that Jesus, who obediently went to his death according to God's plan, was raised from the dead by God. Finally, he appeals to scripture, quoting Psalm 16:8-11, to show that Jesus is the Messiah: though crucified, the risen Jesus is now enthroned.

A reading from Acts.

^{14a} Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]: ²² "Fellow Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know ²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. ²⁴ But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵ For David says concerning him,

'I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;
²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.

²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades
or let your Holy One experience corruption.

²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'

²⁹ "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

'He was not abandoned to Hades,
nor did his flesh experience corruption.'

³² "This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 16

¹ Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;
I have said to the LORD, "You are my Lord, my good above all other."

² **All my delight is in the godly that are in the land,
upon those who are noble among the people.**

- ³ But those who run after other gods shall have their troubles multiplied.
- ⁴ **I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods, never take their names upon my lips.**
- ⁵ O LORD, you are my portion and my cup; it is you who uphold my lot.
- ⁶ **My boundaries enclose a pleasant land; indeed, I have a rich inheritance.**
- ⁷ I will bless the LORD who gives me counsel; my heart teaches me night after night.
- ⁸ **I have set the LORD always before me; because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.**
- ⁹ My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices; my body also shall rest in hope.
- ¹⁰ **For you will not abandon me to the grave, nor let your holy one see the pit.**
- ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:3-9

This epistle was written to encourage Christians experiencing hardships and suffering because of their faith in Christ. The letter opens by blessing God for the living hope we have through Christ's resurrection even amid difficult circumstances and surroundings.

A reading from First Peter.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ⁴ and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, ⁷ so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Although you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
 words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. But one of their number is missing, and his unbelief prompts another visit from the Lord.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The holy gospel according to

Glory to you, O Lord.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands

HYMN OF THE DAY *We Walk by Faith* (ELW 635)



1 We walk by faith and not by sight; with
2 We may not touch your hands and side, nor
3 Help then, O Lord, our un - be - lief; and
4 For you, O res - ur - rec - ted Lord, are
5 And when our life of faith is done, in



gra - cious words draw near, O Christ, who spoke as
fol - low where you trod; but in your prom - ise
may our faith a - bound to call on you when
found in means di - vine: be - neath the wa - ter
realms of clear - er light may we be - hold you



none e'er spoke: "My peace be with you here."
we re - joice, and cry, "My Lord and God!"
you are near and seek where you are found:
and the word, be - neath the bread and wine.
as you are, with full and end - less sight.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation. Each petition ends, "Hear us, O God." The assembly then sings, "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" (ELW 752).



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

We are grateful for your gifts, and they are needed to continue the work of the church. For those worshipping online, options on ways to give are found on our website (www.wbbethany.org). Thank you! After the offering is gathered, the people of God stand and sing the hymn below as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERTORY HYMN *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High* (ELW 857)



Lord, I lift your name on high; Lord, I love to sing your prais-es.



I'm so glad you're in my life, I'm so glad you came to save us.



You came from heav-en to earth to show the way, from the earth



to the cross, my debt to pay, from the cross to the grave,



from the grave to the sky; Lord, I lift your name on high.

OFFERING PRAYER

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

SENDING HYMN *Thine is the Glory* (ELW 376)



1 Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con-qu'ring Son; end - less is the
2 Lo, Je - sus meets thee, ris - en from the tomb! Lov - ing - ly he
3 No more we doubt thee, glo - rious Prince of life; life is naught with-



vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won! An - gels in bright rai - ment
greet thee, scat - ters fear and gloom; let his church with glad - ness
out thee; aid us in our strife; make us more than con-qu'rors,



rolled the stone a - way, kept the fold - ed grave-clothes
hymns of tri - umph sing, for the Lord now liv - eth;
through thy death - less love; bring us safe through Jor - dan



where thy bod - y lay.
death hath lost its sting! Thine is the glo - ry, ris - en, con-qu'ring
to thy home a - bove.



Son; end - less is the vic - t'ry thou o'er death hast won!

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.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the Great Hall following worship

OUR MINISTRY ASSISTANTS

Ministers of:	Today	April 19th
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	John Black	Wayne Frauenholtz
Technology	Darla & Kevin Crosthwaite	Paula Casper
Hospitality	Nancy Bruns	Jon & Laura Twing
Worship (Altar Care)	Cindy Knoop	Cindy Knoop
Food & Fellowship	John & Linda Black	Please sign up!

OUR *mission*

*To grow so deep in Christ
through worship, education, and
fellowship that we celebrate by
reaching out to others.*



Land Acknowledgement

Bethany Lutheran is located in the original and ancestral homelands of the Iowa, Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo and Oceti Sakowin peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

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