

New Hope Lutheran Church  
Easter Sunday  
April 9, 2023



## **Introduction**

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34): Christ's resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God's faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God's endless love.

## **First Reading: Acts 10:34-43**

*Peter's sermon, delivered at the home of Cornelius, a Roman army officer, is a summary of the essential message of Christianity: Everyone who believes in Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection fulfilled the words of the prophets, "receives forgiveness of sins through his name."*

<sup>34</sup>Peter began to speak to [the people]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup>but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup>You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup>That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup>how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup>We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup>but God raised

him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup>not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup>He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup>All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**First Reading (alternate): Jeremiah 31:1-6**

*God’s final word is always “Yes.” Because God’s love is everlasting, God always remains faithful. Ancient Israel is assured that it will be rebuilt and have plentiful crops. The people of God too will ultimately be reunited.*

<sup>1</sup>At that time, says the LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

<sup>2</sup>Thus says the LORD:

The people who survived the sword

found grace in the wilderness;

when Israel sought for rest,

<sup>3</sup>the LORD appeared to him from far away.

I have loved you with an everlasting love;

therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

<sup>4</sup>Again I will build you, and you shall be built,

O virgin Israel!

Again you shall take your tambourines,

and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.

<sup>5</sup>Again you shall plant vineyards

on the mountains of Samaria;

the planters shall plant,

and shall enjoy the fruit.

<sup>6</sup>For there shall be a day when sentinels will call

in the hill country of Ephraim:

“Come, let us go up to Zion,

to the LORD our God.”

**Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

*This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Ps. 118:24)*

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good;  
God's mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>**Let Israel now declare,  
"God's mercy endures forever."**

<sup>14</sup>The LORD is my strength and my song,  
and has become my salvation.

<sup>15</sup>**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:  
"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!**

<sup>16</sup>The right hand of the LORD is exalted!  
The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

<sup>17</sup>**I shall not die, but live,  
and declare the works of the LORD. R**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD indeed punished me sorely,  
but did not hand me over to death.

<sup>19</sup>**Open for me the gates of righteousness;  
I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**

<sup>20</sup>"This is the gate of the LORD;  
here the righteous may enter."

<sup>21</sup>**I give thanks to you, for you have answered me  
and you have become my salvation. R**

<sup>22</sup>The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.

<sup>23</sup>**By the LORD has this been done;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

<sup>24</sup>This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it. **R**

**Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4**

*Easter means new life for us as it first meant new life for Christ. His resurrection reshapes the entire focus and motivation for our lives since we are now hidden with the risen Christ in God.*

<sup>1</sup>If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup>for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

### **Second Reading (alternate): Acts 10:34-43**

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### **Gospel: Matthew 28:1-10**

*Sorrow gives way to "fear and great joy" when two women are sent by an angel to proclaim the good news: Jesus is risen!*

<sup>1</sup>After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup>For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup>But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." <sup>8</sup>So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup>Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

**Gospel (alternate): John 20:1-18**

*John's gospel describes the confusion and excitement of the first Easter: the stone is moved, disciples race back and forth, and angels speak to a weeping woman. Then, Jesus himself appears.*

<sup>1</sup>Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. <sup>2</sup>So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>3</sup>Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup>The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place

by itself. <sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup>for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples returned to their homes.

<sup>11</sup>But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; <sup>12</sup>and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>13</sup>They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup>When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup>Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.