

What's your favorite miracle? Jesus walking on water, feeding the 5000, changing water into wine? After these past few weeks of talking miracles I have some new favorites (the Good Friday darkness, the splitting of the rocks), but none of my new favorites bump my old favorites. What's your favorite miracle? When we're walking the beach and we see crabs and sand dollars and starfish and jelly fish and so many kinds of birds, I think of God's miracle of creation. When we were hiking in Switzerland, looking up at the Matterhorn, I thought of God's miracle shifting and re-shaping creation. When I hear our school children ask and talk about Jesus, I think of God's miracle gift of faith. When I'm visiting in the hospital ICU or bedside with the HomeBound, I think of the miracle of the resurrection - Easter and Jesus' resurrection.

If Jesus never walked on water, or fed the 5000, or changed water into wine, I'm not sure my life would be all that much different than it is now. If Jesus would have fed 10,000, or ran across the lake, or changed water into doppelbock, I don't think my life would be any different. But without Jesus' resurrection on Easter, I don't think my life would be worth much anything.

Even after all of Jesus' great miracles, Jesus without Easter, Jesus without his resurrection, had his closest friends and followers broken, broken in their hearts, broken in their thinking. The women we meet in our lesson are intent on unburying and reburying their dead Jesus just to make sure, and then what? Meanwhile, his disciples are in hiding, waiting for what? In their hearts and minds, they hadn't just lost a friend, a friend who was like family, in their minds they had lost their trust, lost their calling in life, lost any reason for hope. They had uprooted their lives to follow Jesus as the One who would save them and their people and make life right in this world. They had answered Jesus' call to be part of what Jesus was doing thinking they would be part of making life right in this world. With Jesus, even in a hopelessly dark and crushing world, they had hope; with Jesus, they were looking forward to a wonderful new life. With Jesus, they were somebodies with a wonderful future ahead of them. But now, they're making sure their dead Jesus wouldn't smell. Now they're hiding in case those who had Jesus killed would come after them.

If I didn't have the resurrection, what would I be doing? Who would I be? What would I be? How would I be? Would I be hiding from life, hiding behind a screen, hiding with a bottle, hiding behind a smile, hiding behind a scowl - hiding from the world - afraid of what the world might do, afraid of what the world might expect of me? It's easy to be afraid and want to hide, isn't it? Or would I be perfuming the dead, rearranging chairs on the Titanic, going through the meaningless motions of this world, pretending purpose, pretending I was giving my life meaning? Or would I be chasing success out there, living the life of the world, chasing the American dream, cluelessly living like this life is all that matters - clueless until it's my turn in the ER or the ICU or the grave?

If I didn't have the resurrection, what would I be thinking of my family history of heart attacks and cancer, dying and death? If I didn't have the resurrection, what would I be thinking about Judgment Day and facing God and having to answer for my wasted life?

If I didn't have the resurrection, what would I be thinking about you? Wrapped up in making a life for myself, would I even care? Or would I just see you as obstacles to me and my life? Or as props for me to use in acting out my pretend life? Oh, we don't like where this is going, do we? If you didn't have the resurrection, what would you be doing? How would you be doing?

I imagine we've all had days without Easter and the resurrection - days when Easter and Jesus' resurrection were lost on us.

We don't have to live those days; we don't have to live that kind of life. What did the women find that Easter morning? Not a dead body with dead promises and dead hopes to bury, but an empty tomb. How? Why? The angels didn't leave the women wondering and empty inside. The angels answered the women's fear: "**Do not be afraid.**" They answered the women's wondering: "**He is not here; he is risen; just as he said.**" And then, the angels gave the women new purpose: "Go, and tell - he is risen from the dead!"

Wow! Or should I say, “Yikes!” That would be a lot to wrap your head around, wouldn’t it? The body of your loved one, the body you saw buried on Friday now gone, tomb empty, empty except for grave clothes and angels. Angels speaking to you. Angels telling you Jesus rose back to life. Angels telling you to go and tell. Tell what? Is it Good News or news too good to be true? If you were those women, would you be fearing or cheering, cheering or fearing?

Jesus himself gives the answer they need: “**Do not be afraid.**” The Jesus they saw on the cross, the Jesus they saw dead and buried - that Jesus was right there in front of them. And he wasn’t scowling and scolding them for their broken hearts and broken thinking. Instead he says: “**Do not be afraid.**” That night he gives his hiding disciples the same answer: “**Peace be with you.**” On page after page, in baptism, in the Lord’s Supper, Jesus says the same thing for us - “Peace be with you.” “You are forgiven.” “Do not be afraid.” “I’ve got you.”

Coming from me, those words might not mean much. But those words aren’t just my words. They are the words of the Son of God who loves you so much he left the holy glories of heaven to stand in for you in this world gone wrong. They are the words of the Lamb of God who loves you so much he took on himself the blame for everything you have ever done wrong; he loves you so much he took on himself the blame for everything you couldn’t get right. They are the words of the God who loves you so much he took on a body to take your place in death.

But they aren’t just the words or thoughts of a dead guy. They are the words of your Shepherd who let death take its best shot and then got back up again. They are the words of your Champion who took Satan’s best shot and got back up again. They are the words of the Lord who rules to put sin and Satan in their place, who rules over death to deliver you from death.

When Jesus says: “**Do not be afraid**” ... “**Peace be with you**” those words aren’t just nice words from someone who really doesn’t care; they aren’t just well-intentioned words from someone who really can’t deliver. Those words are spoken by and backed up by the One God raised from the dead to give you his life and love.

So I don't have to hide; we don't have to hide from God like he's out to get us - he raised Jesus up for us! I'll say it again - I don't have to hide; we don't have to hide no matter what the world might have against us or expect from us - we have Jesus, and he's already overcome the world!

What does that mean for us? We are free to live a life with meaning and purpose! We are free to live the calling and purpose God has for us! We don't have to pretend our lives have meaning and purpose by rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic; we don't have to pretend our lives have meaning and purpose by filling our lives with meaningless motion. Jesus had an Easter mission and Easter message for the women in our lesson. And Jesus has an Easter message and Easter mission for us. We get to echo the angels - "Jesus has risen!" We get to echo Jesus - "Don't be afraid; peace be with you." No matter what this world throws at us, we have the Lord of Life! We get to look ahead and point ahead to life with Jesus in heaven. Amen.

The Resurrection of Our Lord

April 05, 2026

Pre-Service Music

Easter Medley

By Valerie Floeter

"This Joyful Eastertide"

By Charles Callahan

"Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands"

Setting by Carl Ziebell

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today"

By Charles Callahan

Order of Service

Opening Hymn

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today"

Hymn 438

Jesus Christ is ris'n 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!

Please stand to sing the final stanza

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia! praise eternal as his love;
Alleluia!
praise him, all you heav'nly host, Alleluia! Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost. Alleluia!

Minster: Christ is risen!

Congregation: He is risen, indeed!

Easter Dialogue

M: This is the day the Lord has made;

C: Let us rejoice and be glad in it. *(Psalm 118:24)*

M: Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

(Ephesians 2:4-7)

C: Since we have been raised with Christ, we set our hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. *(Colossians 3:1)*

M: Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. *(Colossians 3:2-3)*

C: When Christ, who is our life, appears, then we also will appear with him in glory.

M: Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. *(Romans 6:3-4)*

C: What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? *(Romans 6:1-2)*

M: But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. (1 John 2:1)

C: **He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.** (1 John 2:2)

M: Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen, indeed!**

Choir

“Christ is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed”

(Refrain)

Christ is risen! Hallelujah, hallelujah!

Christ is risen, risen indeed! Hallelujah!

Love’s work is done; the battle is won. Where now, O death, is your sting?

He rose again to rule and to reign, Jesus, our conquering King.

(Refrain)

Lord over sin, Lord over death, At his feet Satan must fall!

Ev’ry knee bow; all will confess, Jesus is Lord over all! *(Refrain)*

Tell it abroad, “Jesus is Lord!” Shout it and let your praise ring!

Gladly we raise our songs of praise; Jesus, our conquering King.

The Word of God

M: 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 the newness of life and always rejoice in the hope of sharing his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be dominion and praise now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

First Lesson

Jonah 2:2-9

He said:

“In my distress I called to the LORD,
and he answered me.
From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,
and you listened to my cry.
You hurled me into the depths,
into the very heart of the seas,
and the currents swirled about me;
all your waves and breakers
swept over me.
I said, ‘I have been banished
from your sight;
yet I will look again
toward your holy temple.’
The engulfing waters threatened me,
the deep surrounded me;
seaweed was wrapped around my head.
To the roots of the mountains I sank down;
the earth beneath barred me in forever.
But you, LORD my God,
brought my life up from the pit.
“When my life was ebbing away,
I remembered you, LORD,
and my prayer rose to you,
to your holy temple.
“Those who cling to worthless idols
turn away from God’s love for them.
But I, with shouts of grateful praise,
will sacrifice to you.
What I have vowed I will make good.
I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’ ”

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

Hymn

"This Joyful Eastertide"

Hymn 449

This joyful Eastertide
away with sin and sorrow!
My love, the Crucified,
has sprung to life this morrow. (Refrain)

Had Christ, who once was slain,
not burst his three-day prison,
our faith had been in vain:
but now has Christ arisen, arisen, arisen;
but now has Christ arisen!

Death's flood has lost its chill
since Jesus crossed the river.
Lover of souls, from ill
my passing soul deliver. (Refrain)

My flesh in hope shall rest
and for a season slumber
till trump from east to west
shall wake the dead in number. (Refrain)

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen

asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!

Choir

“Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed”

Hymn 447

How can it be, the One who died
has borne our sin through sacrifice,
to conquer ev’ry sting of death?

Sing, sing “Hallelujah!”

For joy awakes as dawning light
when Christ’s disciples lift their eyes.
Alive he stands, their friend and King;

Christ, Christ, he is risen! (*Refrain*)

(*Refrain*)

Christ is risen, he is risen indeed!

Oh, sing “Hallelujah!”

Join the chorus, sing with the redeemed:

“Christ is risen, he is risen indeed.”

Where doubt and darkness once had been,
they saw him and their hearts believed.
But blest are those who have not seen,
yet sing “Hallelujah!”

Once bound by fear, now bold in faith,
they preached the truth and pow'r of grace
and pouring out their lives they gained
life, life everlasting. (*Refrain*)

The pow'r that raised him from the grave
now works in us to pow'rf'ly save.
He frees our hearts to live his grace;
go, tell of his goodness. (*Refrain*)

The Gospel of the Resurrection

Matthew 28:1-10

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

M: Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen, indeed!**

Explanation of the 2nd Article of the Apostle's Creed

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

Hymn of the Day

"Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands"

Hymn 440 v. 1-6

Men sing v. 3

Women sing v. 4

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, alleluia!

No son of man could conquer death,
such ruin sin had wrought us.
No innocence was found on earth,
and therefore death had brought us
into bondage from of old
and ever grew more strong and bold

and held us as its captive.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Men:

Christ Jesus, God's own Son, came down,
his people to deliver;
destroying sin, he took the crown
from death's pale brow forever.
Stripped of pow'r, no more it reigns;
an empty form alone remains;
its sting is lost forever.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Women:

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;
disgraced, it lies defeated.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Here the true Paschal Lamb we see,
whom God so freely gave us;
he died on the accursèd tree—
so strong his love—to save us.
See, his blood now marks our door;
faith points to it; death passes o'er,
and Satan cannot harm us.
Alleluia, alleluia!

So let us keep the festival
to which the Lord invites us;
Christ is himself the joy of all,

the sun that warms and lights us.
Now his grace to us imparts
eternal sunshine to our hearts;
the night of sin is ended.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Then let us feast this Easter Day
on Christ, the bread of heaven;
the Word of grace has 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, alleluia!

Sermon

Matthew 28:1-10

Hymn

"In Christ Alone"
Hymn 510

In Christ alone my hope is found;
he is my light, my strength, my song;
this cornerstone, this solid ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My comforter, my all in all;
here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, who took on flesh,
fullness of God in helpless babe;
this gift of love and righteousness,
scorned by the ones he came to save.
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
the wrath of God was satisfied;

for ev'ry sin on him was laid;
here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay,
light of the world by darkness slain;
then bursting forth in glorious day,
up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory,
sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
for I am his and he is mine,
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
this is the pow'r of Christ in me;
from life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man
can ever pluck me from his hand;
till he returns or calls me home,
here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

Gathering of Offering

An offering can be an act of cheerful worship to thank God for his blessings and to support his ministry at St. John. The vast majority of our church and school ministry is made possible by our weekend offerings. May the Lord bless you! And may he use your gifts to be a blessing to many others!



If you prefer online giving, you may scan this code with your mobile device.

Easter Prayer

Almighty and merciful God, on this glorious day we rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Increase our faith that the message of the empty tomb may fill our lives with new life.

When we are weak, be our strength; when we are sad, be our song; and when we sin, be our salvation.

In the hearts of the hurting and the lost, may the promise of Jesus as “the Resurrection and the Life” wipe away tears born of death and give new birth into a living hope.

Use our compassion and our witness to comfort hearts in need of mercy.

Wherever we live and whatever we do, help us to be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope that we have in Christ.

King of kings and Lord of lords, destroy all dominion, authority, and power (seen and unseen) that stands against you. For your glory and for the good of your people, rule over the evil in the world and over the evil in our hearts.

Triumph over our enemies and empower us as your Church to fight the good fight to the end.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for connecting us to Christ and his resurrection through baptism. As your baptized children, keep us united with your Son, living for you as he lives for you.

Enrich us and empower us with everything we need for life and godliness.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

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.

Closing Blessing

M: Go now into God's creation with bold confidence, living and declaring the truth that Jesus is alive. Go in the grace, the peace, and the strength of the Father who has raised the Son through the power of the Holy Spirit. Alleluia!

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn

"I Know that My Redeemer Lives"

Hymn 441 (select vs.)

I know that my Redeemer lives! What comfort this sweet sentence gives!

He lives, he lives, who once was dead; he lives, my everliving head!

He lives triumphant from the grave; he lives eternally to save;
he lives all-glorious in the sky; he lives exalted there on high.

He lives to bless me with his love; he lives to plead for me above;
he lives my hungry soul to feed; he lives to help in time of need.

He lives to silence all my fears; he lives to wipe away my tears;
he lives to calm my troubled heart; he lives all blessings to impart.

He lives and grants me daily breath; he lives, and I shall conquer death;
he lives my mansion to prepare; he lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to his name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

Postlude

"I Know that My Redeemer Lives"

Setting by Michael Burkhardt

Service Participants

Preacher and Presiding Minister

Pastor Kevin Raddatz

Organist

Mrs. Beth Rockwell

Choir Director

Dr. Tim Samelson

Choir

St. John Senior Choir

Musicians

Miss Meredith Fein, *violin*

Mr. Charles Ledvina, *bass*

Mr. Steve Lemerand, *timpani*

Mr. Louis Luedtke, *trumpet*

Mr. Justin Wintrone, *trombone*

Mr. Greg Haak, *guitar*

Mr. Matthew Curtis, *congas*

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