



**HE LIVES TO GIVE ME EAGER EXPECTATION OF
GLORY**

Seventh Sunday of Easter

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | Seward, Nebraska

May 21, 2023

SERIES THEME: HE LIVES!

Life is full of either/or moments where you face an unavoidable choice between two alternatives. Some of those moments are relatively insignificant. Either I have the chicken, or I have the fish. Other times, they shape the course of your life. Either I accept this new job offer, or I keep my current job for the remainder of my career. Either I accept his marriage proposal, or.... Some either/or moments are bigger than others. Here is the biggest either/or of them all. Either Jesus is still dead, or Jesus rose. One might ask, "How does that either/or affect me?" Because Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and Savior from sin. He said the proof is that he would rise from the dead. "The Son of Man must suffer many things ... be killed and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). Thus, if Jesus remains dead, he is both failure and fraud. However, if Jesus rose from the dead, he proves he is who he claimed to be—the Messiah. And he did what he came to do—save us. Either Jesus is still dead, or Jesus rose. That means, either Jesus is a complete waste of your time, or he is your only hope for salvation. If Jesus is still dead, it is completely logical that you should want nothing to do with him. If Jesus rose, it is only logical that he becomes the center and greatest priority of your life. Either Jesus is still dead, or Jesus rose. This season of Easter is a 50-day-long celebration of the fact that the Holy Spirit has answered that either/or for us. We believe this life-changing truth. Christ is risen! He lives! Throughout this season, we explore what that means.

THEME OF THE DAY: HE LIVES TO GIVE ME EAGER EXPECTATION OF GLORY

The Church waits. The Church in Jerusalem waited for ten days between Christ's ascension and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. The Church today waits through the millennia between Pentecost and Christ's second coming. We are waiting for the gifts that Jesus promised. We live in eager expectation of glory! That glory is not dimmed by early suffering. Rather, our current sufferings only remind us of the glory that awaits us. We are simply following in Christ's footsteps. First comes the cross, and then comes the crown. Knowing what is coming lets us view our current troubles as light and momentary. They cannot mute the joy of living in eager expectation of glory. While we wait in the time between Christ's ascension and return, we live knowing that we will suffer persecution for our faith in Christ, but God will work it for glory.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
Cori Humann

Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 597 Now Thank We All Our God

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

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.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory Be to God on High

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



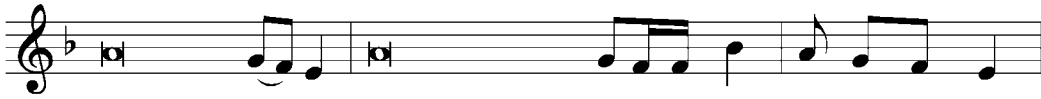
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



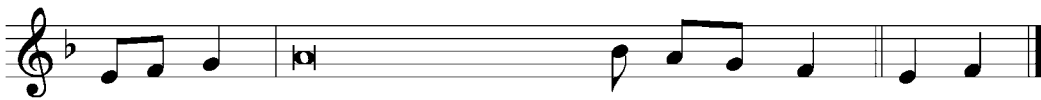
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho-ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, your Son our Savior was taken up in glory and intercedes for us at your right hand. Through your living and abiding Word, give us hearts to know him and faith to follow where he has gone; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Acts 1:12–26

Matthias is chosen to join the apostles, who served as eyewitnesses of Christ's resurrection. Through their testimony, God gave his church the expectation of future glory.

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain called the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³ When they entered the city, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. Peter and John were there, also James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ All of them kept praying together with one mind, along with the women, with Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. ¹⁵ In those days, when the group there numbered about 120 people, Peter stood up among the brothers and said, ¹⁶ "Gentlemen, brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David about Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷ Judas was counted as one of us and was given a share in this ministry.

¹⁸ "Now this man acquired a field with what he was paid for his wicked act. When he fell headfirst, his middle burst open, and all his intestines spilled out. ¹⁹ This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, and so in their own language that field was called Akeldema, which means Field of Blood. ²⁰ Indeed, it is written in the book of Psalms:

May his residence be deserted.

Let there be no one dwelling in it.

And, let someone else take his position.

²¹ "Therefore it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us during the entire time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from his baptism by John until the day Jesus was taken up from us, become a witness with us of his resurrection."

²³ They proposed two: Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus) and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place."

²⁶ Then they assigned lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias. So he was counted with the eleven apostles.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: 124- Front of Hymnal: Our Help Is in the Name of the LORD

Second Reading

1 Peter 4:12–17; 5:6–11

The God of all grace has called us to future glory. Until that time, he encourages us to bring all our anxiety and cares to him.

Suffering for Being a Christian

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised by the fiery trial that is happening among you to test you, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead rejoice whenever you are sharing in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

¹⁴ If you are insulted in connection with the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or as a meddler. ¹⁶ But if you suffer for being a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God in connection with this name. ¹⁷ For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. Now if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who disobey the gospel of God? ⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under God's powerful hand so that he may lift you up at the appointed time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ Have sound judgment. Be alert. Your adversary, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him by being firm in the faith. You know that the same kinds of sufferings are being laid on your brotherhood all over the world.

¹⁰ After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who called you into his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you. ¹¹ To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

John 14:18



Refrain

Al - le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Tone

I will not leave you as or - phans; I will come to you.

Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 713578

Gospel

John 17:1–11a

Just hours before he would be tortured and killed, Jesus says those events would lead to glory, both his and ours.

Jesus Prays to Be Glorified

¹ After Jesus had spoken these things, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you. ² For you gave him authority over all flesh, so that he may give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. ⁴ I have glorified you on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, glorify me at your own side with the glory I had at your side before the world existed.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

⁶ “I revealed your name to the men you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me, and they have held on to your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me, and they received them. They learned the truth that I came from you. They believed that you sent me. ⁹ “I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All that is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine. And I am glorified in them. ¹¹ I am no longer going to be in the world, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 446 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense

Sermon

Stand

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Lord of life, fill our hearts with joy this Easter Season, for you have risen and conquered the grave. Imprint the message of victory on our hearts and implant it in our minds. Through the good news of your resurrection renew our hope and revive our faith. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

By baptizing us into your name, you have connected us to your death and rising. You have put our sin to death and have given us a new life. Enable us each day to think of ourselves as

dead to sin and alive to you, so that we may walk in newness of life in all we do. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

In this fallen world, death and sorrow surround us. Touch the hearts of those who grieve the loss of a Christian they love. Direct their eyes to your empty tomb and ease their pain by reminding them that their loved ones will one day rise again. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Lord, many people grieve without hope. Let the message of resurrection reach them and awaken faith in their hearts. Use us as your instruments to bring the word of life to their souls and the message of hope to their hearts. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Stay by the side of all who are suffering. In your wise mercy, heal those who are sick, receiving treatment for illness, recovering from illness or surgery, or hurting in body or mind. [We pray especially for...*here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Remind them that your victory over death is a fact, and comfort them with your promise to raise them and give them and all believers new, glorified bodies like yours. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Risen Savior, feed our faith with the message of your resurrection. Come to us in your Word and in the feast of your Sacrament to sustain and strengthen us until we feast with you in eternal glory.

Amen.

Offering

Offering Hymn: 721 What a Friend We Have in Jesus

sts. 1–2

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.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.
Amen.

Hymn: 876 Fight the Good Fight

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 8:00 AM Bible Study, 8:45 AM Worship, 9:45 AM Fellowship and Sunday School

Sunday: 8:00 AM Bible Study, 8:45 AM Worship and Communion, 9:45 AM Fellowship and Sunday School

New Church Directory

Over the course of these next weeks (April 9th-May 14th) please find a time following a worship service to have Becky Wilkens take your picture for our new church directory.

Joint Meeting for Grace and Bethel

The joint voters assembly meeting will be held on Sunday June 11th at 6:30 PM at Bethel.

Trinity Lutheran Association Meeting

Trinity's association meeting will be on June 18th at 6:00 PM.

Picture for Pastor Marc and Elaine Frey's retirement

The Frey family is asking for members at Grace and Bethel to share any pictures that you may have of Marc and Elaine Frey during their 16 years of serving here in Nebraska. Please get pictures to Andrew Frey by June 18th.

Camp Jefferson

WELS Youth Camp Jefferson will take place on July 14th-16th with Teen Camp following until the 19th. To register or for more info please visit: wescampjefferson.org -registration will close on June 26th.

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Given to the Lord: Attendance: Sunday Bible Class 12, Sunday School 4, Worship 40 in person, Facebook Reached 84, Audio/YouTube 15. Offerings: Home 630.00, WELS 100.00, NELHS 75.00, Trinity 800.00 **To God be the glory!**

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