

**April 7th, 2013
Second Sunday of Easter**



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

Phone: 320-684-2123 (1-877-684-2123) Fax: 320-684-2836

E-mail address: blcmalmo@frontiernet.net

Church Web Site: blcmalmo.org

Pastor: Rev. James Raisanen

Church Secretary: Evelyn Richter

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, C 320-684-2846

Patti Honnold, RN CNP 320-676-8421

Kathy Berland RN ANP 320-495-3988

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will grow spiritually and in numbers as we serve Christ. We will reach out and address the hurts and hopes in our community. We will maintain a church home that is reverently joyous and extend a welcome to all who seek to join us in our mission. }

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.

Please notify usher if you would like assistance

Sunday, April 7, 2013/Second Sunday of Easter Communion

INTRODUCTION

In spite of all we have heard and all that we have seen, it is often hard to believe. Because it is hard to believe, we will invest ourselves in the Easter mystery for fifty days (a week of weeks). Because it is hard to believe, John the evangelist will provide sign after sign celebrating Jesus' victory over death. Because it is hard to believe, the Lord Jesus will return to us again and again in the mystery of the holy communion, inviting us to touch and taste his presence, and offering us his peace.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: "Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing" # 389 ELW
Vs. 1, 2 & Last

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

CONFESSION OF OUR SIN:

God, we confess to you and to those around us that we lose ourselves trying to find the excitement in life's parade. We listen to and follow the crowds, wanting to experience everything. We push away others in our attempt to grab the golden ring. We do all these things, God, and yet we find ourselves empty, lonely, and afraid. We need someone to rescue us from the tombs we have created. We need Someone to break through the walls we have built to insulate ourselves from you and each other. God, we ask that you would hear the prayers of our hearts.

(A time of silence for meditation and reflection.)

THE GOOD NEWS OF EASTER:

Here is the good news of Easter: The celebration has begun! The real parade has started! Christ has defeated death, and is pointing the way for you and for me! We have received the promise of eternal life through Christ's victory over death and evil! When we are lonely, empty, and afraid, we are reminded of God's great love for us in the image of the empty cross. Jesus lives! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM

FIRST READING: Acts 5:27–32

Peter has been arrested for proclaiming the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. His response to the charges of the high priest summarizes the early church's proclamation of forgiveness of sin through repentance.

When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

PSALM: Psalm 118:14–29

Refrain: You are my God, and I will exalt you. (Ps. 118:28)

The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.
Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:

"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!

The right hand of the LORD is exalted!

The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

R: *You are my God, and I will exalt you.*

The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

Open for me the gates of righteousness;

I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.

"This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter."

I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.

R: *You are my God, and I will exalt you.*

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Hosanna! O LORD, save us! We pray to you, LORD, prosper our days!

R: *You are my God, and I will exalt you.*

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD;

we bless you from the house of the LORD.

The LORD is God and has given us light.

Form a procession with branches up to the corners of the altar.

You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.

Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God's mercy endures forever.

R: *You are my God, and I will exalt you.*

GOSPEL: John 20:19–31

The unprecedented events of the day of resurrection continue as the risen Jesus appears to his fearful disciples. A week later, after Thomas worships Jesus, Jesus pronounces that the blessings of the resurrection are also for those who "have not seen and yet believe."

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

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them

when Jesus came. 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."

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." 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." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 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."

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

**HYMN OF THE DAY: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!" # 634 ELW
Vs. 1, 2 & 6**

SERMON

OFFERING & OFFERTORY PRAYER

God, give of every good and perfect gift, we thank you for the daily blessings of life. For food and family, for friends and neighbors, for the gift of life itself we give you thanks. Bless these offerings of our treasure that they may be used wisely in your service. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rejoicing with all the witnesses of the resurrection, let us pray in confidence for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A time for silent prayer.

Give your church a sure and certain hope that overcomes doubt and fear. Fill us with the peace of Christ so that our lives proclaim your forgiveness and life. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Open our eyes to see the abundance of water and nourishing food you provide. Help us to work together so that all have access to clean water and adequate nutrition. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire the leaders of the nations to work for peace and justice for all your children.
Teach us to obey your commandments and live in peace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Ease the burdens of all who suffer in mind, body, or spirit (*especially*). Grant healing,
companionship, and hope to all who live in fear. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen this congregation to sing songs of hope and promise. Raise up musicians who
will share their gifts and lead our praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be made.

Fill our hearts with joy and gladness as we remember those who have died believing in
life in your name. Reveal to us the joy of your salvation even in the face of death. Hear
us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In resurrection hope we commend to you all for whom we pray, trusting in the promise of
new life; through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

Amen.

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus.

Amen.

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The God of all grace + bless you now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN: “God Be with You Till We Meet Again” # 536 ELW

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK OF APRIL 7TH, 2013

Organist: Marlys Beavers
Greeters: Maynard & Kathy Berland
Ushers: 8:30 Mary & Steve Long, 10:00 Wayne & Janice Olson
Lectors: 8:30 Lyn Hansen, 10:00 Joyce Rimer
Coffee Servers: Wayne & Janice Olson, Jack & Paula Spetz

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD LAST WEEK (3/31/13)

Attendance: 8:30 – 91 10:00 – 99

Offering: \$ 3,722.00 Building Fund: \$ 325.00

\$ 3,077.00 – Weekly amount needed for operating expenses.

\$ 580.00 – Weekly amount (building fund) needed for mortgage payment.

THIS WEEK AT BETHESDA APRIL 7TH THRU APRIL 13TH, 2013

Mon., Apr. 8 th	9:00 a.m.	Women's Devotions
	7:00 p.m.	AA & Alanon
Tues., Apr. 9 th	9:00 a.m.	Quilters
	9:30 a.m.	Bells
Wed., Apr. 10 th	8:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	9:30 a.m.	Hardanger
	11:00 a.m.	Bible Study
	6:00 p.m.	Choir
	7:00 p.m.	Praise Team
	7:00 p.m.	Confirmation
Thurs., Apr. 11 th	8:00 a.m.	R.O.M.E.O.S.
	1:00 p.m.	Funtimers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WOMEN'S DEVOTIONS will be Monday, April 8th at 9:00 a.m. at Pat Becker's home. All women are invited to join us for a study of the Old Testament. Please bring your Bible.

COFFEE SERVERS needed to help Joyce Rimer serve on Sunday, April 14th. Please sign up on the board next to the kitchen serving window.

MN ADULT & TEEN CHALLENGE will lead our service on Sunday, April 28th at a 9:00 a.m. service followed by a brunch. There will be only one service that day.

CHECK THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ON THE BULLETIN BOARD FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

MILLE LACS LAKE WATERSHED CONFERENCE & BUS TOUR
8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. on April 20th, 2013. Please Register.

First Annual Run for the Camps

5 K Run/ 2 Mile Walk
May 4th, 2013

Craft & Bake Sale

Sacred Heart Church in Wahkon
May 11th, 2013

Need help with housekeeping or light yard work in the Mille Lacs area?

Contact: Judy's Housekeeping Plus
Tel: 612-670-8030

T.O.P.S. on Tuesdays in Isle

SEEING IS BELIEVING

"Seeing is believing." This could be the subhead for John 20, at least up through verse 28. Throughout this chapter we are introduced to four examples of faith through sight: the beloved disciple, viewing the grave-cloths in the empty tomb; Mary Magdalene, seeing the risen Jesus in the garden; the disciples, rejoicing when their risen Lord appears in the locked room; and ultimately Thomas, when Jesus shows him his wounds and invites him to touch them.

But the message of verse 29, which follows Thomas's proclamation of faith, is that it is "those who have *not* seen, and yet have come to believe" who are truly blessed. Here we find Jesus shifting his attention from the disciples in his presence to the audience—to us, the readers down through the ages. He makes it clear that his concern is equally for those who will come to believe through the words and actions of his followers.

The world encourages us to insist on signs and wonders as a gauge of our faith. We often read stories about an image of the face of Jesus, or that of a cross, detected in an unexpected place, and some may take that as proof that the story of Christ is true. In a similar vein, how often have we waited on a "sign from God" to make some important move? This is perilous indeed, for really, how do we know for certain what is or is not a true sign?

Let us instead turn continually to the Christ who is within each of us and in our communities, and whose words, as they have come down to us through the Bible, provide us with all the signs and wonders we will ever need for belief.

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