

The Resurrection of Our Lord /Easter Day April 12, 2020

Lectionary Year A – the Gospel of Matthew

Living the Lutheran Lectionary

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.

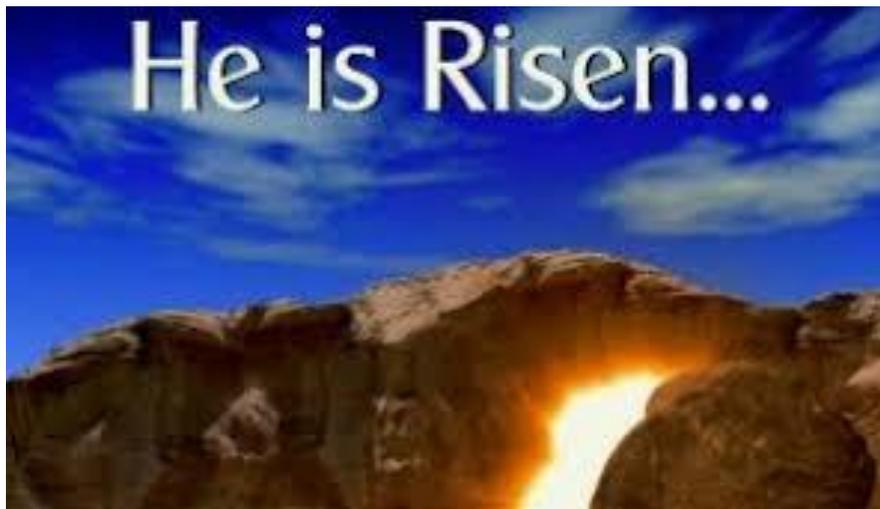
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.

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- ✦ www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies
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- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM(5pm Kenya/Uganda):** At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134 and on line through <https://zoom.us/j/815200301>
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- ✦ **Tuesdays at 1:00 PM (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya (Currently suspended due to corona virus restrictions in Kenya.)
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.



<https://kimberlinglutheran.com/2011/04/24/easter-sermon/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 458 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 195

“Christ Jesus lay in death’s strong bands”

“Could it be that this hymn is more valued in theory than in usage? It was Luther’s favorite of all his hymn texts, but it is not quite a favorite among Lutherans. That is too bad. We are poorer for not singing this hymn as often as we might. It was probably based on the hymn that follows it in LSB, “Christ Is Arisen.”...

Two Scripture texts are pivotal to this hymn. One is Ex. 12:7–14, about the Passover lamb. Look at Exodus and compare the Passover lamb to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world... Luther returns to this imagery in the final stanza.

The other text deeply intertwined with Luther’s hymn is the historic (*One Year*) Epistle for Easter, 1 Cor. 5:6–8. This also focuses on Christ, our Passover lamb, who has removed the old leaven of sin and made us new.

- <https://www.lcms.org/worship/hymn-of-the-day-studies>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKx2J4Llcso>
Higher Things youth conference, Te Deum 2015, recorded in Seward, Nebraska.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONbBD4HeH3A> recorded and arranged by Koiné. <http://www.koinemusic.com/> Sand Art by Jason Jaspersen <http://www.jjjaspersen.com/>

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001
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During the season of Easter the Old Testament reading is replaced with a reading from The Book of Acts. The Old Testament/Epistle titles are changed to 1st and 2nd reading.

1st Reading – “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality”

Psalm – “Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.”

2nd Reading – “Set your minds on things that are above”

Gospel – “***Do not be afraid; go and tell***”

Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the same reading (Next week: Acts 5:29-42; RCL, Acts 2:14a, 22-2)

Also used on the Baptism of Jesus Sunday in the RCL.

“On the surface nothing too controversial leaps out of the text to assault the contemporary hearer’s theological sensibility. When one considers the context of this speech within the flow of Acts, however, Peter’s speech is monumental. It reflects Peter’s gigantic “aha!” moment when he has come to realize that, within God’s missional program of salvation, all really, truly means all.

At the beginning of Acts 10, those who believe in Jesus as Lord and Messiah and who are now members of God's reconstituted Israel have been Jews and Samaritans. Both groups have had the word preached to them by God's commissioned agents. Both groups have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit (especially see Acts 2:37-42; 8:14-17). By Acts 10:33, however, everything is now being changed forever as God has forced Peter to come to the astonishing realization that God has decided to include Gentiles as part of God's people..."
(continued after the reading)

Peter and Cornelius Verses 1-8

Peter's Vision Verses 9-33

Gentiles Hear the Good News Verses 34-43

³⁴ So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), ³⁷ you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles Verses 44-48

"...The physical setting of Peter's speech is exclusively Gentile in two ways. First, Peter is in the city of Caesarea Maritima. This was the coastal city that King Herod had built for his Roman patrons (ca. 22-9 BCE). Not only was this the capital of the Roman province of Judaea, it was also thoroughly Roman in its character and structures. The city's crowning building was a grand temple dedicated to Caesar Augustus and the goddess Roma perched on a hill overlooking its newly engineered harbor.

Up to this point in Luke and Acts (recalling that they are two-volumes in a single narrative), neither Jesus nor his followers have set foot in such a pagan location. Second, Peter is in the house of an Italian officer in the Roman army named Cornelius (10:1). Jews do not visit the

homes of Gentiles as Peter initially reminds Cornelius (10:28). Previously in Luke 7:6-7 a centurion living in Capernaum had messengers tell an approaching Jesus that it was inappropriate for Jesus to come to his house. So Peter is in a city and a house where God's people should not be. Indeed the only reason that Peter is in such a Gentile location speaking to a house full of Gentiles is that God has arranged this encounter (see 10:3-8,17-24,29-33).

The emphatic first words out of Peter's mouth in the Greek of 10:34b are "by truth." Here Peter has now perceived the truth of what God's impartiality entails. That God shows no partiality is not a new theological claim (see Deuteronomy 10:17; Sirach 35:12-13).

What is absolutely new here are the implications of divine impartiality. The character of God as an impartial God now means the character of God's community is impartial. The dividing lines separating Jew and Gentile based on who is clean and who is not according the law have been obliterated. This does not mean Israel as God's people has been obliterated. Rather the basis for membership is now radically redefined. God accepts people not on the basis of ethnic identity...

What has changed is the scope of "all." In Luke 24:47 Peter and the other disciples were commissioned by the risen Christ to preach repentance and forgiveness in Jesus' name to all nations. In fulfillment of this commission Peter told his Jewish Pentecost audience from all nations that Joel's prophecy regarding the outpouring of the Spirit had been fulfill so that all who call upon the name of the Lord would be saved (Acts 2:21; Joel 2:32a)..."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1966 [Richard Carlson](#)
Professor of New Testament, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pa.

Or: Jeremiah 31:1-6

"Jeremiah was a prophet to Judah during the time leading up to the exile. In the early chapters of the book, Jeremiah laments over Judah and the coming defeat of Jerusalem. He warns the people of the severe consequences of their sin and disobedience, but they do not heed his warning. He also includes a striking personal lament over his life as an unwelcome prophet, speaking a word out of season. He sees his prophetic vocation as conveying the will and purposes of God as they unfold over time.

This alternate Old Testament reading for Easter Day is from a part of Jeremiah, chapters 30 and 31, known as the Book of Consolation. In these chapters, the tone shifts from warning and woe to the promise of restoration and renewal of life following the exile. For Jeremiah, this is not a promise of cheap grace, but a dawn that will only come at the end of a long, dark night..."(continued after the reading)

The LORD Will Turn Mourning to Joy

31 "At that time, declares the LORD, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people."

² Thus says the LORD:

"The people who survived the sword
found grace in the wilderness;

when Israel sought for rest,
³ the LORD appeared to him^[a] from far away.
 I have loved you with an everlasting love;
 therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.
⁴ Again I will build you, and you shall be built,
 O virgin Israel!
 Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines
 and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers.
⁵ Again you shall plant vineyards
 on the mountains of Samaria;
 the planters shall plant
 and shall enjoy the fruit.
⁶ For there shall be a day when watchmen will call
 in the hill country of Ephraim:
 ‘Arise, and let us go up to Zion,
 to the LORD our God.’”... (continues through verse 30)

The New Covenant Verses 31-40

- a. [Jeremiah 31:3](#) Septuagint; Hebrew *me*

“...Coming as it does at the close of Lent and Holy Week, this passage turns the corner from lamentation to joy. The passage from Jeremiah accords well with the gospel reading for Easter Day from John 20:1-18 (*RCL*), as both readings bring the promise of a light that shines in the darkness, the unexpected in-breaking of joy when only death and exile seemed certain. In preaching the passages for today, the text from Jeremiah bids us praise God for the surprising resurgence of grace shown in the promised return from exile, and in the One who returned even from the exile of the grave, whose resurrection we celebrate this Easter Day.

- <http://hwallace.unitingchurch.org.au/WebOTcomments/EasterA/EasterDayalt.html> Rev'd Dr. Howard Wallace, Minister in the Uniting Church in Australia

Psalm 16; RCL, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (Psalm 148; RCL, Psalm 16)

Psalm 16 is the reading the RCL will use next week as referred to in Stan Mast's comments. (It is also used for the 6th Sunday after Pentecost in Year C.) The Psalm selection is also another example of how well God guides the Lectionary to be appropriate for current times even though it was written years ago. Read this in the context of the corona virus as it reaches a peak in the United States.

“Psalm 16 is the perfect Psalm for this second Sunday of the Easter season. The last 3 verses were the text for Peter's Pentecost sermon, in which he proved from Scripture that Jesus' death and resurrection had always been at the heart God's plan of salvation. Psalm 16 is also the perfect Psalm for our times. The first verse of Psalm 16, which sets the tone for the entire Psalm, taps directly into the intense search for security that dominates our terror haunted time.

“Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge.” Fascinatingly, the Easter theme of Psalm 16 is exactly the solution to our frantic search for safety...” April 17, 2017

➤ https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/easter-2a/?type=the_lectionary_psalms
Stan Mast ...”spent 41 years in parish ministry in four very different churches.... In 2012, Stan retired and then promptly un-retired to return to Calvin as Adjunct Professor of Preaching.”

You Will Not Abandon My Soul A Miktam^[a] of David.

16 Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

² I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;

I have no good apart from you.”

³ As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones,
in whom is all my delight.^[b]

⁴ The sorrows of those who run after^[c] another god shall multiply;
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names on my lips.

⁵ The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

⁶ The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

⁷ I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.^[d]

⁸ I have set the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being^[e] rejoices;
my flesh also dwells secure.

¹⁰ For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
or let your holy one see corruption.^[f]

¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

- a. [Psalm 16:1](#) Probably a musical or liturgical term
- b. [Psalm 16:3](#) Or *To the saints in the land, the excellent in whom is all my delight, I say:*
- c. [Psalm 16:4](#) Or *who acquire*
- d. [Psalm 16:7](#) Hebrew *my kidneys instruct me*
- e. [Psalm 16:9](#) Hebrew *my glory*
- f. [Psalm 16:10](#) Or *see the pit*

“...Trust as a Way of Acting and Living

Obviously, since this is a psalm, we are talking about trust in *God*. We are talking about *faith*. The psalmist makes it clear that trust in God is not a right belief, a warm feeling, or an impulse in times of trouble. Trust is a way of acting and living that opens the self to God as the most important reality in life. We do not take drastic action because we necessarily feel trust; our actions are a way of maintaining or cultivating our trust in God...

Preaching Psalm 16

...Psalm 16 invites the preacher to overwhelm the congregation with the good news that, in Christ, God does not abandon us to the grave but shows us the path of life in God's presence. Only then can the preacher help the congregation to emulate the psalmist in undertaking practices that cultivate the trust that flows from this good news."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=616

[Craig A. Satterlee](#) Bishop, North/West Lower Michigan Synod, Lansing, Mich.

Colossians 3:1-4; RCL, the same reading or Acts 10:34-43 (1 Peter 1:3-9; RCL, the same reading)

Colossians 3:1-11 is the reading for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost in Year C, part of a series from Colossians that began on the Fifth Sunday through the Eighth. The historic (One Year) Epistle for Easter is 1 Cor. 5:6-8.

Why is Col 3:1-4 read on Easter Sunday? The answer is as brief as the reading:

**the text refers to the resurrection of Jesus,*

**it connects believers to it, and*

**it outlines a basic ethical response that the author hopes will guide believers..."*

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=48

[Walter F. Taylor, Jr.](#) Ernest W. and Edith S. Ogram Professor of New Testament Studies, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH

Put On the New Self

3 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your^[a] life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory... (continues through verse 17)

Rules for Christian Households Verses 18-25

- a. [Colossians 3:4](#) Some manuscripts *our*

(Paul) "...has described baptism as being raised with Christ and becoming sharers in his suffering and death. In the early Church, those to be baptised removed their clothes before the rite and donned new ones after it, symbolizing the casting aside of their old ways and their new life in Christ. Vv. [1-4](#) summarize this teaching. The author tells us that we already have close

fellowship with Christ, but that this is not yet fully revealed; our lives are still “hidden with Christ in God” (v. 3). When Christ’s glory is “revealed” (v. 4) at the end of time, our complete union with him will also be seen. (Early Christians saw Psalm [110:1](#), “... Sit at my right hand ...”, see v. 1, as showing that Jewish messianic hopes are realized in Christ.)

Being baptised, we are expected to conduct ourselves ethically (vv. 5-17): we are to cast aside both sins of the body (v. 5) and of the mind (v. 8). “Fornication” (v. 5), *porneia* in Greek, means *all forms of sexual immorality*; the “impurity” is sexual; “passion” is *lust*; *evil desire* is self-centred covetousness; “greed” motivates a person to set up a god besides God. Because people still commit these sins wilfully and without seeking forgiveness, “the wrath of God is coming” (v. 6) on them – at the end of time. (“Image of its creator”, v. 10, recalls that God makes humans in his own image.) In the baptised community, racial and social barriers no longer exist, for “Christ is all and in all” (v. 11).”

- <http://montreal.anglican.org/comments/archive/cpr18m.shtml> Chris Haslam of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, Canada

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“Your best life now...is hidden.

Not inside of you—like some dormant seed that, once found, can be watered, nurtured, and coaxed into maximum fruit-production—but hidden. *Your Hidden Life Now*; perhaps this could be the subtitle of the letter to the Colossians.

The third chapter of Colossians describes what may seem like a bit of a paradox. The life of the Christian **is**. And (but?) it is hidden with Christ. This is not something that has to be earned, but it is both encouraged and expected. It is something that is a reality—if a reality that can be hard to recognize, realize, and really show forth every day.

In *The Letter to the Colossians: Your Hidden Life Now*, and in particular in these eleven verses from chapter three, Paul confronts ideologies that stand in opposition to the word of truth, which is the gospel (Colossians 1:5). And the reality is that the message to the Colossians, and if we preachers echo it our own message, is pointedly counter-cultural...

One of the striking things about Colossians 3:1-11 is the way in which it describes the paradox of life in Christ. This life is something which we already have—if you have been raised with Christ, *and you have*, for you have died, and your life is hidden with God (3:1, 3); and it is something which we must strive to live into—put to death therefore whatever in you is earthly...these are the ways you once followed...you have stripped off the old self with its practices...(3:5, 7, 9)...

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=718
[Karl Jacobson](#) Senior Pastor, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Minneapolis, Minn.

Matthew 28:1-10; RCL, John 20:1-18 or the same reading (John 20:19-31; RCL, the same reading)

“The resurrection accounts in the four gospels have similarities and differences. They are similar in that in each case the event is on a Sunday morning (two days after the crucifixion), Mary Magdalene is present at the tomb, and the tomb was found to be empty.

But there are differences. (1) In the Synoptic Gospels the women arrive at the tomb early in the morning, either at dawn or after the sun had risen. In the Gospel of John it is still dark. (2) There is a difference in the number and names of women present (except that Mary Magdalene is present in all four accounts). In Matthew's account there are only two women (Mary Magdalene and the other Mary); Mark names three; Luke names three and adds that others had accompanied them to the tomb as well; John has Mary Magdalene alone. (3) Finally, there is a difference concerning the placement of the stone at the doorway of the tomb. In three of the gospels the stone had been rolled away prior to the approach of the women. Matthew's account is the exception. There an earthquake takes place, and an angel descends from heaven and rolls the stone away after the women arrive. Clearly, it is impossible to harmonize the details to everyone's satisfaction..."

“The Holy Gospel according to the 28th Chapter of St. Matthew”

The Resurrection

28 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. **2** And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. **4** And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. **5** But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. **6** He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he^[a] lay. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” **8** So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. **9** And behold, Jesus met them and said, **“Greetings!”** And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, **“Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”**

The Report of the Guard Verses 11-15

The Great Commission Verses 16-20

- a. Matthew 28:6 Some manuscripts *the Lord*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“... Christ's resurrection means that the story of Jesus is "to be continued" in you, and in me, and in every life that is touched by the power of the good news that, "He is risen." The logic of the "continuation" of the story is present already in Matthew's account of the Easter good news. The two Marys approach the tomb, expecting to see the tomb--the final resting place of Christ, the last sad chapter in his once promising story, the closing scene in the saddest story ever told. Instead, a message greets them.

First, they **feel** a message--a great earthquake, that shakes the foundations. Then, they **see** a message--quite literally. They see a "messenger" (as is well known, the Greek term *angelos*, like the Hebrew term *mal'ak*, literally means a "messenger"--in this case the "angel" being a divine messenger), who descends and rolls away the stone.

Finally, they **hear** a message: "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said." But this original message about the good news is only the start of a chain of messages...

It is interesting that Matthew, like Mark, does not elaborate on the meaning of Christ's resurrection. In an elegant act of narrative succinctness, the Gospel *announces* and does not explain: The good news of his resurrection is announced. The command is given to go and spread the word. This act of narrative brevity is fitting. To try at this point to explain the meaning of Christ's resurrection would wreck the telling of the greatest story ever told. It would be like wrecking a great joke by explaining it. Or souring a great musical performance by describing the music while the performance is still taking place.

The reason for this is that no amount of explanation can adequately explain the meaning and significance of Easter. The Gospel of John famously ends by saying that all the books in the world could not fully describe all of the signs that Jesus did. In a similar vein, the Gospel of Matthew, perhaps aware that all of the words in the world could not explain the meaning of the resurrection, simply announces: He has been raised..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=945 **Rolf Jacobson** Professor of Old Testament and Alvin N. Rogness Chair in Scripture, Theology, and Ministry, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.



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How are you doing with The Matthew Challenge ?.