



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
April 5, 2026

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
106 Scheid Road, Sandusky, OH 44870
(419) 625-2192 www.stjohnlcsandusky.com
Sanctuary Worship 10:30 a.m. Live streamed to Facebook

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

April 5, 2026

Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Day

Welcome to Worship! 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.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe and teach that Christ is truly present in the celebration of Holy Communion as he is God with us. Christians of all denominations are encouraged to come to the Lord's table. We commune children of any age who have received communion instruction at St. John or another Christian church. Children who have not yet received communion instruction will receive a blessing. Both red wine and white grape juice are offered to accommodate various traditions. Gluten free wafers are provided for those with dietary restrictions. Please make the pastor aware of your need.

If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Please stand if you are able

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

Amen.

Let us come into the light, the revealing and healing light of God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of grace and glory,

you have brought us through the night of sin into the light of Jesus' resurrection. Yet our lives are still shadowed by sin. Make us alive in Christ, O God. Make us new as you make all things new. Rescue us from evil and the gloom of sin, renew us in grace, and restore us to living in your holiness, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.

Rejoice with all creation around God's throne! The light of the risen Christ puts to flight all evil deeds, washes away sin, restores innocence to the fallen, casts out hate, brings peace, and humbles earthly pride. Jesus Christ loves you and † frees you from your sins by his blood. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever!
Amen.

Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Gathering Hymn

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today"

ELW 365

Text: Latin carol, 14th cent., sts. 1–3; tr. J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708, alt.;
Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, st. 4 Music: J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 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! | 2 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! |
| 3 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! | 4 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! |

Litany of Easter Praise

Hold your head high, Christ has risen! Death has been conquered. Christ has restored us to new life. All that is broken has been made whole.

“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

Hold your head high for Christ has risen! From a triumphant Palm Sunday to a dark Friday, passing through sorrow, through death, to life and joy, we arrive at Easter. We know that joy and sorrow, life and death are bound together.

By the power of God, the cross could not defeat Christ. The tomb could not hold him.

Hold your head high for Christ has risen! Carry forward God's healing. Carry it to a world, where truth and justice triumph over evil and oppression. You have been called out of despair and into hope, out of death and into new life!

Rejoice! Life bursts through death. Jesus Christ is alive for evermore! Alleluia!

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Please be seated if you are able

First Reading: Acts 10:34-43

A reading from Acts

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."

³⁴Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ — he is Lord of all. ³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how 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. ³⁹We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not 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. ⁴²He 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. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (Read responsively)

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

²**Let Israel now declare,
"God's mercy endures forever."**

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my song,
and has become my salvation.

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

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD is exalted!
The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷**I shall not die, but live,
and declare the works of the LORD.**

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

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

²⁰"This is the gate of the LORD;
here the righteous may enter."

²¹**I give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and you have become my salvation.**

²²The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

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

²⁴This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4

A reading from Colossians.

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.

¹ If 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 the things that are above, not on the 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 life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

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

Gospel Hymn

“Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia” (Verses 1 & 2)

ELW 364

Text: Latin carol, 14th cent., sts. 1–3; tr. J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708, alt.;
Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, st. 4 Music: J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708

1 Christ has arisen, alleluia.
Rejoice and praise him, alleluia.
For our redeemer burst from the tomb,
even from death, dispelling its gloom.

Refrain

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.
Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.

2 For three long days the grave did its worst
until its strength by God was dispersed.
He who gives life did death undergo,
and in its conquest his might did show. *Refrain*

Our sin forgiving, alleluia!
Jesus is living, alleluia!

Gospel: John 20:1-18

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

¹Early 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. ²So 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.” ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and 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. ¹³They 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.” ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus 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.” ¹⁶Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew,

“Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus 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.’” ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

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

Gospel Hymn

“*Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia*” (Verse 5)

ELW 364

5 Christ has arisen to set us free.
Alleluia, to him praises be.
Jesus is living! Let us all sing;
he reigns triumphant, heavenly king. *Refrain*

Please be seated

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.
Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.
Our sin forgiving, alleluia!
Jesus is living, alleluia!

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

“*Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen*”

ELW 377

Text © 1995 Augsburg Fortress

Music © 1969 *Contemporary Worship 1*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 Alleluia! Jesus is risen!
Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb, heaven forever!
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight!

2 Walking the way, Christ in the center
telling the story to open our eyes;
breaking our bread, giving us glory:
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise.
Refrain

Refrain

Jesus is risen and we shall arise.
Give God the glory! Alleluia!

4 Weeping, be gone; sorrow, be silent:
death put asunder, and Easter is bright.
Cherubim sing: O grave, be open!
Clothe us in wonder, adorn us in light. *Refrain*

3 Jesus the vine, we are the branches;
life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;
heaven to earth, Christ to the people,
gift of the future now flowing to me.
Refrain

5 City of God, Easter forever,
golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
river of life, saints and archangels,
sing with creation to God the I AM! *Refrain*

Prayers of the people:

Response: Merciful God, receive our prayer.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

Choir Offering

“Easter Joy”

Linda Spevacek-Avery

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Please stand if you are able

Offertory Hymn

“Give Thanks”



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



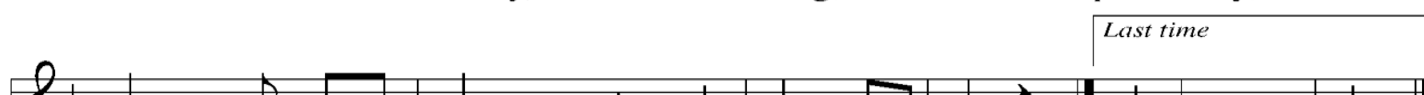
And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am



rich,” be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. And



now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am



rich,” be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

Last time

Text: Henry Smith

Music: GIVE THANKS. Henry Smith

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Offering Prayer

Risen One,
you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we bring.
Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with this meal,
that we may live as your risen body in the world.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy, living, and loving God,

we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood,

for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,

and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry,
and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection,
we await your promised life for all this dying world.
Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup:
carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones,

clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

Invitation to Communion

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread.

Come and eat at God's table.

Please be seated

Distribution



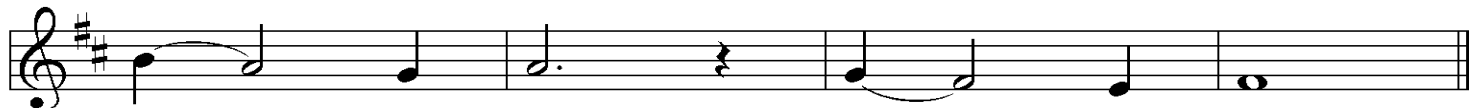
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Distribution Hymn

"The Day of Resurrection!"

ELW 361

Text: John of Damascus, c. 696–c. 754; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt. Public Domain

Music: German melody, 18th cent.; adapt. X. L. Hartig, *Melodien zum Mainzer Gesangbuche*, 1833

1 The day of resurrection!
Earth, tell it out abroad,
the passover of gladness,
the passover of God.
From death to life eternal,
from sin's dominion free,
our Christ has brought us over
with hymns of victory.

3 Now let the heav'ns be joyful,
let earth its song begin,
the round world keep high triumph
and all that is therein.
Let all things, seen and unseen,
their notes of gladness blend;
for Christ the Lord has risen,
our joy that has no end!

2 Let hearts be purged of evil
that we may see aright
the Lord in rays eternal
of resurrection light,
and list'ning to his accents,
may hear, so calm and plain,
his own "All hail!" and hearing,
may raise the glad refrain.

4 All praise to God the Father,
all praise to Christ the Son,
all praise to God the Spirit,
eternal Three in One!
Let all the ransomed number
fall down before the throne,
and honor, pow'r, and glory
ascribe to God alone!

Distribution Hymn

"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia"

ELW 369

Text: attr. Wipo of Burgundy, d. c. 1050; tr. Jane E. Leeson, 1807–1882, alt.

Music: Robert Williams, 1781–1821 Public Domain

1 Christ the Lord is ris'n today; Alleluia!
Christians, hasten on your way; Alleluia!
offer praise with love replete, Alleluia!
at the paschal victim's feet. Alleluia!

3 Christ, the victim undefiled, Alleluia!
God and sinners reconciled, Alleluia!
when contending death and life, Alleluia!
met in strange and awesome strife. Alleluia!

2 For the sheep the Lamb has bled, Alleluia!
sinless in the sinner's stead. Alleluia!
Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Alleluia!
now he lives, no more to die. Alleluia

4 Christians, on this holy day, Alleluia!
all your grateful homage pay; Alleluia!
Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Alleluia!
now he lives, no more to die. Alleluia!

Distribution Hymn

"Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!"

ELW 382

Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt. Music: Frederick C. Maker, 1844–1927 Public Domain

1 Christ is risen! Alleluia!
Risen our victorious head!
Sing his praises! Alleluia!
Christ is risen from the dead!
Gratefully our hearts adore him
as his light once more appears;
bowing down in joy before him,
rising up from griefs and tears.

Refrain
Christ is risen! Alleluia!
Risen our victorious head!
Sing his praises! Alleluia!
Christ is risen from the dead!

2 Christ is risen! All the sadness
of our Lenten fast is o'er;
through the open gates of gladness
he returns to life once more;
death and hell before him bending
see him rise, the victor now,
angels on his steps attending,
glory round his wounded brow. *Refrain*

4 Christ is risen! Henceforth never
death or hell shall us enthrall.
We are Christ's, in him forever
we have triumphed over all.

Please stand

Post Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His care.

Amen

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray.

Living One,

in this feast you have made yourself known to us.

Send us now to tell of your wonders, sing of your glory,
and proclaim your risen life to a wounded and weary world.

Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The triune God, who was, who is, and who is to come, Sovereign, ✠ Savior, and Spirit,
light your way with resurrection dawn, now and always.

Amen

Sending Hymn

“Thine Is the Glory”

ELW 376

Text: Edmond Budry, 1854–1932; tr. R. Birch Hoyle, 1875–1939

Music: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759 Public Domain

1 Thine is the glory,
risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry
thou o'er death hast won!
Angels in bright raiment
rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes
where thy body lay.

Refrain

Thine is the glory,
risen, conqu'ring Son;
endless is the vict'ry
thou o'er death hast won!

2 Lo, Jesus meets thee,
risen from the tomb!
Lovingly he greets thee,
scatters fear and gloom;
let his church with gladness
hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord now liveth;
death hath lost its sting! *Refrain*

3 No more we doubt thee,
glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee;
aid us in our strife;
make us more than conqu'rors,
through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan
to thy home above. *Refrain*

Dismissal

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Postlude

“Thine Is the Glory”

Text: Edmond Budry, 1854–1932; tr. R. Birch Hoyle, 1875–1939

Music: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759

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St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church is:

“A Family of Disciples, Faithfully Making Christ Known”

And a congregation of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

PEOPLE OF ST. JOHN'S, MINISTERS

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

Church: 419-625-2192

Pastor Stacy's Day Off – Friday

Cell: 419-680-0358

Mrs. Sandy Thompson, Secretary

419-625-2192

Nathan Samsa, Organist

E-mail: Sandy8110@gmail.com

Trumpeter: Brandon Alt

Usher: Ray Witt/Chuck Thompson

Lay Reader: Devon Snook

Audio/Visual Tech: Jon Baaske

Communion Assistant: Sandy Thompson

Website: www.stjohnlcsandusky.com

Attendance: Mar. 29 - 57

Like us on Facebook: St. John's Lutheran Church, Sandusky

2026 The Year of the Way of Love. Welcome to 2026: The Way of Love! This year for our annual theme, we will be grounded in 1 John 4:19, "We love because he first loved us."

Thank you to everyone who assisted with worship this Easter morning and during our Holy Week services. Your willingness to serve is a blessing to the members of St. John's. We thank Brandon Alt and Nathan Samsa for blessing us with their musical offerings as well as St. John's choir.

Council asks the congregation to pray: In this year of the Way of Love, council asks the congregation to pray that we follow Jesus' command to love one another as he loves us, even when that is challenging, and to remember that God's love is for ALL people.

Communion Clean-up today: Elizabeth Libben

April 12 – Set-up – Joleen Dillender

Cleanup – Sandy Thompson

19 – Set-up - Jim Kluding

Cleanup – Jim Kluding

26 – Set-up - Elizabeth Libben

Cleanup – Sue & Lynn Schlessman

Thank you for your willingness to help with this important ministry. If you would like to help, please see Elizabeth Libben or Sandy Thompson.

Flamingos Needed: Our high school youth are beginning to plan for the national youth gathering in 2027 in Minneapolis. We are going to fund raise this summer...and need about 50 yard flamingos. If anyone has any to donate, please let Pastor Stacy know!

New Members: We will be welcoming new members on April 26.

Greeting Cards Available: Are you in need of a greeting card? Handmade greetings are available at the back of the sanctuary. The donations from your purchases will go to

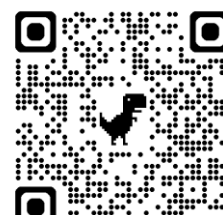
We are moving into the digital age for your convenience! The following QR codes can help you navigate to the St. John's website, St. John's Facebook page and share your offerings through tithel.ly. Just scan the QR code and it will take you to that site.



St. John's Website



St. John's Facebook



tithel.ly offering

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR APRIL 5TH THRU APRIL 19TH

Sunday, April 5	9:00 am 9:45 am 10:30 am	Easter Breakfast Easter Egg Hunt Easter Worship
Tuesday, April 7	1:00 pm	Faith Life Team
Sunday, April 12	9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Worship
Wednesday, April 15	10:30 am 4:00 pm 5:30 pm 6:15 pm	World Religions Discussion Upper Room Worship Team Choir Practice Bell Practice
Sunday, April 19	9:15 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Catechism Class Sunday School for Youth Worship

We thank the following members who furnished flowers to beautify our sanctuary this Easter morning:

Kathy Strayer in loving memory of husband Bob and sister-in-law, Barb and our parents.

Chuck and Sandy Thompson in loving memory of Charles and Pearl Thompson, Arden and Ruth Bruns.

Lynn and Sue Schlessman in loving memory of our parents.

Dennis and Sue Bottorf in loving memory of our parents.

Doreen Ross in loving memory of Mark, Mom, Dad, and Dean.

Peg Kingsley in loving memory of husband, Chuck.

Toni Nossaman in loving memory of brother, Gary.

Laurie Kropf in loving memory of my husband Mark Kropf, my mom, Mary Dircks and my sister Amy Dukes. In honor of my dad, Lyn, my children and grandchildren, my foster sister, Eleanor Stout.

Jim Kluding and Kathleen Shuck in loving memory of Paul and Norma Kluding and Charles and Florence Shuck.

Brandon Alt in loving memory of Patricia Alt, Ernie and Carol Laughlin.

Nathan, Christine, Nicholas, and Noel Samsa in loving memory of Susan Samsa and in honor of James and Barbara Condea and Paul Samsa.

Bob and Lori Stacy in loving memory of Troy and Grace Stacy and in honor of Jim and Bonnie Semon.

Paul and Laura Knott in loving memory of loved ones.

Ruggles Family in loving memory of Sharen Smith, Chuck Ruggles III and loved ones. In honor of Ray Smith and Barb Ruggles.

Jon and Trudi Baaske in loving memory of Ernest and Phyllis O'Hara and Wayne and Joyce Baaske.

Ray Smith in loving memory of Sharen Smith and Sue Graybill.

Ann Voight and family in loving memory of David Voight, Sr.

We remember the whispers of Advent as we anticipated the birth of Jesus. Now, as we journey through Holy Week, we anticipate the joyful noise of alleluias on Easter Sunday. But before we reach the Easter celebration, we make our way through Lent, through an in-between time where we don't know what tomorrow will bring. We often describe ourselves as an Easter church, but in this holy, solemn time that begins with Ash Wednesday and moves on to Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, we are also a Lenten church. Living in uncertainty, waiting and hoping for renewal. Longing for the moments when God's presence feels closer and more sure.

During Lent, we learn what it means to live on unsettled ground.

In Matthew's retelling of the resurrection, he describes a "violent earthquake" as the angel came down from heaven and rolled the stone away from the entrance to the tomb where Jesus lay.

I imagine the earthquake, the rumble deep below the earth, as the ground shifted far under the surface. Perhaps those who were nearby felt the tremble. Maybe the women who were on their way to the tomb with prepared spices felt the earth shift. They were unsettled, but they knew something powerful was happening.

We can understand that human experience of feeling out of control, of not being able to make sense of what's happening around us. Many of us can relate to this as we witness the current unrest in our world and in our communities. Like the women at the tomb, we feel isolated, disconnected. We're unsettled, unsure, living the Lenten reality of waiting and hoping.

And then, in the midst of that shaking, comes the promise.

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."

God's promise offers reassurance and hope. The resurrection does not deny disruption — it meets us within disorder and disturbance. The stone is rolled away. Death does not have the final word.

Yes, we are Easter people. Even when the ground below us is shaking, we will not grow weary. We know that Jesus is our foundation. Christ is risen, and that truth strengthens us. It gives us courage to live, to hope and to proclaim joy.

Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!



The Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



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