



“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.”

John 20:22-23, NRSV

St. John Lutheran Church
2nd Saturday of Easter
Saturday April 26, 2025 * 5:00 PM

www.stjohnwilliston.org

419-836-5514

Second Saturday of Easter

April 26, 2025

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG

Lift Up Your Heads
(Congregation echoes)

Lift up your heads, **(lift up your heads)**
oh you gates **(oh you gates)**
Swing open wide, **(Swing open wide)**
you ancient doors **(you ancient doors)**
Let the King of kings **(Let the King of kings)**
take His rightful place **(take His rightful place)**
Make room, make way **(make room, make way)**
for the King of grace **(for the King of grace)**

Lift up your hands, **(lift up your hands)**
open up your hearts **(open your hearts)**
His victory over sin **(His victory over sin)**
and death is ours **(and death is ours)**
Let the King of kings **(let the King of kings)**
take his rightful place **(take His rightful place)**
Make room, make way **(Make room make way)**
for our King of grace **(for our King of grace)**

Who is this King of glory, Lord of power?
His name is Jesus, our risen King
Who is this King so mighty, Lord of strength?
His name is Jesus, our risen King

Lift up your heads, **(lift up your heads)**
oh you gates **(oh you gates)**
Swing open wide, **(Swing open wide)**
you ancient doors **(you ancient doors)**
Let the King of kings **(Let the King of kings)**
take His rightful place **(take His rightful place)**
Make room, make way **(make room, make way)**
for the King of grace **(for the King of grace)**

King of glory, Lord of power
King of glory, Lord of power
King of glory, Lord of power
King of glory, Lord of power

WE CONFESS OUR DOUBTING HEARTS

C: Jesus, we have often acted like your disciples.

We are afraid to believe you, ashamed of our lack of conviction, and frozen by our indecision. We fail to see the evidence of your great love for us, and we constantly ask you to provide more proof.

Loving Savior, forgive our doubt.

Forgive us when we forget how you died a criminal's death to free us from the bonds of sin and evil.

Help us to live every day in the freedom and love of Easter.

Hear us, Jesus.

Time for silent reflection

WE HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S NEVER-ENDING LOVE!

Leader: People of God, on the cross our Lord Jesus Christ has defeated death and has given us new life. The glory of Easter is reflected in the way that God shows us love. You and I are called to reflect the love of the Savior to those around us. God calls us to pray without ceasing, to love each other in confidence, and to share and make good use of our gifts. People of God, hear the good news of the Gospel...God loves us, God cares deeply for each of us, and God will not leave us alone. Praise God for never-ending love!

ALL: AMEN

FIRST READING

Acts 5:27-32

When they had brought [the apostles,] they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ 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." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

SECOND READING

Revelation 1:4-8

⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen.

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

¹⁹ 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." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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."

²⁶ 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." ²⁷ 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." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ 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."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ 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.

SERMON

Pastor Shawn O'Brien

PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

Leader: Hear us, O God,

ALL: Your mercy is great.

SHARING THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always

C: And also with you.

(Please offer those around you a sign of peace as you are comfortable.. this can be a handshake, a thumbs up, a fist bump or simply a smile..)



SONG

I Believe in Jesus

I believe in Jesus, I believe He is the Son of God.
I believe He died and rose again, I believe He paid for us all.

I believe He's here now standing in our midst.
Here with the power to heal now and the grace to forgive.

I believe in You Lord, I believe You are the Son of God.
I believe You died and rose again, I believe You paid for us all.

Chorus

**I believe you're here now standing in our midst.
Here with the power to heal now and the grace to forgive.**

I believe in You Lord, I believe You are the Son of God.
I believe You died and rose again, I believe You paid for us all.

Chorus (2 times)

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Risen One,

C: 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.

HOLY COMMUNION

Leader: We are resurrection people!

All: We come to share in the table Jesus has prepared for us.

Leader: We are Easter people!

All: Just as we share his death - we share his life. We, too, will be raised from death to life.

Leader: We are Good News people!

All: The body and blood of Jesus is a very real presence among us. We come to the table to find forgiveness, healing, and acceptance.

Leader: Our Lord, on the night when he was betrayed took bread, gave thanks, broke it and give it to his disciples saying, "Take this bread and eat it. This is my body given for you. Do this to remember me." And in a similar manner he took a cup filled with fruit of the vine and after giving thanks he shared it with his disciples saying: "Drink of it, all of you, for this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Given for you for the forgiveness of sin. Do this to remember me!" Following our Lord's command and responding to our need for forgiveness, we come!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**All: 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**

THE DISTRIBUTION



Welcome!

St. John practices "open communion". All who are baptized and instructed are welcome to share the Lord's Supper with us today. Starting with the right side of the church, followed by the left when they are finished, the Pastor will distribute the bread and the communion assistant will serve the wine. We will also have pre-sealed elements available for those who would prefer the more hygienic option (or those who wish to receive grape juice instead of wine). Indicate to the Pastor that you would like pre-sealed elements and skip the wine server. Those who wish to receive a blessing should indicate their wishes to the Pastor by crossing their arms over their chest.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: 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.

ALL: Amen

BLESSING

Leader: May God bless us and keep us.

May God's face shine upon us and be gracious.

May God look upon us with favor and give us peace.

ALL: Amen.

SENDING SONG

Christ is risen, sing alleluia.
Christ is risen, sing alleluia.
Open wide the door is standing.
From the grave new life is springing.
He was dead, now he's living.
Alleluia, Alleluia!

Christ is Risen

DISMISSAL

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

ALL: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Leader: Go in peace. Tell what God has done.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE