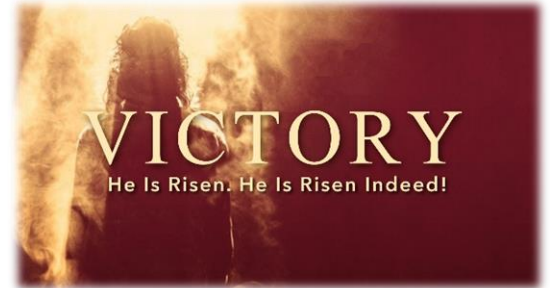


Victory!

Easter Sunday Festival Worship Online

Greetings in the name of our Savior Jesus: He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia. We often picture Jesus as a gentle shepherd, a compassionate friend. He welcomes little children. These things are all true about Jesus. But don't ever imagine Jesus to be too weak or soft to battle this world's fiercest foes – sin, death and the devil. When Jesus came into this world, that is exactly what he did.

The theme as you worship: Our theme for worship is Victory! Our Savior Jesus went into battle against our greatest enemies of sin, death and hell and he was victorious! Through faith in Jesus Christ, Jesus' victory is our victory! I pray that God's message of victory over the grave fills you with a confidence that forgiveness of sins and eternal life are yours – not just today, but every day! God bless your worship.



Announcements: Parents with Sunday School aged children. It is our privilege as parents to tell the good news of Easter to the young ones God gives us. We hope you will check out the resources that were sent over email to read more of and discuss the Easter story with your young ones.

Tonight at 7 PM EST is a special WELS Easter Worship Event, *Together at the Tomb!* Join brothers and sisters in faith around the world for this online worship event.

INVOCATION & INVITATION TO WORSHIP

M: He is risen!

C: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

PRAYER

SONG

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

♪ 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!

♪ 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!

♪ 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!

♪ **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!

EASTER SUNDAY DIALOGUE

Psalm 118

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

C: Amen.

M: The Lord is my strength and my song.

C: He has become my salvation.

M: I will not die, but live,

C: And will proclaim what the Lord has done.

M: This is the day the Lord has made;

C: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

M: Dear friends, to better appreciate the joy we have in the Lord, we confess our sin.

**C: Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.
For faithless worrying and selfish pride,
For sins of habit and sins of choice,
For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,
You should cast me away from your presence forever,
O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. At Jesus' empty tomb our grief turns to joy. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. By his death on the cross and his resurrection from grave, Christ gives this authority: If you forgive anyone their sins, they are forgiven. Therefore, by our living Lord's authority I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER

Almighty God, by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you conquered death and opened the gate to eternal life. Grant that we, who have been raised with him through baptism, may walk in the newness of life and ever rejoice in the hope of sharing his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be dominion and praise now and forever.

THE FIRST LESSON

Jonah 2:2-9

²[Jonah spoke from the belly of the great fish] said:

“In my distress I called to the LORD,
and he answered me.
From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,
and you listened to my cry.

³You hurled me into the depths,
into the very heart of the seas,
and the currents swirled about me;
all your waves and breakers
swept over me.

⁴I said, ‘I have been banished
from your sight;
yet I will look again
toward your holy temple.’

⁵The engulfing waters threatened me,
the deep surrounded me;
seaweed was wrapped around my head.

⁶To the roots of the mountains I sank down;
the earth beneath barred me in forever.
But you, LORD my God,
brought my life up from the pit.

⁷“When my life was ebbing away,
I remembered you, LORD,
and my prayer rose to you,
to your holy temple.

⁸“Those who cling to worthless idols
turn away from God’s love for them.

⁹But I, with shouts of grateful praise,
will sacrifice to you.
What I have vowed I will make good.
I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’”

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 28:1-10

¹ After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. ² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵ The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

SONG

I Know that My Redeemer Lives

♪ I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living Head!

2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
He lives eternally to save.
He lives all-glorious in the sky;
He lives exalted there on high.

3 He lives to bless me with his love;
He lives to plead for me above.
He lives, my hungry soul to feed;
He lives to help in time of need.

5 He lives to silence all my fears;
He lives to wipe away my tears.
He lives to calm my troubled heart;
He lives all blessings to impart.

THE MESSAGE

Revelation 19:11-16

Theme: Victory!

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:11-16)

This is certainly a day of victory and celebration. Jesus went forth to war with our greatest and enemies, sin and death, and he won. He is our champion. But first let's consider another picture, a picture by Palazzo Abatellis in Italy from 1448. The painting was done during the outbreak of the plague known as Black Death. It shows death riding on a gross looking horse and he plays no favorites. The painting shows that all levels of society are effected, from the nobleman to the poor. On the bottom left corner you have poor people praying for the suffering to stop, but being ignored. On the right there are nobles who seem to have no interest in what is going on, going about their lives. Just like today there are a variety of reactions to plague and death. Black Death was a plague



that would pop up throughout the middle ages. The title of this painting is “The Triumph of Death.”

But no matter whether you live through a time of plague and sickness or in a time of health and prosperity, there is a sobering reality for all of us. There is a finish line here. There is an end to this life. Death rode into this world and it would seem that death has triumphed.

But now lets go back to the picture from Revelation. Picture this: There is a rider on a white horse. The rider on the white horse is called King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We might be a little fearful of this rider, **“With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire...”** (he see all things) In verse 15 it says **“he has a sword coming out of his mouth.”** This is Jesus, your powerful Savior who is a warrior able to defeat our enemies of Satan and death. It is a day of triumph and victory. We must celebrate!

Some might wonder, “How can Jesus be victorious when he died on Good Friday afternoon? “Maybe he didn’t really die,” some might say. No, Jesus heart stopped, his corpse was placed in a tomb. Jesus was indeed dead, the soldiers had checked to make sure of it, by piercing Jesus’ side on the cross. He body was placed in the grave and sealed with the governors seal. Then look again, **“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war.”** When John sees this revelation of Jesus in heaven, it is not a statue made out of marble or bronze with a war horse rearing back and Jesus depicted with sword in hand as might warrior. Jesus is alive and well, he is powerful and he is leading the armies of heaven are following him.

He is no longer captive and bound being led by human rulers. He is no longer battered and bruised, his head is not bowed in humiliation. His body is not in the grave. As St. Paul said, **“Christ has indeed been raised from the dead!” (I Corinthians 15:20).** The blood of Jesus that he sacrificed was powerful, perfect blood to cleanse us of all our sin. His payment for sin was accomplished when he cried out, “It is finished.”

But there was one more foe to be defeated: Death. **“The last enemy to be destroyed is death” (I Corinthians 15:26).** Jesus empty tomb makes it clear that he is more powerful than death. He claims victory over sin and the last enemy – death!

The God-man Jesus Christ let death grab a hold of him. He willingly went to die. Because he was true God, when death took a hold of him and he died, his the sacrifice of his perfect, holy, innocent blood is payment for the guilt and shame of the whole world, including yours and mine. But Jesus did something no one has ever done. He killed death! He arose, of his own power and might. He showed he was more powerful than the grave itself. Jesus is alive! He is now in heaven as our victorious warrior and Savior.

There is no doubt. The Bible lists over a dozen different appearances of the risen Jesus. On one occasion we are told 500 people were present. Most of the Scriptures that tell us about Jesus rising from the dead were written when many were still alive who witnessed Jesus’ resurrection. If it weren’t true, there would have been some to write it. Christianity would have become just another fairy tale or myth like many of the stories believed by the Romans and Greeks. But there were too many who could attest to it from firsthand experience or heard it directly from someone with firsthand experience. Jesus actually rose from the dead, of his own will and power!

That is important news, headline news for us, for every one of us who knows death is coming. We try to push it out of the way. How many trillions and trillions of dollars are being spent right now in our world to avoid death from this virus. It is good we want to preserve life, but in the end we can’t stop death’s march. There is only one cure to death!

The empty tomb of Jesus proves that what he said about death is true, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die” (John 11:25). That is you and me. We will rise from death, we will enjoy life forever, because of the one who conquered death said so. We will close our eyes in death only to be brought through the gate of life immortal. While at the moment of death our souls go to live in heaven, our bodies will one day rise from the grave as well.

Paul puts it this way, **“In a flash, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality” (I Corinthians 15:52,53).**

Should we ever get the idea that Jesus can't do what he has promised to do, bringing us to life immortal, raising our bodies to be made immortal...that is exactly why the Holy Spirit gives us words like Revelation 19, "**The armies of heaven were following him, Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter."** He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.** (Revelation 19:12-16).

Your Warrior-Savior Jesus is not too weak or soft to take on the tough enemies. Think about this. This is one of the last pictures we have of Jesus in in the Bible. This is an image that God wants you to carry with you – Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Victorious!

One of the images that might strike you is that Jesus' robe is "dipped in blood" in verse 13. When you heard that, maybe you thought it was his blood. But the reference to "treading the winepress" of God's fury helps us to understand that this is a graphic image of Jesus' coming back from battle against his enemies. In Old Testament times you got the juice out of grapes by putting the grapes on stone pavement and you stomped on the grapes. In Isaiah the picture is made more clear for us. The one robed in splendor says, "**I trampled them (the enemies) in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing" (Is 63:3).**

Jesus shed his innocent blood to pay for the sins of the whole world. He rose again to demonstrate his power over death. He went to battle with sin and death and he won the victory. And this victory is for all people, the world. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son..." (John 3:16). What about those who refuse his gift of forgiveness, who toss it away or are too busy for it? Jesus uses pretty strong language, "They will be thrown into darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt 22:13).

Sure and certain judgement will come to Satan and all the rebellious host of hell. They have worked and are still working against the Lord of Lord and King of Kings. But they have lost. The victory over these enemies is secured and gift of forgiveness of for all people. And all who mock and refuse these gifts of God will be judged by Jesus on Judgement Day.

In this imagery from revelation we have Easter and Judgement Day connected, holding hands. They are events where Jesus is alive for all to see and it is clear he is ruler and king of all...

We know there are there are those who sadly refuse to honor Jesus. They will face his judgement. We are also here, and we too have rebelled against God. But by God's grace through faith created by the Holy Spirit, you believe in Jesus. You are children of God and heirs of heaven. We will rise from death and join the hosts of heaven in praise of our gracious and glorious Lord. In heaven, a thunderous sound of praises will go up from the angel armies with human voices praising the rider on the white horse. He has used his great power for us! He has cleansed us with his blood and clothed us in one of the white robes. To our heavenly father we are dressed as those following Jesus in verse 14, dressed in fine linen, clean and spotless. See how much he loves you!

Do not be afraid. Your Jesus is mightier than viruses and death itself. Someday God is going to take us to himself, but death will not triumph. Instead, our fears will be erased, the ugliness of sin and disease will be gone. The guilt and shame will be no more. The hopelessness, the uncertainty we experience in this life will be a thing of the past. We will enter into inexpressible joy. The saying will be true that the things we endure in this life are not even worth comparing with what we will enjoy in eternal life with Jesus. Perfect health, the scene will be perfect. At the moment of death we will pass through the gate with Jesus. When he returns on Judgement Day he will raise our bodies from the grave. There will be no more disease or viruses. There will be perfect love and joy forevermore.

Here is the picture God leaves us with under the reign of Jesus our mighty warrior, "They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:3,4).

Easter is pure joy and gladness! It is final victory! Alleluia. Amen!

SONG

When Peace Like a River

♪ When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll—
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain

It is well (It is well) with my soul (with my soul).
It is well, it is well with my soul.

♪ My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought—
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more:
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! *Refrain*

♪ And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend;
Even so, it is well with my soul. *Refrain*

APOSTLES CREED¹

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.

OFFERING

“On the first day of the week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money” —II Corinthians 16:2. Out of thanks to God, we set aside a regular offering to the Lord.

Peace Lutheran offers a secure Give by Text option. To donate via text, send the dollar amount you wish to give, including a dollar sign, to 888-314-2975. Example: \$40. You will receive a secure registration link.

THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Almighty and merciful God, on this glorious day we rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Increase our faith that the grace of the empty tomb may fill our lives and make us glad each day. When we are weak be our strength, when we are sad be our song, and when we sin be our salvation.

¹ Public confession of what we believe is faith's response to God's saving Word. Today we confess the Apostles' Creed.

Remove the disgrace of death from all who mourn. In moments of grief call believers through the voice of our Good Shepherd, and embolden us to follow his promises. In their hopelessness of despair turn the faithless to trust in the only Way, Truth, and Life. Wipe away tears born of death, and give new birth to a living hope in the hearts of the lost and troubled.

King of kings and Lord of lords, empower the Church to fight the good fight to the end. Never leave us or forsake us. Walk among our churches, even as many of your people worship you in their homes this Easter Sunday. As you sent your disciples with the power of the Spirit, empower us to speak your truth and love to our circles of friends, relatives, and neighbors. Bless our efforts to help others understand and believe the victory of Easter.

O Lord of life, you have done mighty things for us! We pray through him who is the Beginning and the End, Jesus Christ, our Lord. His name is above every name, to the glory of God the Father! Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: 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.

C: Amen.

CLOSING SONG

I Know that My Redeemer Lives

♪ He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
He lives and loves me to the end.
He lives, and while he lives I'll sing;
He lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.

7 He lives and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death.
He lives my mansion to prepare;
He lives to bring me safely there.

8 He lives, all glory to his name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:
"I know that my Redeemer lives!"

****Together at the empty Tomb – A WELS worship event, Easter Sunday evening.** Check out Facebook**

More opportunities to grow and strengthen your faith:

Schedule for the coming week:

- Wednesday, April 15, Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study, 1:30 PM
- Wednesday, April 15, Wednesday Evening Bible Study, 7 PM (Same as Wednesday Afternoon)
- Sunday, April 19, Worship Online, Victory over Skepticism
- Sunday, April 19, Youth Confirmation Class Resumes, 5:30 PM