



## Order of Worship

We worship in The Name of The Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Hymn C.W. 159 / TLH 203 Read or sing as desired

### Confession of Sins & Absolution:

Let us bow before the Lord and confess our sins.

**O Almighty God, merciful Father, I a poor miserable sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them, and sincerely repent of them, and Lord, I beg of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.**

Praise be to the Lord that our sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

May He comfort our heart by His Holy Absolution, and strengthen us by His Gospel in Word and Sacrament, that our joy may be full.

AMEN.

### Scripture Readings:

**First Lesson** – Jonah 2:1-10 (For added insight see: Matt. 12:38-42; Lk. 11:29-32)

**PSALM OF THE DAY:** Psalm 118 (NIV) (Read Responsively)

**Group 1:** Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever.

**Group 2:** Let Israel say: “His love endures forever.” Let the house of Aaron say: “His love endures forever.” Let those who fear the LORD say: “His love endures forever.”

**Group 1:** In my anguish I cried to the LORD, and He answered by setting me free. The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The LORD is with me; He is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies.

**Group 2:** It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

**Group 1:** All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the LORD I cut them off. They surrounded me on every side, but in the name of the LORD I cut them off. They swarmed around me like bees, but they died out as quickly as burning thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them off.

**Group 2:** I was pushed back and about to fall, but the LORD helped me. The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: “The LORD’s right hand has done mighty things!

The LORD’s right hand is lifted high; the LORD’s right hand has done mighty things!”

**ALL:** I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done. The LORD has chastened me severely, but he has not given me over to death.

**Group 1:** Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD through which the righteous may enter. I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation.

**Group 2:** **The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

**ALL:** O LORD, save us; O LORD, grant us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you.

**Group 1:** The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine upon us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.

**Group 2:** **You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God, and I will exalt you.**

**ALL:** Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever.

**Second Lesson** – Colossians 3:1-14

**Gospel Lesson** – Matthew 28:1-10

### **Apostle's Creed**

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 shall 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

**Hymn: C.W. 157 / TLH 199** Read or sing as desired

**Sermon Text:** Matthew 28:1-10

**Sermon Theme:** Death Is Defeated.

SERMON TEXT: Matthew 28:1-10

Vs. 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.

Vs. 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.

Vs. 3 – His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

Vs. 4 – The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

Vs. 5 – The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, Who was crucified.

Vs. 6 – **He is not here; He has risen, just as He said.** Come and see the place where He lay.

Vs. 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.

Vs. 8 – So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid, yet filled with joy, and ran to tell His disciples.

Vs. 9 – Suddenly Jesus met them. Greetings, He said. They came to Him, clasped His feet and worshiped Him.

Vs. 10 – Then Jesus said to them, **Do not be afraid**. Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see Me.

GREETING: Christ is Risen!      He is Risen Indeed!      Halleluiah!

2020 will down in history as the year that Easter was canceled!

Praise God, that despite the Empty Church buildings – CHRIST is Still Risen!

Pilate's order to make the Tomb secure could not stop Jesus from Rising from the Dead! (Matt. 27:65)

The soldiers standing guard in front of the tomb could not keep Jesus in the grave.

Jesus Himself tells us: “**Where two or three come together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.**” (Matt. 18:20)

So even when only a few are gathered together in joint worship in their home or apartment, Jesus is still there. It is still Celebrating Easter.

It has been said that there is a war going on.

A war against an enemy that can go from person to person without being seen.

Efforts are being made to PRESERVE LIFE in any way possible.

People are told to stay at home, all in an attempt to slow and prevent the spread of the virus.

Doctors, nurses, hospital staff, emergency workers and all their support groups are trying to help as many people infected with the disease as possible.

Scientists are working frantically on finding a cure and finding an accurate and quick test to diagnose the disease.

The President of the United States and the COVID-19 task force are making regular reports.

State Governments are issuing directives.

Great expense, effort and sacrifice is being made to PRESERVE and to SAVE Lives!

Why is such a great effort being made?

Because people want to LIVE! Because of the fear of Death.

Death brings fear to many, even to believers, because the sinful nature lives with us even after conversion. (Rom. 7:15-25)

As the writer to the Hebrews reminds us:      “Since **the children** have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who hold the power of death, that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their **fear** of death.” (Hebrews 2:14-15)

When God created all things with His Almighty and powerful Word, God did not create mankind to die!

Death is something repulsive and downright dreadful.

God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden to live forever.

Death was not what God wanted.

In **Genesis 2:15-17** we learn: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, **for when you eat of it you will surely die.**’”

Before the eating of the forbidden fruit, there was NO DEATH!

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit.

God then drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and placed a cherubim and a flaming sword to guard the way of the Tree of Life, God placed the cherubim and a flaming sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life, so that Adam and Eve would not be able to eat from that Tree, and live forever in their **sin filled** state. (Gen. 3:21-24)

Even though the best possible efforts are being made to save people's lives from COVID-19, there are unfortunately many who die. We see the numbers increasing daily from this disease alone, not to mention other causes of death.

Thankfully, as believers, we know that when we die, regardless of what the cause may be, we have heaven because of Christ our Living Savior.

That is why we celebrate The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead.

Jesus smashed, crushed, and totally destroyed the power of death.  
Jesus is the CURE for death and the fear of eternal punishment in hell.

When Jesus **died** upon the cross, His death was announced by a shaking of the earth.

“And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave us His spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. **The earth shook and the rocks split.**” (Matthew 27:50-51)

When Christ Jesus died upon the cross He made payment for the sin of all people, for all time, as the Lord makes clear through the Apostle John: “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, The Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice **for our sins**, and not only for ours **but also for the sins of the whole world.**” (I Jn. 2:1-2)

By His resurrection from the dead, Jesus has destroyed death as the Lord tells us through the Apostle Paul in his second letter to Timothy: “But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, **Who has destroyed death** and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” (II Timothy 1:10)

Just as the earth shook at the death of our Lord Jesus, **so also** at the resurrection of The Lord Jesus was His resurrection announced by an earthquake.

**Vs. 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.**

Something earth shattering, and totally amazing had taken place.

Something that will never need to happen again.

God died in Christ Jesus your Lord. (Not God the Father, Not God the Holy Spirit, but God the Son)  
And God Rose again victorious over Death.

Total payment for sin was made by His Holy, Precious Blood. (I Peter 1:18-19)

The payment that Jesus made for sin was fully acceptable before God the Father.

It is just as the angel announced to the women at the tomb of Jesus.

Vs. 6 – **“He is not here; He has risen, just as He said.** Come and see the place where He lay.”

We are all involved in this battle against COVID-19, just by doing our part to slow and stop the spread of this Virus in order to give others more time to find a cure.

Jesus was and is the Only One needed and capable of defeating death and making full payment for sin. (Sin = every time we miss the mark of keeping God's Word Perfectly, as well as our sinful nature)

We thank the Lord that All, yes Every Sin is forgiven. Jesus did not pick and choose which sins He paid for. On the Cross Jesus said. "It Is Finished" The payment was made for Every sin for all people for all time. (Heb. 10:10)

As we go through this COVID-19 issue together, we pray that many more, yes even that all people in the world would be brought to faith in Christ Jesus their Risen Savior and ours, so that they too may live with us forever in heaven where there is no more sin, or death or sorrow or COVID-19. (Rev. 21:1-7) And we know that we will have our new glorified bodies as our lowly bodies are transformed to be like His glorious body. (Philippians 3:20-21) AMEN

### **Responsive Prayer for Easter**

O Lord God, during this time, many people are suffering and struggling due to the outbreak of COVID-19. Thank You for being our ever present strength, our song, and our salvation, You fulfilled Your promises by the resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, from the dead.

**Thanks be to God! You have given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Give us patience to endure.**

In Your compassion You sent Christ, the Good Shepherd, Who laid down His life to rescue the lost.

**Send us an added measure of Your Holy Spirit to comfort us in all doubt and gloom that may be in our hearts and minds at this time, that we may delight in Your glorious triumph over death and the devil.**

Lift our eyes heavenward to see Him Who lives to make intercession for the believers, and grant us confidence in the greatness of His power. Keep before us the vision of Your redeemed people standing before Your throne and singing the song of victory:

**Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive wisdom and power and honor and glory and praise.**

Use us as instruments of Your peace to proclaim the good news of hope and new life to others who are filled with fear and sorrow and loss. Guide us in the use of all that You have entrusted to us: our time, our talents, and our treasures.

**Risen Lord, live in us that we may live for You.**

Merciful Lord Jesus, grant healing to the sick, strengthen the faith of the believers who are suffering and dying. Assure them of Your abiding presence, and comfort them with the hope of eternal life. Use this hardship of COVID-19 to bring many more to faith in Jesus as their One and Only Savior from sin, death and the devil. Keep us all safe according to Your Almighty will.

Use this space to write in any additional people or things that you wish to pray for -

Hear us, Lord, as we bring You our private petitions.

*Time for Silent prayer.*

Gracious Father, You have revealed to us in Your Inspired, Infallible and Inerrant Word the Holy Bible, the certainty of salvation in Christ Jesus our Risen and Victorious Savior. Help us to rejoice always, even in the midst of trial and tribulation as we come before You and say:

**Alleluia! Thanks be to God! AMEN!**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Hymn C.W. 152 / TLH 200

### **Prayer:**

O God, from Whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, give unto Your servants that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your Commandments, and also that we, being defended by You from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest, quietness and calmness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, Who liveth and reigneth with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. AMEN

Hymn C.W. 154 / TLH 188 by the Congregation

### **Benediction:**

The Lord Bless us and keep us,  
The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us.  
The Lord look upon us with favor and give us peace

**So Shall It Be! He Is Risen! Hallelujah!**

Silent Prayer

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### **Our Heavenly Father's Business at St. John's**

**Easter Sunday – April 12** – 8:00 a.m. Worship Service – Canceled Due to COVID-19 Precautions – Extended BAN until April 30.

Easter Breakfast – Canceled Due to COVID-19 Precautions.

**Easter Sunday – April 12** – 10:30 a.m. Worship Service – Canceled Due to COVID-19 Precautions – Extended BAN until April 30.

**Monday, April 13** – 6:45 p.m. Deacon Meeting; 7:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting. The Council Meeting will be via E-mail. An Agenda will be sent out with responses.

**Sunday – April 19** – 9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 9:15 a.m. Young People's Society Meeting; 9:30 a.m. Family Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Worship Service – Canceled Due to COVID-19 Precautions – Extended BAN until April 30.

**Sunday, April 26** – VOTER'S Meeting – Canceled Due to COVID-19 Precautions – Extended BAN until April 30. The Voter's Meeting has been postponed until Sunday May 24, 2020 after the worship Service. If possible.

**Wednesday, April 29** – 12:30 p.m. Ladies Aid Meeting - Canceled Due to COVID-19 Precautions – Extended BAN until April 30.