

April 9, 2023

Easter Sunday 10:15 AM

Communion

Theme: Seeking: Who are you looking for?

THEME PARAGRAPH for bulletin front cover:

*When Mary finds the tomb empty, she stands weeping at the vacant grave. Jesus, mysteriously appearing as the gardener, asks her: "Why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?" In the haze of grief, Mary can only see what is right before her—or in this case, what is not before her. It is only when Jesus calls her by name that the veil is lifted and she beholds the resurrected Christ. On this Easter morning, who—or what—are you looking for? Why have you come to the tomb? What kind of Jesus are you looking for? Recall all the questions that have guided us this Lenten season. Who do we see in the living Christ? What veils need to be lifted so we can recognize God's resurrection in all the places it occurs? As we journey into Eastertide, will we continue to seek the miracle of God's newness? In what ways will you continue to look for Jesus in the world?*

+ GATHERING +

PRELUDE    Up from the Grave He Arose – Robert Lowry/Fred Bock  
David Lewis, trumpet

WELCOME and GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP

What are you looking for?

**The light before dawn.**

What are you looking for?

**A reason to hope.**

What are you looking for?

**Joy after grief and flowers after winter.**

What are you looking for?

**A place to belong.**

What are you looking for?

**We are looking for the Messiah.**

Good news! Come in. Love is alive!

**Surely God is in this place.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GATHERING HYMN ELW 365 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

GREETING

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Friends, sometimes our relationship with God can feel a little bit like that. We seek after God. We swear that we're looking, and yet so often we miss when the Divine is right under our noses. So let us pray together, knowing that our seeking has its limits, but God's love does not. Let us pray:

God of resurrection,

**we confess, like a dog with a bone, we run aimlessly. We chase our tails, looking for things that provide answers to the suffering of the world, looking for comfort to our longest nights. You meet us in the darkness before dawn, but we mistake you for the gardener. Forgive us for seeking after worldly things. Forgive us for forgetting to seek you. Speak to us. Call us by name, that we might recognize you in our midst. With hope and gratitude we pray, Amen.**

Family of faith,

No matter how many times we lose sight of God, God never loses sight of us.

We might spend our whole days seeking, but we are always found.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel, the good news proclaimed in resurrection:

**What once was lost is found. We are held in God's loving embrace: forgiven, claimed, and sent to serve. Alleluia! Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Rabbouni... We are seeking after you. **Amen**

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Acts 10:34-43

*At the conclusion of the reading:*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION                      Celtic Alleluia

*Cantor introduces Alleluia, congregation sings Alleluia. Cantor sings verse. Congregation responds with Alleluia.*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Verse: Now he is living, the Christ  
 Out of the tomb he is risen;  
 he has conquered death,  
 opened heaven to all believers.

GOSPEL READING: John 20:1-18

*At the beginning of the reading:*  
 The holy Gospel according to John.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the conclusion of the reading:*  
 This is the gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Lord.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 384 That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in resurrection—

**mysterious, beyond our understanding, and yet,  
 like tulips after the snow: real.**

We believe in Easter morning—

**in the promise of a God who would roll back every stone to return to us.**

We believe in Jesus—

**who calls us by name and asks,  
 “Who are you looking for?”**

So we look—

**for justice, for mercy, for God in our midst.**

And as we look, we sing, “Alleluia!”

**Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Risen Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**Amen.**

#### THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all.  
And also with you.

#### OFFERING

#### MUSICAL OFFERING

On the Third Day – Allen Pote

St. John's choir

#### OFFERTORY ELW 482 I Come with Joy

I come with joy, a child of God,  
forgiven, loved, and free,  
the life of Jesus to recall  
in love laid down for me,  
in love laid down for me.

The Spirit of the risen Christ,  
unseen, but ever near,  
is in such friendship better known,  
alive among us here,  
alive among us here.

#### OFFERING PRAYER

Generous God, in this meal you offer your very self. We give thanks for these gifts of the earth. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

+ MEAL +

#### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Come, whether you are dancing for joy, or like Mary, still feeling a little lost.

**We come with our questions – we come with our hunger.**

Come, whether this is your first time or your hundredth.

**We come because this feast is a reminder that God's Table is big enough for all of us.**

Jesus Christ is risen today and he rose for you.

So, come. All are welcome as we remember that

In the night in which he was betrayed...

#### LORD'S PRAYER

#### SHARING OF COMMUNION

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION ELW 462 Now We Join in Celebration

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen us and keep us in God's grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together. Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

As you leave this place,  
may God bless you with seeking.

**Seek out the hungry.**

**Seek the weary.**

**Seek the good in every person you pass.**

**Seek out the hopeful.**

**Seek the faithful.**

**Seek God in each of us.**

In the light of this Easter morning, may your seeking not end as we depart from the empty tomb. May the risen Christ compel you to keep seeking and to keep asking questions in the name of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

SENDING HYMN ELW 376 Thine Is the Glory

DISMISSAL

In the name of our loving God,  
who is always seeking us,  
go now in peace and serve the risen Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE Finale from *Symphony No. 4 in f minor* - Charles-Marie Widor

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## Mark Your Calendar

Monday, Apr 10	Office Closed
Tuesday, Apr 11	7pm Outreach Committee
Easter Sunday, April 16	9am Faith Formation 10:15 Sunday Worship

**Jesus 'n' Jammies new date is Sunday, April 23rd from 5-7pm** (ages pre K and up) Join us for crafts, game, movie, snacks and tons of fun!

### **Congregation-Wide Lenten Service Project**

Supporting the work of Lutheran World Relief has become a Lenten emphasis at St. John's. For the last few years, we have put together Personal Care Kits, trusting that God is at work in this humble donations of supplies that are shared with people enduring tragedies. **Please drop off any Personal Care Kits you still have to church by Sunday, April 16th**

**Blessed to be a Blessing for April: Laurel House.** It is a comprehensive domestic violence agency serving individuals, families, and communities throughout Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. In addition to emergency shelter, Laurel House offers: a 24-hour hotline, a textline, transitional housing, a children's program, individual and group counseling, medical advocacy, legal representation and advocacy, crisis response, law enforcement collaboration, as well as community education and prevention efforts. Topping their most needed items right now are **\$25 gift cards to Target, Walmart, WaWa and Uber/Lyft.** These donations will allow the families in shelter, transitional housing, and community counseling programs to feel empowered shopping with gift cards to provide for their own family.

**Book Club resumes in April!** Monday, April 24 at 7 PM

We're returning to the classics for the next few books - April's pick is *To Kill A Mockingbird*. All are welcome!

**We are collecting items for an upcoming Earth Day project. We need:** old newspapers, magazines and recycled, clean 16 oz plastic cups (e.g. WaWa, Starbucks Grande, Solo cups...) for Earth Day projects. Drop off in Fellowship Hall by 4/22.

**Lutheran Night at the Phillies, Saturday, May 20 at 4:05 p.m. against the Chicago Cubs.**

Ordering your tickets is simple: Go to [www.phillies.com/lutheran](http://www.phillies.com/lutheran). Use the password: LUTHERAN. Then select from available tickets.