

# Bethlehem Lutheran & St. Stephen's Episcopal



3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

## **Announcements**

**Welcome to all who came to Bethlehem & St. Stephen's today!**

Holy Communion may be received at the altar with individual cups of wine/juice and bread; or if you choose to remain seated, individual cups of wine/juice and wafer are available in the narthex. Those at home, we welcome you to the table with your own bread and wine/juice.

**Our service today is lead by Father Stephen Day.**

Please remember in your prayers: Brian, Gary, Barb, Kay, Rob, Lyle, Lisa & Lindsey, Pastor Kim & Terri, Eva, Josh, Joyce P, Howard & Donna.  
Please email [bethlehembillings@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehembillings@gmail.com) to be added to the list.

If you are in need of pastoral leadership or spiritual counsel, please leave a message at the church (406)248-6427 or email [bethlehembillings@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehembillings@gmail.com).

**There is a Congregational Council Meeting after service today.**

**The Christian Church Book Sale is back!**

From Monday April 20 – Saturday April 25

Over 80,000 books, videos, music, games and puzzles.

There is also a quilt raffle!

1221 16<sup>th</sup> Street West

St. John's United-Aeries invites you to "Meals & Meaning: A Free Speaker Series for Active Aging." Coming Up: **Building Strong Connections in Your Community**

Presented by: Leif Wellhaven, LW Consulting, LLC

Wed., April 29th - 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (Lunch Included)

Lillis Center, 2429 Mission Way

Call 406-655-5400 to RSVP for this free event!

**Showers for our unhoused neighbors** – We at Bethlehem and St. Stephen's, in cooperation with St Vincent DePaul and the Salvation Army, provide showers for our unhoused neighbors on Mondays and Wednesdays. If you are willing to help, call Chelsea Meisner at 360-915-2762 or Terri Wilker at 406-425-3713

# Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church

## St Stephen's Episcopal Church

40 10<sup>th</sup> Street West

Billings, MT 59102

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026

9:30 Worship

Now the Feast and Celebration

### Introduction

Today's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord's day.

*(please stand as you are able)*

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

**C: Amen.**

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.

You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us.

Blessed are you.

**C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you.

**C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows.

Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace.

Blessed are you.

**C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**



# HYMN OF PRAISE

*Congregation:*

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,  
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy  
to the God of life and love and  
free - dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -  
er - more!

## Verse 1

*Congregation or Congregation 1:*

1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once  
slain, whose blood has freed and u -  
nit - ed us to be one great peo - ple of  
God. *to Refrain*

*Congregation:*

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,  
 all of cre - a - tion sings for joy  
 to the God of life and love and  
 free - dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -  
 er - more!

*Congregation or Congregation 2:*

2. Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and  
 might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ  
 for ev - er. *to Refrain*

*Congregation:*

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,  
 all of cre - a - tion sings for joy  
 to the God of life and love and  
 free - dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -  
 er - more!

*Congregation:*

3. For God has come to dwell with us, to  
 make us peo - ple of God; to make  
 all things new. *to Refrain*

Refrain



## Psalm: Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

*I will call on the name of the LORD. (Ps. 116:13)*

<sup>1</sup> I love the LORD, who has heard my voice,  
and listened to my supplication,

<sup>2</sup> **for the LORD has given<sup>1</sup> ear to mew whenever I called.**

<sup>3</sup> The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came  
upon me; I came to grief and sorrow.

<sup>4</sup> **Then I called upon the name of the LORD:**

**“O LORD, I pray you, save my life.”**

<sup>12</sup> How shall I repay the LORD for all the good things God has done for me?

<sup>13</sup> **I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.**

<sup>14</sup> I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of<sup>1</sup>all God’s people.

<sup>15</sup> **Precious in your sight, O LORD, is the death of your servants,**

<sup>16</sup> O LORD, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child  
of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

<sup>17</sup> **I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and call upon the name of the LORD.**

<sup>18</sup> I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God’s people,

<sup>19</sup> **in the courts of the LORD’s house,  
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!**

## Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-23

*The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.*

<sup>17</sup> If you invoke as Father the one who judges impartially according to each person’s work, live in fear during the time of your exile. <sup>18</sup> You know that you were ransomed from the futile conduct inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. <sup>20</sup> He was destined before the foundation of the world but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. <sup>21</sup> Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your trust and hope are in God.

<sup>22</sup> Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual affection, love one another deeply from the heart. <sup>23</sup> You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

Word of God, Word of Life

**C. Thanks be to God.**

*(please stand as you are able)*

## **Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia.* Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the feast. *Alleluia.* (1 Cor. 5:7, 8)

*Congregation:*

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we  
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal  
life. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Optional Repeat*

P. The Gospel according to Luke, the 24th Chapter

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **Gospel: Luke 24:13-35**

*The colorful story of Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.*

<sup>13</sup> Now on that same day two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place

there in these days?”<sup>19</sup> He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,<sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.<sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,<sup>23</sup> and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.<sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.”<sup>25</sup> Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!<sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?”<sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.<sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.<sup>29</sup> But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them.<sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.<sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight.<sup>32</sup> They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”<sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.<sup>34</sup> They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!”<sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, Christ.**

**Sermon:** Father Stephen Day

**Hymn of the Day** *“Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds”*

*ELW #367*

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

*A brief silence.*

Living Savior, just as you journeyed with the disciples to Emmaus, accompany us on our journey of faith. Gather us at your table, that we recognize you in the breaking of the bread. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Almighty God, you provide for the needs of all creation. Bless the fields that are being prepared for planting, and send favorable weather so that the soil may yield an abundant harvest. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer**

God of justice, where leaders abuse power, confront them and call them to repentance. Where there is corruption, bring integrity; where there is violence, sow peace. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Healing Savior, your resurrection brings hope to a hurting world, Heal those who are sick especially: **Brian, Gary, Barb, Kay, Rob, Lyle, Lisa & Lindsey, Pastor Kim & Terri, Eva, Josh, Joyce, Howard & Donna.** Strengthen the weary, give courage to the despairing, and comfort the dying. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Gracious One, you have made us your own through the gift of baptism. Unite us in genuine love for one another and uphold this community in your name. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Eternal Light, we give thanks for all who have nurtured your church's life in ages past. Bring us at last with them to the brightness of your glorious presence. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

**C: Amen.**

## **Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

**Share a sign of peace with your neighbors.**

## Offering

The collection globes are available at the rear of the church. Donations can be sent to Bethlehem Lutheran Church at 40 10<sup>th</sup> St. West, Billings, MT 59101. Thank you for the support of our ministries.

## Offering Prayer

P: Merciful God,

C: **accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory.**

**You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love.**

**In the name of Jesus,**

**Amen.**

*(please stand as you are able)*

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff is for the Presider and the Congregation, with lyrics: 'The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.' The second staff is for the Presider and the Congregation, with lyrics: 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.' The third staff is for the Presider and the Congregation, with lyrics: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is' The fourth staff is for the Presider and the Congregation, with lyrics: 'right to give God thanks and praise.'

P. It is our duty and delight that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O God, through Jesus Christ who by his death on the cross and glorious resurrection broke the bonds of sin and death and gave life to all creation, and so with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

## HOLY

*Congregation:*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and  
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!  
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

## Words of Institution

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 to all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.

## Thanksgiving at the Table

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

## The Lord's Prayer

**C: 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

Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

*(congregation may be seated)*

## AGNUS DEI (LAMB OF GOD)



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
you break the chains of ha - tred and  
you are the way of jus - tice and  
you are the way of mer - cy and



world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,  
fear:  
peace:  
love.

### Final Stanza

*Congregation or Assistant:*



mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

*Congregation:*



take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,



grant us peace, grant us peace.

## Distribution

The Body of Christ, given for you.

The Blood of Christ, given for you.

## Communion Hymn

### COME, LET US BRING

*(May be sung in canon with assisting minister entering at 1. and congregation at 2. or congregation may divide into two parts.)*



1. Come, let us bring the warm and fra-grant bread.  
2. Come, let us bring the sweet a - bun-dant wine.  
3. Praise be to you who set all peo - ple free.



Come, let us bring the warm and fra-grant bread.  
Come, let us bring the sweet a - bun-dant wine.  
Praise be to you who set all peo - ple free.



Bro - ken here so all God's peo - ple might be fed.  
In this cup we taste the joy of grace di - vine.  
Blest are they who share the feast of ju - bi - lee.



Bro - ken here so all God's peo - ple might be fed.  
In this cup we taste the joy of grace di - vine.  
Blest are they who share the feast of ju - bi - lee.

### Prayer after Communion

P: Holy One,

**C: through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations.**

**In the name of Jesus,**

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,  
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,  
and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,

✠ bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**Sending Hymn:** *“Wade in the Water” ELW #459*

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

**C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**



## **All Are Welcome**

Christian community should be a place of absolute welcome. Christ has welcomed us, whoever we are. Because of this, we at Bethlehem Lutheran Church are glad to welcome you. None of the distinctions that seem to divide our world apply here!

We welcome you if you are:

- \* young, old or in between;
- \* white, black, native, Hispanic, or whatever your ancestry;
- \* married, single, divorced, a single parent, or whatever your family of choice;
- \* rich, poor, middle class, employed or unemployed;
- \* a lifelong Christian, just now seeking faith, or not really sure;
- \* straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, questioning, or any other identity;
- \* healthy of mind and body, living with mental illness, disabled or sick;
- \* struggling with addiction, in recovery, or if you love those who are;
- \* liberal, conservative, or ambivalent;
- \* homeless, a former convict, or in any way someone longing for acceptance.

At Bethlehem, we offer safety, love and the ministry of Word and Sacrament to everyone who seeks it. Come and be part of this welcome, as an equal, as a free and beloved child of God!

## **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

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