

# Bethlehem Lutheran & St. Stephen's Episcopal



Easter Sunday

## **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: Gary, Barb, Kay, Rob, Lyle, Lisa & Lindsey, Pastor Kim & Terri, Eva, Josh, Joyce P, Howard & Donna U, Sally, Bill & Lisa, Amanda & family, Danielle, Jamie & family, Jennifer, Karly, Katie, Laura, Lyndsee & family, Libby, and Lynn.

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).

Special Offering for April is St John's United

Women's Bible Study is April 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00  
The next Congregational Council meeting is April 19<sup>th</sup> after service.

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

Easter Sunday

April 5, 2026

9:30 Worship

Now the Feast and Celebration

### **Introduction**

*This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34): Christ's resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God's faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God's endless love.*

*(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.**

**Greeting**

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

**C: And also with you.**

**Gathering Song:** *ELW #365 Jesus Christ is Risen Today*

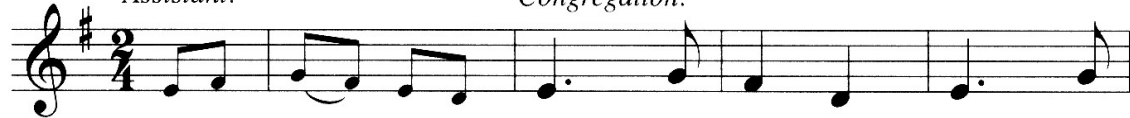


# Kyrie


In peace, in peace

## Refrain

*Assistant:* *Congregation:*



Let us pray to the Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have




mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy. *to Verses*

For the Reign of God and for peace throughout the world, for the unity of all (refrain)


For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word (refrain)

*Assistant:*



Help, save and de - fend us, O

*Congregation:*



God. A - men.

# 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.

*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*

*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!

**Prayer of the Day**

**C: O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen**

## Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

*(Congregation may be seated)*

### **First Reading: Acts 10:34-43**

*Peter's sermon, delivered at the home of Cornelius, a Roman army officer, is a summary of the essential message of Christianity: Everyone who believes in Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection fulfilled the words of the prophets, "receives forgiveness of sins through his name."*

<sup>34</sup> Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Word of God, Word of Life

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

*This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Ps. 118:24)*

<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good;

God's mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> **Let Israel now declare,**

**"God's mercy endures forever."**

<sup>14</sup> The LORD is my strength and my song,  
and has become my salvation.

<sup>15</sup> **Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:**

**"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!**

<sup>16</sup> The right hand of the LORD is exalted!

The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

<sup>17</sup> **I shall not die, but live,**

**and declare the works of the LORD.**

- 18 The LORD indeed punished me sorely,  
but did not hand me over to death.
- 19 **Open for me the gates of righteousness;  
I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**
- 20 “This is the gate of the LORD;  
here the righteous may enter.”
- 21 **I give thanks to you, for you have answered me  
and you have become my salvation.**
- 22 The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.
- 23 **By the LORD has this been done;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.**
- 24 This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

**Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4**

*Easter means new life for us as it first meant new life for Christ. His resurrection reshapes the entire focus and motivation for our lives since we are now hidden with the risen Christ in God.*

<sup>1</sup> If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup> for you

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 John, the 20th Chapter

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

**Gospel:** John (20:1 - 18)

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So, she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**Sermon:** Father Stephen Day

**Hymn of the Day** *ELW #382 Christ Is Risen, Alleluia*

## **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.*

Risen Savior, you have conquered death and opened the gates of everlasting life. Dispel our doubts and fears and renew our faith and hope in you. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Life-giving God, the created world rejoices in Christ's victory over death. May all the earth be renewed by the light of Jesus' resurrection, and may we be faithful stewards of all you have made. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Sovereign God, let the nations acknowledge your reign of justice and truth. Where violence, oppression, and corruption hold sway, pour out your holy and life-giving Spirit to transform and redeem. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Gentle Shepherd, like the women at the empty tomb, many grieve or feel lost and afraid. Draw near to those who are ill or in pain, especially **Gary, Barb, Kay, Rob, Lyle, Lisa & Lindsey, Pastor Kim & Terri, Eva, Josh, Joyce P, Howard & Donna, Sally, Bill & Lisa, Amanda & family, Danielle, Jamie & family, Jennifer, Karly, Katie, Laura, Lyndsee & family, Libby, and Lynn.**

Reveal yourself to them as the Risen One. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Faithful God, we thank you for the living hope you give us through Christ's resurrection. Bless this community, that we may boldly proclaim Christ's victory over death in word and deed. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Eternal One, we give thanks for all who have died and now share in the joy of your resurrection. Bring us, with them, to the unending feast of your victory. 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 globe is available at the rear of the church. Offerings can be sent to Bethlehem Lutheran Church 40 10<sup>th</sup> Street West, Billings, MT 59102. 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)*

## **Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and Merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and  
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

### Words of Institution

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.

You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

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

**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.**

*(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

*Congregation:*

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.

### **Invitation to Communion**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

### **Distribution**

The Body of Christ, given for you.

The Blood of Christ, given for you.

**Communion Hymn:** *ELW #619 I Know that My Redeemer Lives*  
*ELW#388 Be Not Afraid*

### **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:** *ELW #376 Thine is the Glory*

### **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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