



Drawing by Jon Hlafter

The Lutheran Church of the Messiah

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Martin K. Erhardt, *Pastor*
Janice Hofreiter, *Organist*
Paul C. Hofreiter, *Choir Director*
John Mark Goerss, D. Min., *Pastor Emeritus*

Second Sunday of Easter

April 12, 2026

Prayer upon entering: Almighty God, we have celebrated with joy the festival of our Lord's resurrection. Graciously help us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Guests, welcome! We are delighted you are with us for worship this morning. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Erhardt, sign our guest book next to the main doors. Bibles are available on a shelf in the back of the nave. Kneelers and large-print bulletins are available from the ushers upon request. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to join us here at Messiah.

Worship begins with the prelude and continues through the postlude. Once the prelude begins, please refrain from conversation. We use two hymnals: the green *Lutheran Book of Worship* (LBW) and the blue paperback *With One Voice* (wov). Hymn numbers below 600 are generally in LBW; above 600, in wov. The pastor's parts (spoken and sung) are designated "P:." Parts spoken or sung by the congregation are italicized, prefaced by "C:." The liturgy text and music are in the LBW on the pages noted in this service folder.

Holy Communion: Lutheran Christians celebrate a divine service of Word and sacrament in which God comes to us both in his proclaimed Word and in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We invite to commune at the Lord's table all baptized Christians who with contrite hearts trust God's word of forgiveness for their sins, acknowledge the presence of Jesus Christ both in the Communion elements and in this gathered body of believers, and seek, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to follow Jesus and walk in newness of life. If this doesn't describe you, we invite you to come to the altar rail to receive a blessing instead of the Communion elements. Indicate this by folding your arms across your chest at the rail. All are invited to bring their children forward for a blessing.

Individual cups are available in addition to the chalice (the common cup). Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are also available upon request from the server at the Communion rail. All are invited to bring their children forward for a blessing.

Families with young children: Welcome! We have children's activity backpacks in the back of the church for use during the service, as well as an unstaffed nursery on the stage downstairs. Feel free to ask an usher for help locating them. The stairs are at the back of the sanctuary.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen*

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C: *But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

P: Let us, therefore, confess our sins to God.

Please kneel or sit for silent reflection and confession.

C: *Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen*

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen*

Order of Holy Communion

Setting II (LBW p. 78)

Opening Hymn The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done LBW 135

Apostolic Greeting *2 Corinthians 13:14*

P: 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.*

Kyrie *pp. 78-79*

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: *Lord have mercy.*

P: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: *Lord, have mercy.*

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: *Amen*

Hymn of Praise

pp. 81–82

P: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

C: *Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia. Sing with all the people of God and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen*

This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. Alleluia.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

C: *O God, you raised up Jesus Christ as your faithful witness and the first-born of the dead. By your Holy Spirit, help us to witness to him so that those who have not yet seen may come to believe in him who is, and was, and is to come. Amen*

Please be seated. The service continues with the scripture readings printed on the last two pages of this service folder.

First Lesson

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 16

pp. 220-221

Second Lesson

1 Peter 1:3-9

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Verse (please stand):

John 6:68 (p. 83)

C: Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia.

P: The Holy Gospel according to John, the 20th chapter.

C (sung): Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel Lesson

John 20:19-31

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C (sung): Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Resurrection Wounds

Hymn of the Day O Sons and Daughters of the King LBW 139

Creed (Nicene) *Spoken in unison*

*C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.*

(continued on the next page)

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, light from light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen*

The Prayers of the People

P: Rejoicing in our Lord's victory over death and the grave, let us call upon God our Father, for his help and deliverance.

After each prayer or petition,

P: Lord, in your mercy,

C: *hear our prayer.*

P: All this we ask, Father, in the name of Jesus our risen Savior, who has conquered death and the grave. Because He lives, we also shall live. Fill us with your Holy Spirit to spread this good news abroad as ambassadors of your present and coming kingdom.

C: *Amen*

The Sharing of the Peace

p. 86

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: *And also with you.*

Please exchange a greeting of peace with your neighbors, then be seated.

Gathering of Offerings

pp. 86–87

As the offerings are brought forward, please stand and sing:

C: *Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.*

Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

P: Let us pray.

Merciful Father,

C: *we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

The Great Thanksgiving

p. 88

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them to the Lord.*

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty and ever-living God. But chiefly we are bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of our Lord; for he is the true Passover Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who by his death has destroyed death, and by his 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:

Sanctus

p. 89

C: *Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might: Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

P: Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory. Through Abraham you promised to bless all nations. You rescued Israel, your chosen people. Through the prophets you renewed your promise; and, at this end of all the ages, you sent your Son, who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

P: Therefore, gracious Father, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us. And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, the spirit of our Lord and of his resurrection, that we who receive the Lord's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

C: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

P: Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

C (sung, p.91): Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

P: Taught by our Lord and trusting in His promises, we are bold to say:

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

Agnus Dei: Lamb of God

p. 92

*C: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.*

Once the pastor says, "Welcome to the table of the Lord," please sit.

Because Communion is important, please read and follow our Communion policy, printed on p. 2 of this service folder. Feel free to bring your hymnal and continue to sing. If you are not communing, you are invited to come forward to receive a blessing, but feel no pressure to do so. If you do come forward for a blessing (only), indicate this by folding your arms across your chest when you kneel at the altar rail. When the pastor dismisses you, please return to your seat by the center aisle. If you would like Communion brought to your seat, please raise your hand to alert the pastor.

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Thank you to today's Temple Servants

Acolyte	Jon Hlafter
Reader	Miranda Hempel
Ushers	Doris Schubert-Gerwers and Tom Fusco
Fellowship Host	Debbie Baer
Chancel	Laura Bennett
Offering Counter	Jeff Frole
Livestream	Mark von Bargaen

This coming week

Wed	7:30 PM	Choir
Thu	7:30 PM	Community Book Group Discussion (p. 14)
Sat	9:00 AM	Men's Forum
Sun	9:00 AM	Adult Forum
Sun	10:30 AM	Service of Word and Sacrament

Next Sunday

Acts 2:14a, 36-41 • Psalm 116:1-14 • 1 Peter 1:17-25 • Luke 24:13-35
 Opening Hymn: Jesus Christ Is Risen Today (LBW 151)
 Hymn of the Day: With High Delight Let Us Unite (LBW 140)
 Communion Hymn: Come, Risen Lord (LBW 209)
 Closing Hymn: This Joyful Eastertide (WOV 676)

Adult Forum meets Sundays at 9am in the parish building library.

Current Topic: *Facing Death while Celebrating Resurrection*

Pastor Erhardt leads a monthly community book discussion:

April 16: *Tokyo Express*, by Seicho Matsumoto

May 14: *Red Sky at Morning*, by Richard Bradford

June 25: *Colonialism: A Moral Reckoning*, by Nigel Biggar

Discussions begin at 7:30 PM via Zoom. Please obtain and read the book before each discussion, and email Pastor Erhardt for a Zoom invitation.

Spring Work Day at Messiah: Saturday, April 25, 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Come when you can and leave when you must. We'll have plenty of work to go around for people of all ages and abilities. Gardening volunteers, please bring gloves and tools. It's fun, lunch is provided and your help is greatly appreciated!

Save the Date: Messiah's May Voters Meeting will be after worship on Sunday, May 17.

Available on the back pew:

- (1) March/April 2026 edition of the *Messiah Messenger*
- (2) Portals of Prayer devotion booklets (April-June)
- (3) February – May 2026 Temple Servant schedule

Prayer Corner

We remember in our prayers:

- Martha Meyer (mother of Don Meyer, in declining health), Lou and Mary Romolo (following Mary's move into hospice care), Brian Blake (son of Celeste Lokos, thanking God for healing of a lung lesion), Sharon Wilchar (friend of Patricia Wolf who is very ill), Karin Bergesen (recovering from surgery, and thankful to be home again), Joan Colliflower (at home, recovering from knee surgery), Fred Dignon (Greg's father, recovering from surgery after a stroke and fall), Peter Hempel (brother of Miranda Hempel, recovering from surgery), Micha Livne (friend of the Gishlicks who is ill), Ted Alslev (son of Elda Alslev, to overcome his addiction to smoking), Mary Pickens (friend of Jon and Pat Hlafter, undergoing an experimental medical treatment), Sue Parisi (friend of Pat Hlafter, being treated for breast cancer), Peter Schulze (son of Lydia and Carl Schulze, friends of Miranda Hempel), and Jenny Mills – for comfort, strength, and healing
- The people of Iran, and US military personnel engaged in the conflict there

Prayer requests are generally printed in the Prayer Corner and included in the Sunday intercessory prayers for 4 weeks. If you would like us to keep someone there longer, we are happy to do that. Please call the church office or email lcmprinceton@gmail.com to let Pastor Erhardt know.



PROF INSIGHTS

FACULTY-LED WORKSHOP SERIES

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

The Apostolic Fathers

June 1-3 at St. Peter Lutheran Church
Hopewell Township, NJ

Our presenter is Rev. Dr. Joel Elowsky, Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

This event is designed for pastors, other church workers and interested laypeople.



Workshop Description

A study of the primary literature of the Apostolic Fathers with application to the life of the church today. Study will be primarily focused on the texts themselves with attention also given to issues of authorship, dating, the integrity of the text and the occasion for the writing, as well to major theological, ecclesiological and social issues that the writings address such as martyrdom, church order, orthodoxy and heresy, early Christian ritual, etc.

COST UPDATE: The fee for this workshop is \$160. Registration is now open at www.csl.edu/workshop-series, and should be made no later than 14 days before the beginning of each workshop.

To register contact Concordia Seminary Continuing Education at 314-505-7286 or ce@csl.edu
For local information about this event contact Pastor Jon Dunbar at pastor@stpeternj.org

First Lesson: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ “Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’ “This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

Second Lesson: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Gospel Lesson: John 20:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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