

St. Peter Lutheran Church  
April 5, 2026  
Easter Day  
Mark 16:1-8

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

The Sabbath was past—the day of rest. This Sabbath was the great Sabbath—the day when Christ rested following his suffering and death. This work of Christ looked to be only shame and defeat. Death and hell had their way with him. He breathed his last and was laid in a tomb. His soul and body were separated—Christ had truly died. Whatever miracles this Man had worked in his life, looked to be over. Whatever teachings He had given, appeared of no avail.

But who was this Man who suffered and died? He is the One of whom the Scriptures testify that He is God and man in one person. The Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, eternally begotten of the Father, was born of the Virgin. He therefore who is one substance with the Father, God of God, has assumed into his Person our human nature, becoming the same substance with us. God is man. Man is God. This is Christ.

He is without sin, innocent, holy, pure, full of grace and truth, even according to His human nature, not to mention His deity. And so, though death and the devil had devoured many men before Him, this time they bit off more than they could chew. The divine nature can neither suffer nor die, but the Son of God became Man, and so, according to his human nature, He truly suffered and He truly died. Reason cannot fathom this, but faith believes it. But He, being God, could both lay down His life and take it back up again. And though He was put to death in the flesh, He was without sin, and therefore death had no claim on Him. Death is the wages of sin, of which Christ had none.

Yes, death has claim on all other men, sons of Adam who fell. For even as death entered the world through one man, death spread to all men because all sinned. But Jesus, born of the woman, was the eternal Son of God, the One who has life in Himself and who was without sin.

So what happens when Christ, God and man in one person, is gobbled up by death and hell? He tears open the belly of death and stomps the head of the devil, and rises in victory. He had gone quietly into this battle, without weapons, and remained silent as His attackers came for Him and allowed Himself to be overtaken, but with such a strategy He overcomes sin, death, the devil, and hell. **Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.**

These are the facts of the death and resurrection of this particular Person, who is at the same time both God and man. Death lay defeated in His wake, and He rose to live and reign forever. This is an altogether glorious story concerning our Lord, but why would Christ have gone to such ends? He had no need of defeating death for Himself, for as true God, He is one with the Father, the

alpha and the omega, without beginning and without end. He had no need of becoming man and suffering under Pontius Pilate.

He did all of this for you—you who were under the power of sin and captive to death. He became man for us men and for our salvation. Though He was without sin, He took our sins. He was delivered up for our transgressions and raised for our justification. His death was necessary to release us from these enemies of sin, death, devil, and hell. The cost of our redemption was so great it could not be won without the death of the only Son of God. The blood that was needed to atone for our sins was not the blood of a mere man, but the blood of the Son of God. We needed His death and His resurrection. We, not He, were under the power of the great enemies that came against Him. He took up the battle we couldn't fight. He took on these enemies under whom we were held—and He won. And in so doing, he erased our sins and justified us all.

This we hear in the first resurrection appearances. Here in Mark, we have only the angel telling the women to go and tell the disciples. But Matthew and John tell us about Jesus himself appearing at the empty tomb to the women. And when Christ, alive again, appears to them, He tells them to go and tell his “brothers.”

Brothers? How can they be called brothers? The apostles who scattered and left him? Peter who denied him three times? These deserters and reprobates? Yes, Christ calls them brothers. Not just them, but all of us who believe through their word. How? Because Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection was for them and for us. By God's pure mercy and grace, He wins the victory for us and grants us eternal life. His victory is for us. He brings it to us by His Word, calling us brothers. He brings His victory today to little Rory, who also now has Christ as his brother and God as his Father.

This is in fulfillment of Psalm 22, which Jesus prayed as He died for our sins. **I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.** Christ suffered and died and rose victorious—that His Father would be your Father, His God your God—that His heavenly inheritance would be your inheritance.

Though your sins were as scarlet, they have been made white as snow. Heaven has been won for you by Christ and given freely to you in His name. Eternal riches belong to you, eternal life is yours. This is what Jesus' resurrection means. We who have merited death and punishment are given life and salvation as God's free gift. This is why Christ came. This is why God gave His only Son. This is why Christ became our true brother—why He became like us—He did this so that we could become like Him, children of His Father in heaven.

As the Epistle to the Hebrews says, **Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage....in all things He had to be made like *His***

**brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

This then is our faith—we who believe and are baptized have Christ as our brother, God as our Father, and heaven as our home. Though our sins alarm us, though the devil prowls about and assaults us, and though death comes, these enemies are defeated by Christ. And we belong to Him and His victory is our victory.

**O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Alleluia! Christ is risen! **He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**