

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading – Acts 5:29–42

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

³³When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. ³⁴But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. ³⁵And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. ³⁶For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. ³⁷After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; ³⁹but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!" So they took his advice, ⁴⁰and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴²And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Epistle – 1 Peter 1:3–9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be

revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens."

The Holy Gospel – John 20:19–31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld."

²⁴Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

²⁶Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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***Thank you to Deacon Drevlow
for leading our Service this
morning!***

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In today's readings, we see how the risen Christ creates, sustains, and sends His Church through His Word and Spirit. In John 20, the risen Jesus appears to His fearful disciples, speaks peace, shows them His wounds, and breathes on them the Holy Spirit. He sends them just as the Father sent Him and entrusts them with the holy office of forgiving sins, a gift Christ continues to give His Church through the preaching of the Gospel and the Holy Absolution. Thomas's journey from doubt to confession—"My Lord and my God!"—shows how faith is created and strengthened by Christ's Word and presence. Here we confess that the Church is born from Christ's resurrection and lives from His Means of Grace, through which He delivers forgiveness, life, and salvation.

In Acts 5, we see the fruit of that resurrection faith as the apostles boldly confess Christ before the council, declaring, "We must obey God rather than men." Even when they are beaten and commanded to be silent, they rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for Jesus and continue teaching and preaching daily. In 1 Peter 3, this same faith is lived out in daily vocation, as Christians are called to humility, compassion, and love, blessing others even in the midst of hardship. Together, these readings proclaim that the risen Lord sends His forgiven people into the world to confess His name and to live out His peace in their callings, trusting that He is present with His Church and that in Him alone there is life and salvation.



Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

A Biblical, Confessional and Traditional congregation in the Chicago region committed to ministering to sinners with the forgiving presence of Jesus Christ.

Second Sunday of Easter

April 12, 2026

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A WELCOME IN JESUS' NAME to all who gather in the Lord's House today. You have joined with the saints on earth and the saints in heaven around the throne of the risen Lamb, to be served by the Triune God through the preaching of His Word and prayer. Through His Word, the risen Christ comes among His people to speak peace, to forgive sins, and to strengthen faith, just as He did with His disciples on Easter evening. Apart from these Means of Grace there are no Christians and there is no Church, for it is through His Word and Spirit that God creates and sustains faith in Christ. Therefore, the entire Liturgy places God at center stage, as He acts toward His people to deliver His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. That is why the Liturgy is called the "Divine Service"—it is God's service to His people, as the risen Lord comes to us and sends us out in His peace.

Soli Deo Gloria

