



BETHLEHEM UNITED

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, April 5, 2026

Easter Sunday

Worship Leader: Rev. Randall Koppenhaver

Musician: Polly Jeanty

The white peace candle on the altar is lit in solidarity with all peoples of the world affected by armed conflict, civil war, oppression, tyranny, exploitation and discrimination. God, bring them peace.

***= Please rise in body or spirit**

CENTERING BREATH PRAYER: as you inhale, say the first part of the prayer to yourself, and say the second part as you exhale. Repeat 5x

Hallelujah! The Lord is Risen! :: He is risen, indeed!

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CALL TO WORSHIP #196 v.1

"Christ the Lord is Risen Today"

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death.

Hallelujah!

This is the Good News – the grave is empty & Christ is risen.

Hallelujah! Let us worship God with Easter joy!

***OPENING PRAYER**

**Holy and Eternal God,
perfect in love and endless in grace,
governor of the days and seasons,
creator of all things visible and invisible;
filled with glory, majesty and honor,
on this first day you began creation,
bringing order and life out of chaos.
On this first day you began your new creation,
raising Jesus Christ from the powers of death.
On this first day, we gather to join with all creation
to worship and honor you as the Creator.
Christ, and Holy Spirit,
now and always. Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN #196 v. 2-5**

“Christ the Lord is Risen Today”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

As we recall who God is and what God has done, we recall who we are and what we have done. Lord, hear us now as we confess to you our sins:

**Gracious God,
our sins are too heavy to carry,
too real to hide and too deep to undo.
Forgive what our lips are afraid to name
and what our hearts can no longer bear.
Set us free from a past we cannot change,
open us to a future in which we can be changed
and give us the grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image.
In Jesus’ name, we pray.
Amen. (time of silence)**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

“No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

Dear friends, Christ has laid down his life for us and invites us to love one another as he has loved us.

**May we know that we are forgiven and have the grace to forgive one another,
Alleluia! Thanks be to God!**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #571**

“Halle, Halle, Hallelujah”

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24

¹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

² **Let Israel say:**

“His love endures forever.”

¹⁴ The Lord is my strength and my defense^[a];
he has become my salvation.

¹⁵ **Shouts of joy and victory**

resound in the tents of the righteous:

“The Lord’s right hand has done mighty things!

¹⁶ The Lord’s right hand is lifted high;
the Lord’s right hand has done mighty things!”

¹⁷ **I will not die but live,**

and will proclaim what the Lord has done.

¹⁸ The Lord has chastened me severely,
but he has not given me over to death.

¹⁹ **Open for me the gates of the righteous;**

I will enter and give thanks to the Lord.

²⁰ This is the gate of the Lord
through which the righteous may enter.

²¹ **I will give you thanks, for you answered me;**
you have become my salvation.

²² The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;

²³ **the Lord has done this,**
and it is marvelous in our eyes.

²⁴ **The Lord has done it this very day;**
let us rejoice today and be glad.

Matthew 28:1-10

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵ The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has

risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

CHILDREN'S TIME

SPECIAL MUSIC "Risen" by Shawna Edwards, sung by Allyson Jeanty

SERMON

*HYMN #200 "Easter People Raise your Voices"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

(God's table is open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. Please hold the elements until all have been served and we will partake together. All bread is gluten free. The inner circles are grape juice, the outer rings are wine.)

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE STORY OF THE TABLE

THE PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

On this joyful Easter Day, ...with all the saints before us and beside us, in heaven and on earth, to raise the song of your unending greatness:

**Holy, Holy, Holy God of love and Majesty,
The whole universe speaks of your Glory, O God Most High.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the Highest!**

Receive our praise and joy this day, O Christ...,
and so we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again

Spirit of Life, rising in us and around us, ...the love we share in your name.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD – POURING OF THE CUP

DISTRIBUTION

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER (poem)

Christ be with us; **Christ within us;**
Christ behind us; **Christ before us;**
Christ beside us; **Christ to win us.**
Christ to comfort and restore us.

Christ beneath us, **Christ above us,**
Christ in quiet, **Christ in danger,**
Christ in hearts of all that love us,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger
wherever we go in your name. Amen

PRAYER CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE...THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petitions end with: God, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

POST PRAYER RESPONSE

**Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY (Jingle Change for April supports One Great Hour of Sharing, a Special Mission Offering of the UCC that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Tune “Doxology”

**Let trumpets sound and voices sing!
Let all on earth their praises bring!
For Christ has conquered sin and death
And given life eternal breath.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous God, this day we recognize how much you have given us in Christ Jesus, and what that gift has cost. Bless these gifts so they may offer the hope and joy we feel today to the world you love so dearly. In the name of your greatest gift, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG #206 all “He Lives”

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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presbyterian.ca/worship/*

Bethlehem Announcements:

- **Wellness Mini retreat at Bethlehem UCC**
On Saturday, April 25, all are invited to participate in a mini retreat featuring psychologist and author, Dr. Cary Knier-Johannes at Bethlehem. Dr. Johannes' seminar will lead participants to improved spiritual wellness through centering, guided meditation, journaling, and more. The retreat will run from 9am-12pm. The cost is \$10 and includes a copy of Dr. Johannes' book, *The Missing Peace*. RSVP's are encouraged.

- There will be a choir meeting on Sunday 4/12 after the church service in the choir room.

Bethlehem Sunday School

As we move into April, we continue with Biblical lessons. We will be learning about Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter.

Thank you, Thank you for your support.

Our 2026 Leprosy birthday collection was very successful. The Sunday School children are challenged with bringing .25 per their age. The Sunday School students and teachers raised \$100.75. The jingle change collection raised \$187.57 for a total of \$288.32. The cost of curing one person is \$400.00. With some of our other funding raising monies, we were able to send a check to Leprosy Mission for \$400.00.

We continue to collect aluminum cans, the cans be placed in the old garage next to the parsonage. Thank you for your support in this collection.

Looking for some fun this summer. Check out a summer camp at Daycholah Center. See Rev. Randy if you are interested in attending a camp. Camps are for children, families and adults. See you on Sundays at 8:00 am.

Community Announcements:

- Tuesday, April 7 – 11:45a-12:45pm – “An Introduction to Zen Buddhism” Lakeland University

- Saturday, April 11 – Auction supporting Divine Savior Catholic School @ Millhome Supper Club – Raffle tickets available for \$5000 Dream vacation - see flyers

- Thursday, April 16 – 3:30-6:00pm – Smoked Pork Chop Dinner @ Saron UCC – Reservations are required – see flyer in fellowship Hall

- Sat. April 18 – 9a-1pm – “Stewardship of the Body” – A workshop for women – Zion Lutheran Church, New Holstein – see flyer



Those grieving

The family of Dean Horneck
The family of Daniel Huber
The family of Delores Meinert
The family of Jim Markelz
The family of Richard (Rick) Broetzmann

Those dealing with health concerns:

Judy Brockway	Davin Horneck
Dayton Horneck	Jackie Volland
Louie Bowe	Dawson Horneck
Heidi Konen	Darlene Horneck
Jessica Horneck	Margaret
Sofia	Willow
Hubert	Larry
Chase Goekes	Tyler Smith
Molly	Linda Skinkis (sister of Judy Brockway)

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin Ninmer Helen Henning

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today, Sunday 4/5: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Easter Sunday worship w/ Communion

Monday 4/6: *Happy Birthday Lily Watson!*

Tuesday 4/7: *Happy Birthday Marie Mueller!*

Wednesday 4/8: 6pm Confirmation class

Thursday 4/9: *Happy Birthday Sandy Tesch!*

Friday 4/10:

Saturday 4/11:

Sunday 4/12: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Sunday worship led by confirmation students

Mar/Apr Panty Item: Pasta, Rice or Crackers

