

THE ST. JOHN NEWS

April 2021

The Second Earthquake and the Resurrection A Deeper Look at Matthew 28:1–15

Dear beloved of Christ,

The death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has changed the world forever. That fact cannot be stated enough and deserves the proper recognition of all of God's creation. We have recently traveled through the season of Lent again, remembering the suffering and death of Jesus on Good Friday. The whole of Passion Week is memorable, reported on in depth by the evangelists—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each writer has his own perspective and adds his own character to the story. Only Matthew reports several monumental details.

Matthew is joined by Mark in reporting the tearing of the temple curtain from top to bottom, signifying the barrier between God and man being severed by the sacrifice of Jesus. Matthew alone reports the shaking of the earth at Jesus' death. Likewise, Matthew solely proclaims that the tombs nearby were opened and "many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised" (Matthew 27:51–52). And Matthew is unique in the telling of the second earthquake to occur in three days.

"Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it" (Matthew 28:1–2). Matthew remains alone in reporting the specific activities of the angel, rolling back the stone and sitting upon it. But, it is Matthew's use of the word "behold" that draws special notice. Forty times Matthew uses this word in his Gospel, to denote a sacred moment. "Behold" is a translation of a word that has as its root the exhortation "look!"

The earth shook at the death of Jesus. But, behold, look, there was a great earthquake on that Sunday morning, Matthew tells us. The angel of the Lord's descent rattled the entire earth all around the tomb of Jesus. Shaking earth. Stone rolled away. Angel of the Lord sitting upon it. Jesus risen from the dead. Empty tomb. That moment changed everything.

For those with faith, it was news that transcended their greatest hopes. Even though Jesus stated that he would rise from the dead, the faithful disciples had little faith of this actually happening. None of them were at the tomb that morning waiting to watch the big event. The women who were there did not go to find the tomb empty and Jesus alive. They were going to finish their work of caring for the corpse of their loved one. Hearing the good news of the resurrected Jesus led them to great fear and joy.

For those without faith, the news of Jesus' resurrection was awful. Their worst fears had come true. Still not willing to believe that Jesus was the true Messiah, Matthew tells us that the Jewish leaders concocted a story to disprove the resurrection. The best they could come up with was that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus to fake his resurrection. They even had to pay a large sum of money to the soldiers who witnessed the angel's descent and the bursting open of the tomb (Matthew 28:11–15).

For those without faith, they must deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ at all costs. If Jesus is truly raised from the dead, then he is who he truly claimed to be: the Christ, the Son of God. If that is true, then they would have to answer to him for their rejection of him. Sticking with the story of a stolen body allowed them to remain in unbelief.

But, for those who believed in Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus altered their entire countenance. Once the Holy Spirit was gifted to them at Pentecost, there would be no stopping them. Peter and John proclaimed the resurrected Christ, ending up in jail numerous times. Many of the Jews who had rejected Jesus came to believe in him following Peter's Pentecost sermon. Christians would go forth from that moment on and be

witnesses to Jesus' death and resurrection, as he said, in Jerusalem and Samaria and to all the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Jesus' resurrection from the dead is truly the greatest gamechanger of all time! Being raised from the dead, never to die again, Jesus is Lord of lords. "We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him" (Romans 6:9). *Christus victor*, Christ the victor! He is the champion. He can never be defeated. His death is your death. His resurrection is your resurrection (Romans 6:4–5). You will live forever. You are on the winning side. And nothing can take that away from you. Nothing can separate you from God's love for you in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:37–39).

Eternal is the gift He brings, Therefore our heart with rapture sings:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!" Now still He comes to give us life
And by His presence stills all strife. Christ has triumphed! He is living!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

—Verse 3, *Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds*, LSB 465

God grant you the fullest measure of joy this Easter celebration, for Jesus has died for you, he has covered you with his righteousness in Baptism, he strengthens your faith with his body and blood in Holy Communion, and he raises you with himself in his own resurrection.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen, it is so!

In Christ's love and service,

Pastor Caithamer

Let Us Pray

For Peace and Comfort: Clayton and Jacob and family at the death of father Jeff , John & Cheryl and family at the death of John's brother Dan

Hospitalized: Roger

Following surgery: Cindy

For Healing and Recovery: Barbara -family friend of Bob & Joan, Taylor, Starley, Mailyynn - granddaughter of Rick and Rita, Pastor Ehlers, Karla, Aidan, Whitney -wife of Ellie's grandson, Barbara -friend of the congregation, John, Tom, Jan, Hendricks-grandson of Dan & Joanie, Maria, Merv, Brett -cousin of the Kindts', Jessica -granddaughter of Bob & Joan, Jacob -great grandson of Bob & Joan, Joan -mother of Bill, Judy-mother of Rochelle , Rebecca -daughter of Marvin & Esther, Roy -father of Anne, Dan-brother of Bonnie, Todd -grandson of Harold

For Successful Treatments: Luke, Kendra (school parent), Cari(school parent), Nicole (school parent) Earl, Jayne, Linda, Roxy, Jeanette, Joan, Nancy

For our Military: Roberto, Adam, Joshua, Nick, Zachary, Taylor, Andy, Brandon, Ben, Allyson

For our Missionaries: Pastor Randrianasolo Dembiniana Havanjanakary and the Madagascar Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Magnus Bengston and Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica





April Music Notes



Carols at Easter? When we think of caroling, we generally think of Christmas, and our many favorite songs from that season. Carols, however, were not originally sung just in December, or just about Jesus's Advent and Nativity. There are secular carols, and carols for just about every season of the year.

Not all carols are old! Our Lutheran Service Book has only a few "non-Christmas" carols, but two for Easter are worth mentioning.

#481 - "Scatter the darkness, break the gloom" is a modern (Stephen Starke) text set to a French carol tune that also has an Advent text (People, look East).

#482 - "This joyful Eastertide" is a Dutch carol, also with a relatively recent text.

I would like to share with you one 17th-century German Carol text that has inspired several modern composers "Hilariter". The word comes from the Latin and means cheerfully or joyfully – perfect for Easter!

The whole bright world rejoices now, *Hilariter, Hilariter*;
The birds do sing on every bough, Alleluia, Alleluia.
Then shout beneath the racing skies...
To Him who rose that we might rise...
And all you living things make praise...
He guideth you on all your ways...
He, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost...
Our God most high, our joy and boast...

One of my favorite settings of this joyful text was composed by Richard Wayne Dirksen, who served for many years at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, and whose centennial is being observed this year. You may know Mark Dirksen, who has substituted for me here at St. John several times in the past few years. Mark is Richard's son, and has organized a splendid website that includes a performance of this stirring piece led by the composer.
https://rwdirksen.com/musical_work/hilariter/

Soli Deo Gloria!
Keith

LWML Salad Supper will be a St. John LWML only bring your own bag supper for fun and fellowship April 19th at 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. All women of St. John are welcome and are LWML members. Bring one or two "Thinking of You" cards with a stamped envelope to send with a \$10 gift card to encourage St. John's college students. The gift cards will be purchased through St. John School gift card program. Please give your donations for the gift cards purchase to Martha. Contact Linda or Martha for more information. "

ARK ENCOUNTER & CREATION MUSEUM TRIP

Immanuel, Springfield is hosting a trip see the Ark and Creation Museum in Kentucky. Dates are April 26-29...roundtrip motor coach, 3 night stay in Cincinnati area, breakfast and dinner 3 days, admissions, baggage handling...all for \$450.00 per person (double occupancy). Call Pastor Stuenkel for details and sign-up.

Pregnancy Resource Center Walk for Life

It's not too late to join the St. John team. There is a live walk at Marketplace Mall on April 17 at 9am with a celebration following across the street at the Center. However, you do not have to walk in this event to participate, you can walk on your own at another time. Please register at <https://www.pregnancyresourcecenter.org/get-involved/events/champaign-events/> and select St. John Lutheran Champaign for team. You can find more details here as well. If you are unable to participate but would like to make a donation, please contact Vanessa Thank you for your support of this important, life-saving ministry!



SECOND SEMESTER CHAPEL OFFERINGS

Chapel offerings will go toward the CID Campus Ministries. We believe it is very important to provide spiritual care for students in college. All universities and colleges in our Central Illinois District have a volunteer contact campus pastor from a nearby LCMS congregation. Four state universities (UI, ISU, EIU, & WIU) have a special facility and a full-time campus ministry for our students and others (including inter-national students). These campus ministries provide important spiritual care at a very important time in the life of our young people. Many of our St. John Alumni are active in campus ministries.



Chapel Offering for the 1st



St. John Lutheran School and Little Lamb Preschool
Laying Foundations for the Future

Enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year has begun!

St. John Lutheran School and Little Lamb Preschool offer a Christ-centered education for students age three through eighth grade. Our caring, skilled teachers use a variety of strategies to engage students' minds in a safe learning environment, with the focus on teaching every subject with a Biblical worldview. Little Lamb Preschool offers morning and full day classes. Two-day (T/TH), three-day (M/W/F), and five-day options are available.

Tell everyone about our wonderful school! For more information, contact the school office at (217) 359-1714.

Mission Statement

United in faith, we serve the Kingdom of God by building lives that are rooted in the Word, centered on Christ, and motivated by Grace; to reflect Christ's love and share His Gospel with all.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 
- 1 A.J. , Greg, Bob
 - 2 Mike, Mary, Larry
 - 4 Hannah, David, Bonnie, Preslee
 - 5 Lucas, Kate, John
 - 6 Vickie, Brent, Gebres
 - 7 Jill, Jaclyn, Michele
 - 8 Dave, Judy, Elise, Tiernee
 - 9 Cissy, Angela, Katie, Allie
 - 10 Stephanie, Whitney
 - 11 Tish, Jordan
 - 12 Matthew, Nicole, Micah
 - 13 Maci
 - 14 Chris, Layla
 - 15 Douglas, Kathryn, Thomas
 - 16 Andrew, Jamie
 - 17 Sophie, Zach, Betty
 - 18 Julie, Alexis
 - 19 Kurt, Emily, Brad, Virginia
 - 20 Anne
 - 21 Andrea
 - 22 Colin , Kimberly, Monica, Blake
 - 23 Marian, Maura, Jordan, Anita

- 24 Matthew, Paula, Lana, Jayne
- 25 Doug, Mike
- 26 Jeff, Ashley, Brandon, Curt, Noah, Duane
- 27 Noelle, Liam
- 28 Andrea
- 29 Tom



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Gary & Dee (39)
- 16 Elmer & Tami (27), Dan & Karen (33), Randy & Anne (44)
- 20 Kendall & Brenda (19)
- 22 Philip & Donna(54), Bill & Kim (26)
- 24 Michael & Alice (50), Mark & Colleen (45)
- 25 Robert & Karen (12)
- 29 Tom & Nancy (26)
- 30 Nick & Dee (21)



Ram Rebate Gift Cards

Purchase gift cards for hundreds of stores and restaurants through Ram Rebate and a percentage will go towards your tuition or a church account of your choice. In Stock cards are available during school office hours. Orders will be placed the first of the month. Pick-up on physical cards in 5-7 days.

Discover your earning potential with new mobile app

*Earn Every Day: Easy access means you can order whenever and wherever it's most convenient for you

*Everything in one place: You can manage your eGift cards and reloads for simple redemption online and in stores. Stop by the school office or visit www.shopwithscrip.com



School Summer Program 2021

June 7-July 30

(Sign up by the week)

Open to Little Lamb through 5th grade students

**must be enrolled in Little Lamb or St. John for 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 school year

Choose 3 Day (M/W/F) or 5 Day ,
Half Day (7:30-11:30) or Full Day (7:30-3:15)
After Care available til 5:30 for additional fee.

More information and Registration Forms
available in the school office



APRIL 2021

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.
Romans 6:9

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