



**Midweek Service of Word and Prayer
Grace Lutheran Church
Lincoln, Nebraska**

Opening Dialog

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. **Alleluia!**

We are enlightened by the brightness of his rising. **Alleluia!**

Death's darkness has no power over us. **Alleluia!**

Introduction to Sunday

The gospel for the third Sunday of Easter is always one in which the risen Christ shares food with the disciples, meals that are the Easter template for the holy meal we share each Sunday. In today's gospel, Jesus both shares the disciples' food and shows them the meaning of his suffering, death, and resurrection through the scriptures.

Prayer of the Day

Holy and righteous God, you are the author of life, and you adopt us to be your children. Fill us with your words of life, that we may live as witnesses to the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Readings

Acts 3

¹⁷"And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer.

What does it mean that God's will is accomplished despite our ignorance?

1 John 3

What we do know is this: when he (Jesus) is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

Who did you want to be like when you were growing up? Was it Jesus? Why or why not?

Luke 24

⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"

What does it mean that disbelief and wonder are part of the joy that we have in Christ?

Reflection

Faith in a world filled with stockpiles

Faith cannot be stockpiled. It needs to be replenished.

Today, the disciples are hungry. While their stomachs may not be rumbling, their hunger is shown in their lack of certainty about who Jesus is for them and the world. Even though they

were just talking about how Jesus walked with two of them on the road to Emmaus, his real presence now frightens them. Doubt, disbelief, and fear are like hunger to the disciples. Jesus relieves the hunger with his risen presence. When the disciples are unsure what to make of the mess that life has become, Jesus shows up. When their hunger for truth and certainty is most apparent, Jesus walks into the room. The answer to someone's hunger is not to ask why they are hungry. Nor is the answer to doubt a question about why they cannot believe. The answer is food. The answer is the real Jesus showing up and easing fears. Everyone's faith needs sustenance.

Even though Jesus' disciples had been speaking about his appearance to two of them on the road to Emmaus just verses earlier, Jesus does not become agitated at the fact that the disciples are afraid of him. Jesus expects the fears and the doubts about his presence in the room. He knows that one post-resurrection appearance will never be enough. There will need to be more appearances to sustain the faith of generations of disciples!

The appearances become a pattern, with Jesus entering the lives of his disciples, eating with them and teaching them. Finally, Jesus sends the disciples out as witnesses. These witnesses gather again and again to remember what was witnessed—so that their own testimony of a Savior who sets their fears at ease will also ease the doubts and fears of others around them.

Lord's Prayer (together)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Apostle's Creed (together)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended to the living, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Responsive Prayer

Show us your mercy, O God,
and grant us your salvation.

Give us the joy of your saving help again,
and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.

Give peace in all the world;
for only in you can we live in safety.
Keep the nations under your care,
and guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let your way be known upon earth;
your saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy be forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us a clean heart, O God,
and sustain us with your Holy Spirit.
Lord, hear my prayer,
and let my cry come before you.

Closing Prayer

O God, in you we live and move and have our being. Guide and govern us every day by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but remember that always we are walking in your promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Blessing

Almighty God (+) bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.