

WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

THE BIBLE – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

GOD – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

MAN – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

SIN – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

REDEMPTION – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

FAITH – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

THE CHURCH – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

SACRAMENTS – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper, believing communicants, with the bread and wine, also really receive Christ’s body and blood for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

RESURRECTION – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).

INTROIT

Exodus 15:2a, 6, 13, 17-18; Antiphon: Exodus 15:1b

*I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.*

*The LORD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.*

*Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.*

*You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed;
you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.*

*You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain,
the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode,
the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.*

The LORD will reign forever and ever."

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *O God,
for our redemption You gave Your only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross
and by His glorious resurrection delivered us
from the power of the enemy.
Grant that all our sin may be drowned through daily repentance
and that day by day we may arise to live before You
in righteousness and purity forever;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

C *♪[Amen]♪*

GRADUAL

adapted from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

*Christ has risen from the dead,
[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor,
He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
he has put all things under his feet.*

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

*After each petition: **P** Lord, in Your mercy, **C** hear our prayer.*

Isaiah 65:17-25 (ESV)

¹⁷ "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. ¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. ²⁰ No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. ²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²² They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. ²³ They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them. ²⁴ Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. ²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the LORD.

1 Corinthians 15:19-26 (ESV)

¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a

man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Luke 24:1-12 (ESV)

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ²And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" ⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." ⁸ And they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹²But Peter rose and ran to the tomb;

stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

WHAT IS A PASCHAL CANDLE?

The paschal candle is an ancient symbol of the risen Jesus and commonly used in liturgical parishes during the Great Fifty Days of Easter. It is a very large white candle, the largest and tallest of all sanctuary candles. Paschal candles are always inscribed with a cross, usually with the current year, and the Greek letters alpha and omega (Revelation 1:8 and 22:13), signifying that the Lord is present in His church now in the present year and forever in eternity. Sometimes, five grains of incense, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ, are pressed into the arms and center of the cross with pins or small nails. The paschal candle is prominently featured in the Easter Vigil Service (Holy Saturday) at which it is first lighted and brought into the sanctuary. According to ancient liturgical tradition, it is allowed to shine continuously throughout the Great Fifty Days until it is finally extinguished on Ascension Day. For much of the year many churches stand the paschal candle near the font used for baptisms. Here it provides a reminder that baptism is a symbolic death and rebirth with Christ; just like Christ's death and Resurrection. It is lighted at baptisms to remind Christians that in baptism we are crucified and raised with Jesus (Romans 6:3-5). The paschal candle is also lighted at Christian funerals as a reminder that those who die in Christ are raised up with Him.

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD - EASTER DAY

Isaiah 65:17–25

1 Corinthians 15:19–26

Luke 24:1–12

Christ's Resurrection Is the Firstfruits of the New Creation

The Lord has promised to “*create new heavens and a new earth*” (Is. 65:17), in which His people shall abide in peace and joy. That new creation has begun in the bodily resurrection of Christ Jesus. All the baptized belong to that new creation. Reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, they are “*the offspring of the blessed of the Lord*” (Is. 65:23). The Lord rejoices and is glad in them; He hears and answers their prayers. For “*if in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied*” (1 Cor. 15:19). But Christ Jesus has been raised, “*the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep*” (1 Cor. 15:20). We may be “*perplexed about this*” (Luke 24:4), perhaps even frightened and brought to our knees, because it seems like an “*idle tale*” (Luke 24:11). But faith clings to the Word of Christ and finds His resurrected body — not in the tomb, but in His Holy Supper.

Next Week's Readings from God's Word:

April 24: The Second Sunday of Easter (Series C):

Acts 5:12-20 (21-32), Psalm 148, Revelation 1:4-18, John 20:19-31