



Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

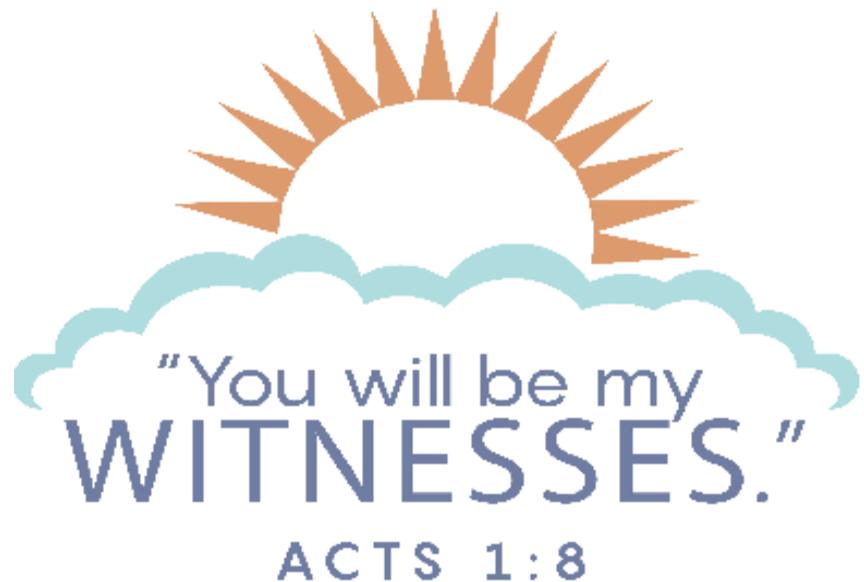
A Reconciling in Christ
(Open and Affirming)
congregation
of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY!

3rd Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2020
9:30 AM



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YouTube

COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE WEEK

Catherine of Siena, theologian, died 1380

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

This theologian was the 1st woman among Roman Catholics to receive the title "Doctor of the Church".

Catherine was a Dominican sister known for her mystical visions
as well as her work on behalf of people who were poor and imprisoned.

Philip and James, Apostles

Friday, May 1, 2020

Philip was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and called Nathanael to "come and see".

He later responded to an Ethiopian official's request for teaching and baptism.

Little is known of James, the son of Alphaeus, called "the Less" to distinguish him from another apostle named James.

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, died 373

Saturday, May 2, 2020

Best remembered for defending the teaching that Christ was fully God against those who taught otherwise,

Athanasius was an influential church leader around the time of the Council of Nicea.

He was banished from Alexandria five times for his forthright views.

Gathering

GATHERING CAROL

TAKE TIME TO BE FUNNY

(Tune: CRADLESONG - Away in a Manger)

Take time to be funny, rejoice in the Lord, let laughter explode, and have fun with God's Word

For laughter is healing, gives strength to the weak, God loves to see smiles, for they lift up the meek.

Take time to be silly, it's good for the soul, too many are somber, grabbing control.

Let go and let God's love wash over your soul, Heavenly transcendence can be your life's goal.

Old Sarah and Abram - a child they did lack but God's angels said she'd give birth to Isaac

In Hebrew that's "laughter", go check if you want (Genesis Seventeen if you don't want to hunt.)

For humor is holy, it sanctifies life, replenishes hope, and oft softens advice

It undercuts sorrow, deflates haughty pride, so smile and hang on, and rejoice in life's ride.

(text: author unknown)

WELCOME

In the name of the risen Christ, welcome to virtual church! We are glad to have you worship with us!

This week you can find us at our website: www.SalemBridgeport.org,

on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport, and on our **YouTube Channel**:

Links to this worship bulletin, to the sermon, to our donate page, and to other resources are included on our website and FB page.

As we worship, please note that unless otherwise indicated, parts in normal font are read by the pastor, leader or lector
while responses in bold font are read by the congregation.

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

In the early days of Christianity, all of Easter Week was one continuous feast -
a week of intense happiness and spiritual joy.

Later the week was compressed into a single day - Easter Monday - a national holiday in many countries.

It was a day of games, picnics, pranks, practical jokes, and "drenching customs"
with boys drenching girls with water, and the girls retaliating by drenching the boys.

Only in the last century did the custom fade away in our increasingly secularized societies.

In the 1980s there were attempts at resurrecting the custom,
but with schools and businesses open, it was difficult to celebrate a holiday.

Thus the idea of celebrating Holy Humor Sunday the Sunday after Easter was born.

This year because we joined in worshipping with the rest of the New England Synod
on that Sunday, we're celebrating Holy Humor Sunday a week late.

The idea is that even though Jesus was crucified, died and was buried and it looked like the devil had won,
God had the last laugh by raising Jesus from the dead, defeating death itself!

God delights in our laughter and receives it as an act of worship.

Today's service continues the Easter story, the greatest practical joke of all time: God overturned death.

To learn more about Holy Humor Sunday, go to: <https://www.joyfulnoiseletter.com/hhsunday.asp>

OPENING CAROL

GOOD CHRISTIANS ALL, REJOICE AND SING! (Tune: While by My Sheep I Watched by Night)

Good Christians all, rejoice and sing! Now is the triumph of our King!
How great our joy! (Great our joy!) Joy, joy, joy! (Joy, joy, joy!)
Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high! Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Up from the grave he rose again, Victory over death and sin!
How great our joy! (Great our joy!) Joy, joy, joy! (Joy, joy, joy!)
Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high! Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Death has been conquered — love has won! Praise to God's high-exalted Son!
How great our joy! (Great our joy!) Joy, joy, joy! (Joy, joy, joy!)
Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high! Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Raise hands and hearts — together sing! Throughout the earth, in chorus ring!
How great our joy! (Great our joy!) Joy, joy, joy! (Joy, joy, joy!)
Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high! Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

(text: author unknown)

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all!
And also with you!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. (a brief silence)

God of Heartache and Humor, we who experience an eclectic array of emotions are made in your image.
You have told us that for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born and a time to die, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.
You even said there is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing!
In this time when many are experiencing anxiety and anger, doubt and despair, stress and strain,
we come to you to have our hearts healed, our minds mended, our bodies blessed, and our spirits made to sparkle.
Pour the gifts of your Spirit into us this day and then send us into the world to bear witness to what you have done.
We pray this in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Spirit. Amen

Word

FIRST READING - Acts 1:1-14

1¹⁻⁵ Dear Theophilus, in the first volume of this book I wrote on everything that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he said good-bye to the apostles, the ones he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. After his death, he presented himself alive to them in many different settings over a period of forty days. In face-to-face meetings, he talked to them about things concerning the kingdom of God. As they met and ate meals together, he told them that they were on no account to leave Jerusalem but "must wait for what the Father promised: the promise you heard from me. John baptized in water; you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. And soon."

6 When they were together for the last time they asked, "Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?"

7⁸ He told them, "You don't get to know the time. Timing is the Father's business. What you'll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world."

9¹¹ These were his last words. As they watched, he was taken up and disappeared in a cloud. They stood there, staring into the empty sky. Suddenly two men appeared — in white robes! They said, "You Galileans! — why do you just stand here looking up at an empty sky? This very Jesus who was taken up from among you to heaven will come as certainly — and mysteriously — as he left."

12¹³ So they left the mountain called Olives and returned to Jerusalem. It was a little over half a mile. They went to the upper room they had been using as a meeting place: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James, son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas, son of James.

14 They agreed they were in this for good, completely together in prayer, the women included. Also Jesus' mother, Mary, and his brothers.

Word of God, Word of Life!
Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL CAROL

HARK THE HERALD ANGEL SAID

(Tune: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)

Hark the herald angel said, "Why seek Jesus with the dead?
He's not here, as you can see, grave cloths lie where he would be.
On your way now, tell the others, "Jesus will be with his brothers.
Sisters, too, he wants to see on the hills of Galilee."
Hark the herald angel said, "Christ is risen from the dead!"

(text by Paul Lintern, Lutheran pastor, humorist and motivational speaker)

GOSPEL - Mark 6:7-13

The Holy Gospel, according to Saint Mark!

Glory to you, O Lord!

⁷⁻⁸ Jesus called the Twelve to him, and sent them out in pairs. He gave them authority and power to deal with the evil opposition. He sent them off with these instructions:

⁸⁻⁹ "Don't think you need a lot of extra equipment for this. You are the equipment. No special appeals for funds. Keep it simple.

¹⁰ "And no luxury inns. Get a modest place and be content there until you leave.

¹¹ "If you're not welcomed, not listened to, quietly withdraw. Don't make a scene. Shrug your shoulders and be on your way."

¹²⁻¹³ Then they were on the road. They preached with joyful urgency that life can be radically different; right and left they sent the demons packing; they brought wellness to the sick, anointing their bodies, healing their spirits.

The Gospel of Our Lord!

Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON

THE REVEREND MARJO ANDERSON

CAROL OF THE DAY

SING A HAPPY ALLELUIA

(Tune: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Sing a happy alleluia!
Sing it out with heart and style!
We're the echo of God's laughter;
we're the image of God's smile.

Alleluia, all creation! Alleluia, everyone!

We're the proof of God's good humor;
we're the twinkle in God's eye,
made to shine, reflect the glory,
given light and space to fly.

Alleluia, all creation! Alleluia, everyone!

Sarah laughed at God's good timing,
Mary sang and David danced,
Jesus smiled and hugged the children —
so is life for us enhanced.

Alleluia, all creation! Alleluia, everyone!

Every day sing alleluia!
We are loved, though so absurd,
human, foolish, chosen people,
grace by God to us transferred!
Alleluia, all creation! Alleluia, everyone!

(Text: Shirley Erena Murray © 1992 Hope Publishing Company)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us affirm our faith together:

I believe in God, who places joy in our souls, dancing in our toes and songs in our hearts.

I believe God wanted gladness to flow like a river and so created a bountiful earth with plenty for all to share.

I believe in Jesus,

who turned water into wine, partied with outcasts and sinners, & touched the broken so they could leap & dance.

I believe Jesus opened the doors and set an extra place so we could feast.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

who prompts us to smile, who sends us invitations to come and dine, who nudges us to openness and tenderness.

I believe the Spirit is present every time we gather to break bread

and is always urging us to live joyfully and walk hopefully.

Forever, I will live in the embrace of God and be a witness to resurrection joy. Amen

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Leader:

As members and friends of Salem Church, let us remind ourselves who we are:

We are a community of Christian disciples called by the Holy Spirit.

In response to God's transforming love, we share our joy through praise and service.

May it be so!

Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Leader:

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection,
we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Individual worshipers are invited to read aloud petitions as moved by the Spirit.

For those whose hearts are fervent with love for your gospel,
that they are empowered to tell the story of your love in their lives and to show hospitality in response to this love.
We pray for our mission partners, especially today for Camp Calumet Lutheran,
and for our Salem members and families, especially those celebrating their birthdays last week and this week:
Gabriella Rosa, Barbara Davis, Domenick D'Andrea, Judi Nielsen, Julia DeWalt, Ian Dow, Tracey Wilkins, and Howard Swanson.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the diverse natural world: for jungles, prairies, forests, valleys, mountains,
and for all the wild and endangered animals who call these spaces home, that they are nurtured and protected.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For broken systems we have inherited and that we continue to perpetuate, forgive us.
Restrain the nations from fighting over limited resources. Redeem us from the cycles of scarcity and violence.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all who call upon your healing name, give rest.
Stay with us, and walk with all those who are hungry, friendless, despairing, and desiring healing in body and spirit, especially
Barbara, Jerry, Andrea, Audry, Diane, Dolores, Dawn, Grace, Hazel, Jacob, Jana, Katherine, Liz, Maria, Martha, Ron, Sarah, Steve,
and all we name in our hearts.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Create in our hearts a yearning to rest in your promise of eternal and resurrected life.
Give us thankful hearts for those who have died, even as we look forward to the hope of new life with you.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Thanksgiving

OFFERING

Leader:

Jesus, you said, "Give, and it will be given to you...
for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

**Give us the confidence to cheerfully give
our tithes & offerings of time, talent & treasure
to your work in this place, trusting that you will provide abundantly for all our needs.
We pray this in the power of your Spirit.**

Amen



Leader:

In response to God's grace, it is our joy to return to God our tithes and offerings.
Although our building at 3160 Park Avenue in Bridgeport, CT is closed at present,
our financial obligations continue and we are dependent upon your generosity.

If you are watching and are part of another faith community,
we encourage you to give your tithes to your own church first,
and, if in addition to that, you would like to support our work here at Salem, we would be most grateful.

Simply go to the menu on our website at SalemBridgeport.org and click "donate"
or scan the QR code here in our Sunday worship program with a QR reader on your smart phone
which will take you to that page.

OFFERTORY CAROL

GOD BLESS YOU MERRY SINNER

(Tune: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen)

God bless you merry sinner you're forgiven it is true; Remember Christ your Savior has lived and died for you, and lives again as King of Kings of saint and sinner, too.

Oh - , tidings of Easter peace and joy, peace - and joy. Oh - , tidings of Easter peace and joy.

On Calvary upon a hill that dismal Friday morn, amid the pain and suffering eternal life was born.
It came with arms outstretched to us, right through the curtain torn.

Oh - , tidings of Easter peace and joy, peace - and joy. Oh - , tidings of Easter peace and joy.

So sing your "Alleluia!" for our Savior's victory, and shout to all "Hosanna!" for we all have been set free from sin and death and devil's grip throughout eternity.

Oh - , tidings of Easter peace and joy, peace - and joy. Oh - , tidings of Easter peace and joy.

(text by Paul Lintern, Lutheran pastor, humorist and motivational speaker)

Leader:

Let us pray. (a brief silence) God of all love and all power,
we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us —
our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love.

Receive them for the sake of the One who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Sending

BLESSING

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer & supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Amen

SENDING CAROL

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

(Tune: *Go Tell It on the Mountain*)

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere, Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus is alive.

While soldiers watched the gravesite that quiet Sunday dawn there came a big commotion and then the storm was gone.

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere, Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus is alive.

The women found no body their spices to anoint; instead they found an angel, God's message to appoint.

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere, Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus is alive.

Go from where He isn't to where He said He'd be. An Easter-time reunion: the hills of Galilee.

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere, Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus is alive.

(text by Paul Lintern, Lutheran pastor, humorist and motivational speaker)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace.

And may the Spirit of the Risen Christ fill you with so much laughter, love and life
that your hearts overflow with sparkling joy that lights up the world around you!

Thanks be to God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAYER REQUESTS, THANKSGIVINGS, GOD-SIGHTINGS

*Please email announcements, prayer requests, thanksgivings and God-sightings
to the Church Office at salemsec123@sbcglobal.net
so they can be distributed to the congregation.*

CREDITS

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Announcements

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,
our building at 3160 Park Avenue has been closed until further notice and in-person worship and meetings cancelled.*

*Even though the church building is closed, if we can help in any way,
please know that you can still call the church office at 203-330-3300 and leave a message
and your message will be picked up remotely and your call returned.*

Please also do not hesitate to call or text Pastor Marjo at 203-982-3441.

*Pastor Marjo and our Office Manager, Karl, will be working primarily from their homes.
Pastor Marjo plans to come in on Sundays to stream worship and Karl plans to come in once a week
to take care of tasks that cannot be accomplished remotely.*

Worship will be streamed from the sanctuary via FacebookLive and YouTube at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. Please join us!

If you'd like to help lead worship please text or call Pastor Marjo at 203-982-3441.

If you can't watch at 9:30 Sundays, the video will be saved to Facebook and YouTube so you can watch it later.

Both the Sunday bulletin & the sermon will be available on our website at SalemBridgeport.org

*If your Salem committee or group would like to meet via Zoom, please contact Karl
by emailing him at salemsec123@sbcglobal.net or by leaving a message on the church phone, 203-336-3300.*

Even though the building is closed, our financial obligations continue.

We encourage you to continue to support Salem as generously as you can.

*Also, in order to protect our staff and volunteers from having to spend time in the building, handling cash and checks,
we strongly urge you to make your donations online.*

Just click on the donate tab at SalemBridgeport.org, and follow the instructions.

It takes less than 5 minutes the first time and you can set it up for automatic payments if you want.

*If you need help accessing Facebook or our website or donating online,
please call Karl so we can get you the help you need.*

And if you need pastoral care - even just to talk - please don't hesitate to call or text Pastor Marjo at 203-982-3441.