

EASTER 2024

# Wandering Heart

*"And I hope"*

Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb.  
(LUKE 24:12)

## Immanuel Lutheran Church, Forest City, Iowa

Pastors: Rod Hopp, Zech Anderson, Intern Elizabeth Carr  
[www.immanuelfamily.com](http://www.immanuelfamily.com)

in person | live stream | on the radio

March 31, 2024 7:30 & 9:15am

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**EASTER MORNING** poem by Rev. Sarah Speed

I cannot stay away on Easter Morning.

Like Peter, I would run if I could.

Stop the car, pump my arms, take the church steps two at a time, all to know—

Did it happen? Did it really happen?

Is evil no match for love?

I'd slide down the center aisle. I'd grab the mic to ask the angels,

The heavens, the children.

Were the stories true?

And in response, the choir would sing, "Alleluia."

The children would flower the cross.

The preacher would pass the peace and welcome strangers, and make room in the pews.

And with faith over doubt, I would hope.

For I image that all of that ordinary holiness would be enough for Peter,

And it would be enough for me.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

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### PRELUDE

VIDEO: "I wonder as I wander" Audrey Assad

OPENING HYMN: "**Jesus Christ is Risen Today**" #365 Choir (9:15) & Congregation

### CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Yesterday we thought death had won. Yesterday we thought all was lost. Yesterday we thought Christ was gone.

**C: But not today. Today we know that love has won. Today we know that hope is real. Today we know that Christ is here.**

L: We have a reason for joy!

**C: We have a reason to sing!**

L: Alleluia!

**C: Alleluia!**

L: Christ is risen, alleluia!

**C: Christ is risen indeed, alleluia!**

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

God of new beginnings, on that first Easter morning, the disciples struggled to hear the good news. Doubt clouded their minds. Negativity took root and hope vanished with a simple shake of their heads. We return to this familiar story, help us to hear differently this morning. Open our ears so that we might hear the sound of Alleluias ringing through. Open our minds that the mystery and joy of Easter might feel within reach. Open our hearts that we might believe the unbelievable. And like Peter, in this hearing, may we move closer to you today and every day until you come again to make all things new. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 25:6-9

PSALM: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 [read responsively]

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God's mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>**Let Israel now declare, "God's mercy endures forever."**

<sup>14</sup>The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

<sup>15</sup>**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous:**

**"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!**

<sup>16</sup>The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

**<sup>17</sup>I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

**<sup>19</sup>Open for me the gates of righteousness;**

**I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**

<sup>20</sup>“This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter.”

**<sup>21</sup>I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.**

<sup>22</sup>The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

**<sup>23</sup>By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

<sup>24</sup>This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: “Easter Fanfares” Michael Coe

Bell Choir (9:15)

GOSPEL: Luke 24:1-12

Pastor: On the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared.

**Women: We found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when we went in, we did not find the body. We were perplexed about this, and suddenly two messengers in dazzling clothes stood beside us. We were terrified and we bowed our faces to the ground, but the men said to us,**

**Messengers (20 yr. olds & younger): “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again.”**

**Women: Then we remembered his words, and returning from the tomb we told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.**

Pastor: Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles.

**Men: But these words seemed to us an idle tale, and we did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he came home, amazed at what had happened.**

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**ALL: Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON / SERMON

Pastor Rod Hopp

HYMN OF THE DAY: “**Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds**”

#367

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *L: God of grace, C: hear our prayer.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: "Remember what he told you," the angels proclaim to the women. Remember. It's one of the words Jesus used at his last supper, and it's one of the first words we hear at the empty tomb. Remember. This call to remember is why we need the prayer of confession and these words of forgiveness every single week. It's not enough to hear of God's grace once. We need to hear it over and over again, week after week. We need to remember that God's grace and mercy will never run out. So, friends, let us run to God like the women ran to the tomb. Let us tell the truth of our lives so that once again we can remember that our God is a God of grace, mercy, and love. Let us pray together the prayer of confession.

**C: The stone is rolled away! We assume it is a mistake. The angels say, "He is not here!" We assume their news is fake. The women tell the story, but we do not want to hear it. Peter runs to the tomb, but we do not understand. Forgive us, God, for thinking an empty tomb is nothing more than a prank. Forgive us for seeing discarded burial cloths and still holding tight to death. Forgive us for pushing away reasons for hope and joy when you are alive and well in the world. Teach us to see what you see. Unravel the threads of our unbelief. Amen.**

L: The angels tell the women, "Remember what Jesus told you." So, church, remember this: You are seen. You are forgiven. You are held in God's grace. All of this is true. Grace and mercy abound for you. Remember this, because He lives, you shall live also! **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE: *L: The peace of Christ be with you always. C: And also with you.*

OFFERING: "Jesus is Risen" Choir (9:15)

OFFERTORY: "**Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing**" #389 vs. 1&4

OFFERING PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION / LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION: "**At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing**" #362 vs. 1-5,7  
"**The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done**" #366

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING / PRAYER

SENDING HYMN: "**Thine is the Glory**" #376 Choir (9:15) & Congregation

BLESSING

DISMISSAL: Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE

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