

Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church—Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Easter Song Service
April 5, 2026
Sermon by Pastor Gary A. Pufahl
It's a new day.

Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷ Purge out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, just as you are unleavened. For our Passover lamb has been sacrificed, namely, Christ! ⁸ So let us keep celebrating the festival, not with old yeast, not with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

—1 Corinthians 5:6-8

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb” (John 20:1). Just think! The stone is rolled away! Of course, that's not what released Jesus from the tomb. It wasn't the rolling away of the stone that set him free from death. No. In the resurrection, Jesus transcends time, space, and death; those things which limit human existence. So, the stone was not rolled away for Jesus, but it was rolled away for Mary and for the disciples and for us. We need to see the evidence that the Christ has triumphed. We need to see the empty tomb so that we might believe, and through believing have life in his name. We need to see the empty tomb so that the risen Christ can dry our tears and remove our fears.

Just a few days ago, we heard the words, **“Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was *betrayed*, took bread”** (1 Corinthians 11:23). He was *betrayed*. Literally, he was handed over. Oh, yes, he was betrayed by Judas and in essence betrayed by all of humanity. But he was also *handed over* by the Father. He was *handed over* as the Passover Lamb to be the once-for-all sacrifice for sins. Just think. It was the Father who sacrificed his Son. We saw that on Good Friday. And now today we celebrate the fact that it was also the Father who raised him from the dead.

You see, God is the orchestrator here. God is the active agent in our salvation. The apostle Paul calls us to see the crucifixion for what it truly must be: The victory of *God* over sin, death, and the reign of darkness. And *that* victory changes your life!

Paul talks about that change as he writes to the Corinthians. He reminds them and us that we are a new community, cleansed from the **“old yeast.”** That came about because God fulfilled his promise to send Jesus as the Passover Lamb, **“the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”** (John 1:29).

So, what happened on that Easter dawn? Yes, Jesus rose from the dead. Yes, he's alive. But that means something for you. It matters. In 1 Corinthians 5, the apostle Paul says that Jesus' resurrection has signified the Kingdom of God has dawned on earth, and by it the world is being remade. On a Sunday God started the creation process of the world. And on this Sunday, Easter Sunday, God begins the spiritual remaking of people. And where does that start? Well, it started with the Corinthians. And it starts with you. The crucified Christ is the basis for your holiness. You share in Christ's holiness. How? Because you have been baptized into his death and resurrection. Therefore, you are a new creation, and today is a new day!

What does that mean for us? Leave the old yeast of sin lying in the tomb and walk in the newness of resurrection. No wonder Paul exhorts us **“to keep celebrating the festival.”** Every day is now an Easter Day! So, when you wake up every morning, just as you did this Easter morning, you can boldly proclaim, **“It's a new day! It's an Easter day!”** Amen.