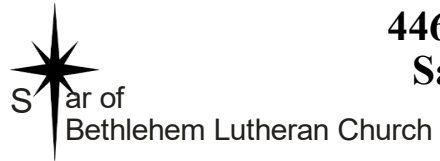


The Sixth Sunday in LENT





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Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, March 29th, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Sixth Sunday in LENT — PASSION SUNDAY

Theme of the day: Lutherans have a long history of remembering the Savior's Passion in midweek services during the season of Lent. The more common practice, in history and in the experience of the wider church, is to read the Passion history on the first Sunday of Holy Week, as we are doing today...

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: Dear friends in Christ: Today we come together to begin the solemn celebration of Holy Week. Jesus entered in triumph into his own city to complete his work as our Messiah: to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us remember with devotion his entry that culminated at the empty tomb and follow him with sincere faith. United with him by baptism, we share in his resurrection and new life. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

OPENING HYMN: # 412:1,4,5 “All Glory, Laud, and Honor”

♪ **All glory, laud, and honor to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.
You are the King of Israel and David’s royal Son,
now in the Lord’s name coming, our King and Blessed One.**

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.
To you before your passion they sang their hymns of praise;
to you, now high exalted, our melody we raise.**

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.
As you received their praises, accept the prayers we bring,
O Source of ev’ry blessing, our good and gracious King.**

PALM SUNDAY READING: Zechariah 9:9-10

Rejoice greatly, Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!
Look! Your King is coming to you.
He is righteous and brings salvation.
He is humble and is riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem.
The battle bow will be taken away,
and he will proclaim peace to the nations.
His kingdom will extend from sea to sea,
from the River to the ends of the earth.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.

M: Let us go forth in peace,

C: In the name of the Lord.

M: We praise you, O God, for the great acts of love by which you redeemed us through your Son, Jesus Christ. As he was acclaimed by those who scattered their garments and branches in his path, so may we always hail him as our King and follow him with perfect confidence; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

M: Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the author of our faith and the one who brings it to its goal. (*Hebrews 12:2*)

C: The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

(*John 12:23*)

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 26:1-35

The Plot to Kill Jesus

(*Mark 14:1-2; Luke 22:1-2; John 11:45-57*)

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, ²“You know that after two days it will be the Passover, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

³Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas. ⁴They plotted together how to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. ⁵But they said, “Not during the Festival, or else there might be a riot among the people.”

Mary Anoints Jesus

(*Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8*)

⁶When Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷a woman approached him holding an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume. She poured it on his head as he was reclining at the table. ⁸But when his disciples saw this, they were upset and said, “Why this waste? ⁹This perfume could have been sold for a lot of money and given to the poor.”

¹⁰Jesus was aware of this and said to them, “Why are you causing trouble for this woman? She has done a beautiful thing for me. ¹¹You are always going to have the poor with you, but you are not always going to have me. ¹²When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. ¹³Amen I tell you: Wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told in memory of her.”

Judas Plans to Betray Jesus
(Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:3-6)

¹⁴Then one of the Twelve, the one named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶From that time on Judas was looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

Jesus Celebrates the Passover
(Mark 14:12-17; Luke 22:7-17)

¹⁷On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

¹⁸He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him the Teacher says, ‘My time is near. I will observe the Passover with my disciples at your house.’”

¹⁹The disciples did as Jesus commanded them and prepared the Passover. ²⁰When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve.

One Will Betray Jesus
(Mark 14:18-21; Luke 22:21-23; John 13:21-30)

²¹As they were eating, he said, “Amen I tell you: One of you will betray me.”

²²They were very sad and began to say to him one after another, “Surely, not I, Lord?”

²³He replied, “The one who dipped his hand in the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴The Son of Man is going just as it is written about him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born.”

²⁵Judas, who betrayed him, replied, “Surely, not I, Rabbi?”

He said to him, “Yes, you are the one.”

The Lord’s Supper
(Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples. He said, “Take, eat, this is my body.” ²⁷Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it all of you, ²⁸for this is my blood of the new testament, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you that I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” ³⁰After they sang a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Mark 14:27-31; Luke 22:31-34; John 13:36-38)

³¹Then Jesus said to them, "This night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' ³²But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

³³Peter answered him, "Even if all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."

³⁴Jesus said to him, "Amen I tell you: Tonight before the rooster crows you will deny me three times."

³⁵Peter said to him, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you." And all the disciples said the same.

HYMN: # 431:1,2,6 "O Perfect Life of Love"

♪ **O, perfect life of love! All, all is finished now,
all that he left his throne above to do for us below.**

**No work is left undone of all the Father willed;
his toil, his sorrows, one by one, the Scriptures have fulfilled.**

**In ev'ry time of need, before the judgment throne,
your works, O Lamb of God, I'll plead,
your merits, not my own.**

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 26:36-56

Gethsemane

(Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46)

³⁶Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane. He told his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and he began to be sorrowful and distressed. ³⁸Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death. Stay here, and keep watch with me."

³⁹He went a little farther, fell on his face, and prayed. He said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

⁴⁰He came to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “So, were you not able to stay awake with me for one hour?
⁴¹Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

⁴²He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to pass from me unless I drink it, may your will be done.” ⁴³Again he returned and found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴He left them again, went away, and prayed a third time. He said the same words as before. ⁴⁵Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise. Let us go. Look, my betrayer is near.”

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

(Mark 14:43-52; Luke 22:47-54; John 18:1-14)

⁴⁷While Jesus was still speaking, suddenly Judas (one of the Twelve) arrived. With him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now the betrayer had given them a sign: “The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him.” ⁴⁹Immediately he went to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.

⁵⁰Jesus said to him, “Friend, why are you here?”

Then they advanced, took hold of Jesus, and arrested him. ⁵¹Suddenly, one of the men with Jesus reached out his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place, because all who take the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Do you not realize that I could call on my Father, and at once he would provide me with more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?”

⁵⁵At that same time Jesus said to the crowd, “Have you come out to arrest me with swords and clubs as if I were a robber? Day after day I was sitting in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has happened so that the writings of the prophets would be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

HYMN: #425:1,2 “Go to Dark Gethsemane”

♪ **Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter’s pow’r;
your Redeemer’s conflict see, watch with him one bitter hour.
Turn not from his griefs away;
learn from Jesus Christ to pray.**

**Follow to the judgment hall, view the Lord of life arraigned.
Oh, the wormwood and the gall,
oh, the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suff'ring, pain, or loss;
learn from him to bear the cross.**

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 26:57-75

Jesus' First Trial in the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-65)

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the experts in the law and the elders were assembled. ⁵⁸Peter was following him at a distance and went as far as the courtyard of the high priest. He went inside and sat down with the guards to see how it would turn out.

⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰They found none, even though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward ⁶¹and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"

⁶²The high priest stood up and said to him, "Have you no answer? What is this that these men are testifying against you?" ⁶³But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I place you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!"

⁶⁴Jesus said to him, "It is as you have said. But I tell you, soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? See, you have just heard the blasphemy! ⁶⁶What do you think?"

They answered, "He is deserving of death!" ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and punched him. Some slapped him ⁶⁸and said, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who hit you?"

Peter Denies Jesus

(Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18,25-27)

⁶⁹Meanwhile Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came to him and said, "You were also with Jesus the Galilean."

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, "I don't know what you're talking about."

⁷¹When Peter went out to the entryway, someone else saw him and said to those who were there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷²Again Peter denied it with an oath and said, “I do not know the man.”

⁷³After a little while those who stood by came and said to Peter, “Surely you are also one of them because even your accent gives you away.”

⁷⁴Then he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know the man!” Just then the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵And Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

HYMN: #432:3,6,7 “O Dearest Jesus, What Law Have You Broken”

♪ **Whence come these sorrows, whence this mortal anguish?
It is my sins for which you, Lord, must languish;
yes, all the wrath, the woe that you inherit, this I do merit.**

**I’ll think upon your mercy without ceasing,
that earth’s vain joys to me no more be pleasing;
to do your will shall be my sole endeavor henceforth forever.**

**And when, dear Lord, before your throne in heaven
to me the crown of joy at last is given,
where sweetest hymns your saints forever raise you,
I too shall praise you.**

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 27:1-26

Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people reached the decision to put Jesus to death. ²They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor.

The End of Judas

³Then when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he felt remorse. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders ⁴and said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? That’s your problem.”

⁵He threw the pieces of silver into the temple and left. Then he went out and hanged himself. ⁶The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, “It is not lawful to put these into the treasury, since it is blood money.” ⁷They reached a decision to buy the potter’s field with the money, as a burial place for foreigners. ⁸So that field has been called The Field of Blood to this day.

⁹Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price the sons of Israel had set for him, ¹⁰and they gave them for the potter's field, just as the Lord commanded me.

Jesus' Trial in Pilate's Court
(*Mark 15:1-5; Luke 23:1-4; John 18:28-38*)

¹¹When Jesus stood in the presence of the governor, the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."

¹²When he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. ¹³Then Pilate said to him, "Don't you hear how many things they are testifying against you?"

¹⁴But he did not answer him—not even one word, so that the governor was very surprised.

Barabbas or Jesus?
(*Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:17-25; John 18:39-40*)

¹⁵At the time of the Festival the governor had a custom to release to the crowd any one prisoner they wanted. ¹⁶At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner named Barabbas. ¹⁷So when they were assembled, Pilate said to them, "Which one do you want me to release to you? Barabbas—or Jesus, who is called Christ?" ¹⁸For Pilate knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because of envy.

¹⁹While he was sitting on the judgment seat, Pilate's wife sent him a message. "Have nothing to do with that righteous man," she said, "since I have suffered many things today in a dream because of him."

²⁰But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus put to death. ²¹The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

"Barabbas!" they said.

²²Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Crucify him!"

²³But the governor said, "Why? What has he done wrong?"

But they kept shouting even louder: "Crucify him!"

²⁴When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing and that instead it was turning into a riot, he took water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am innocent of this righteous man's blood. It is your responsibility."

²⁵And all the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!"

²⁶Then he released Barabbas to them, but he had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified.

HYMN: # 431:3,4,5 “O Perfect Life of Love”

♪ **No pain that we can share but he has felt its smart;
all forms of human grief and care
have pierced that tender heart.**

**And on his thorn-crowned head and on his sinless soul
our sins in all their guilt were laid
that he might make us whole.**

**In perfect love he dies; for me he dies, for me!
O all-atoning Sacrifice, you died to make me free!**

THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 27:27-66

Soldiers Mock Jesus

(Mark 15:16-19; John 19:1-3)

²⁷Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort of soldiers around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. ²⁹They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, knelt in front of him, and mocked him by saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰They spit on him, took the staff, and hit him repeatedly on his head.

The Crucifixion

(Mark 15:20-32; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:16-27)

³¹After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

³²As they were going out of the city, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon. They forced him to carry Jesus’ cross. ³³They came to a place called Golgotha, which means, “The place of the skull.” ³⁴They offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵After they had crucified him, they divided his clothing among themselves by casting lots. ³⁶Then they sat down and were keeping watch over him there. ³⁷Above his head they posted the written charge against him: “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

³⁸At the same time two criminals were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹People who passed by kept insulting him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰and saying, “You who were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!”

⁴¹In the same way the chief priests, experts in the law, and elders kept mocking him. They said, ⁴²“He saved others, but he cannot save himself. If he’s the King of Israel, let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now, if he wants him, because he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” ⁴⁴In the same way even the criminals who were crucified with him kept insulting him.

Jesus’ Death

(Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49; John 19:28-37)

⁴⁵From the sixth hour until the ninth hour, there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

⁴⁷When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “This fellow is calling for Elijah.”

⁴⁸Immediately one of them ran, took a sponge, and soaked it with sour wine. Then he put it on a stick and gave him a drink. ⁴⁹The rest said, “Leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

⁵⁰After Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. ⁵¹Suddenly, the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and rocks were split. ⁵²Tombs were opened, and many bodies of saints who had fallen asleep were raised to life. ⁵³Those who came out of the tombs went into the holy city after Jesus’ resurrection and appeared to many people. ⁵⁴When the centurion and those who were guarding Jesus with him saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they were terrified and said, “Truly this was the Son of God.”

⁵⁵Many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and who had served him were there, watching from a distance. ⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

Jesus’ Burial

(Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42)

⁵⁷When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb that he had cut in the rock. He rolled a large stone over the tomb’s entrance and left. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there sitting opposite the tomb.

The Guard

⁶²On the next day, which was the day after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered in the presence of Pilate ⁶³and said, “Sir, we remembered what that deceiver said while he was still alive: ‘After three days I will rise again.’ ⁶⁴So give a command that the tomb be made secure until the third day. Otherwise his disciples might steal his body and tell the people, ‘He is risen from the dead.’ And this last deception will be worse than the first.”

⁶⁵Pilate said to them, “You have a guard. Go, make it as secure as you know how.” ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and posting a guard.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.

M: Let us go forth in peace,

C: In the name of the Lord.

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

**and is seated at the right hand of God
the Father almighty.**

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;

the holy Christian Church,

the communion of saints;

the forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body;

and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN: #425:3 “Go to Dark Gethsemane”

♪ **Calv’ry’s mournful mountain climb;
there, adoring at his feet,
mark that miracle of time,
God’s own sacrifice complete.
“It is finished!” hear him cry;
learn from Jesus Christ to die.**

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD’S PRAYER

C: 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.

**M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.**

**The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.**

C: ♪ Amen. Amen. Amen.

HYMN: # 429:4,5 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”

♪ **My burden in your passion,
Lord, you have borne for me,
for it was my transgression,
my shame, on Calvary.
I cast me down before you;
wrath is my rightful lot.
Have mercy, I implore you;
Redeemer, spurn me not!**

**What language shall I borrow
to thank you, dearest Friend,
for this, your dying sorrow,
your pity without end?
O make me yours forever,
and keep me strong and true;
Lord, let me never, never
outlive my love for you.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS for today's service were given to the glory of God by the Evers in celebration of Evelyn's birthday.

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: little Elias, Dennis Douglas, George Caravana, Molly Webb, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Marlene Washburn, Helen Cummings, Delores Bass, Rick Stovall, Suzy Garvin, Linda Wilkinson, and Kathie Stillwater.

EASTER BRUNCHEON: After our Easter worship next Sunday we will be joining in a fellowship meal. Ham is being provided for all, so if you wouldn't mind bringing supporting side dishes and desserts, we should end up with a very nice spread.

THIS WEEK

Thursday	Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 7 p.m.
Friday	Good Friday Tenebrae Service, 7:00 p.m.
Sunday	Bible Class and Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
	Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
	Brunch and Egg Hunt - after service

