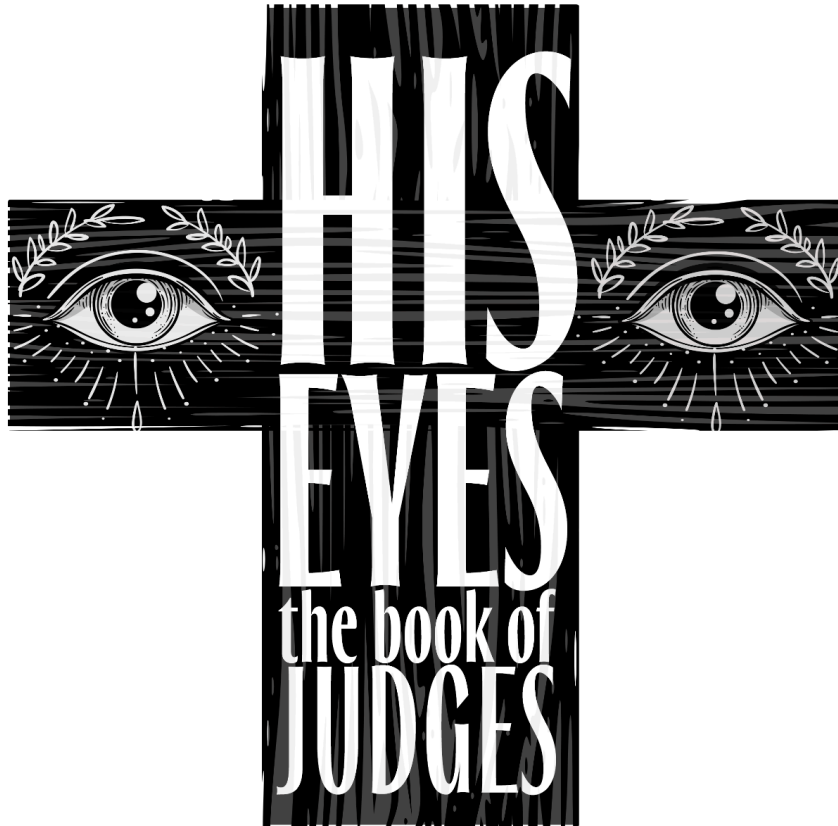


# Sunday Service

May 5, 2024 - 8:30 AM & 10:15 AM  
Livestream at 10:15 AM



## Grace Lutheran Church

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Port St. Lucie, FL 34986-2034

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[www.GraceLutheranPSL.com](http://www.GraceLutheranPSL.com)

Pastor Cris Escher

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# Welcome...

We are so happy that you are here with us today. Our desire is to be like another home for you. If you are new to Grace or to the area and are looking for a church home, we hope you will consider joining our family here at Grace. A Fellowship Time is held after each Worship Service, and we invite you to stay for a few minutes so we can get acquainted.

To our many members and friends worshiping at home, whether near or far, we are so happy that you are sharing this worship with us from your homes. [www.GraceLutheranPSL.com](http://www.GraceLutheranPSL.com)

## Kids at Grace

By the entrance into the sanctuary, busy bags are available for children to use. During the 10:15 service, before the sermon, Ms. Coli will take children (3 and older) to the other building for an engaging lesson about our hope in Jesus. Children are returned to their families right after the prayers. There is also a quiet room outside the sanctuary with toys and the live stream, if families need a place for younger children throughout the service.

## Holy Communion

This meal is weird and wonderful: weird because we actually believe that the bread and wine are the Body and Blood of Jesus the Christ; wonderful because Jesus is with us. We take this meal very seriously here at Grace. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out and allow us to answer your questions. **Children** who have not been instructed in the meaning of the Sacrament may come to the Lord's Table with their parents for a blessing but are asked to fold their arms across their chests to indicate they are to receive a blessing.

**THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMMUNION:** After the closing hymn, Pastor Cris will pronounce the sending and then for those who wish to share in the celebration of communion shall remain. ***For those who have an intolerance to wine, grape juice is lighter colored on the tray, center.*** Those who find it difficult to walk to the altar can be communed at your seat. Please inform the usher of your need. After Pastor Cris has given your group the blessing at the altar, you may place your cup in the basket and depart from the Sanctuary down the center aisle, and enjoy fellowship in the hall.

## His Eyes: The Book of Judges

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes, but they are never far from His eyes.

## Cultured Jephthah

Jephthah tragically misunderstands God's nature, thinking that God will only act because of grossly large devotion. But the actual kingdom of God is one of grace and forgiveness that sets us free.

## ---- THE OPENING HYMN

**"Because He Lives"** (TCH 358 vs 1-3) (V1-3.mp4) (MM Praise pg 135) (ccli 16880)

1. *God sent His son, they called Him Jesus  
He came to love, heal and forgive  
He lived and died to buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove my savior lives*

**(REFRAIN)**

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives, all fear is gone  
Because I know He holds the future  
And life is worth the living, just because He lives.*

2. *How sweet to hold a new born baby  
And feel the pride and joy He gives  
But greater still the calm assurance  
This child can face uncertain days, because He lives (REFRAIN)*

3. *And then one day, I'll cross the river  
I'll fight life's final war with pain  
And then, as death gives way to victory  
I'll see the light of glory and I'll know He reigns (REFRAIN)*

## --- Opening

*Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. - John 13:1*

## --- THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**(Take a moment of silent reflection upon our need for God's forgiveness)**

Pastor: *O Almighty God,*

**PEOPLE: GOD, OUR LOVING FATHER,**

**WE CONFESS THAT WE ARE OFTEN IMPATIENT AND RUSH TO CRITICIZE.**

**WE TAKE OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOR GRANTED.**

**WE ARE OFTEN UNGRATEFUL AND NOT GRACIOUS.**

**WE OFTEN EXPECT CHURCH TO MIRROR OUR OWN BIASES.**

**WE FORGET TO ASK FOR OUR CHURCH TO MIRROR YOU.**

**WE OFTEN USE YOUR SCRIPTURES TO SUPPORT OUR OPINIONS.**

**WE FORGET THAT THEY ARE A LAMP TO OUR FEET AND A LIGHT TO OUR PATH.**

**OUR HOPE IS CENTERED ON OURSELVES AND NOT ON YOU.**

**RENEW US, LORD, THAT WE MAY DELIGHT IN YOUR WILL**

**AND WALK IN YOUR WAYS, TO THE GLORY OF YOUR HOLY NAME. AMEN.**

*Pastor: The story of Jesus is about life and forgiveness... You are God's beloved; you are a child of the resurrection. Live in the hope of new life. God loves you, and God is the restorer of hope. Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN*

## --THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

*Pastor: Let us pray.*

*Almighty and merciful God, you send your Holy Spirit to be the light and life of all your people. Open our hearts to receive His riches, so that we may produce the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen*

## --THE HYMN OF PRAISE

**"This is the Feast"** (LW pg 161)

***This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.***

***Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,  
Whose blood set us free to be people of God.***

***This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.***

***Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and Honor, blessing, and glory are His.***

***This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.***

***Sing with all the people of God, And join in the hymn of all creation:***

***Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and Lamb forever. Amen.***

***This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.***

***For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.***

***This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, al-le-lu-ia.***

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## THE FIRST LESSON Judges 11:1-11

Once ostracized as a violent outsider, Jephthah, now a leader of outcasts, finds himself reluctantly courted by his former family as they face war.

Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior. His father was Gilead; his mother was a prostitute. Gilead's wife also bore him sons, and when they were

grown up, they drove Jephthah away. "You are not going to get any inheritance in our family," they said, "because you are the son of another woman." So Jephthah fled from his brothers and settled in the land of Tob, where a gang of scoundrels gathered around him and followed him.

Some time later, when the Ammonites were fighting against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. "Come," they said, "be our

commander, so we can fight the Ammonites.”

Jephthah said to them, “Didn’t you hate me and drive me from my father’s house? Why do you come to me now, when you’re in trouble?”

The elders of Gilead said to him, “Nevertheless, we are turning to you now; come with us to fight the Ammonites, and you will be head over all of us who live in Gilead.”

Jephthah answered, “Suppose you take

me back to fight the Ammonites and the Lord gives them to me—will I really be your head?”

The elders of Gilead replied, “The Lord is our witness; we will certainly do as you say.” So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them. And he repeated all his words before the Lord in Mizpah.

*Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.*

**PEOPLE: THANKS BE TO GOD**

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## THE SECOND LESSON

### Romans 11:25-27

Israel's temporary setback paves the way for Gentiles to join God's family, ultimately leading to Israel's full salvation.

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,

and in this way all Israel will be saved.

As it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.

And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

*Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.*

**PEOPLE: THANKS BE TO GOD**

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## THE HOLY GOSPEL

### Matthew 21:23-32

Jesus uses a question and a parable to expose the hypocrisy of the religious leaders, showing even outcasts are closer to God.

Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. “By what authority are you doing

these things?” they asked. “And who gave you this authority?”

Jesus replied, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he

will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet."

So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

"I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

"Then the father went to the other son

and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

"Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The first," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

PEOPLE: PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST

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--- PROFESSION

THE NICENE CREED

--THE OFFERTORY

"Create in me a clean heart" (LW pg 143)

***Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit with-in me.***

***Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.***

***Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your free Spirit.***

--- THE SERMON

His Eyes: The Book of Judges - Cultured Jephthah

--- HYMN OF DAY

"Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me" (Robinson, Farren, Thompson #7121852)

1. ***What gift of grace is Jesus my redeemer  
There is no more for heaven now to give  
He is my joy my righteousness and freedom  
My steadfast love my deep and boundless peace  
To this I hold my hope is only Jesus  
For my life is wholly bound to his  
Oh how strange and divine I can sing all is mine  
Yet not I but through Christ in me***
2. ***The night is dark but I am not forsaken  
For by my side the Savior he will stay  
I labor on in weakness and rejoicing  
For in my need his power is displayed  
To this I hold my Shepherd will defend me  
Through the deepest valley he will lead  
Oh the night has been won and I shall overcome  
Yet not I but through Christ in me***
3. ***No fate I dread I know I am forgiven  
The future sure the price it has been paid  
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon  
And he was raised to overthrow the grave  
To this I hold my sin has been defeated  
Jesus now and ever is my plea  
Oh the chains are released I can sing I am free  
Yet not I but through Christ in me***
4. ***With every breath I long to follow Jesus  
For he has said that he will bring me home  
And day by day I know he will renew me  
Until I stand with joy before the throne  
To this I hold my hope is only Jesus  
All the glory evermore to him  
When the race is complete still my lips shall repeat  
Yet not I but through Christ in me  
Yet not I but through Christ in me  
Yet not I but through Christ in me***

## --- PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

(after each petition)

*Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,*

**PEOPLE: HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

## --- THE LORD'S PRAYER

## ----- THE BLESSING

*Pastor: May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May the Lord look upon you with grace and redemption.  
May the Lord always walk before you and give you peace*

**PEOPLE: AMEN**

## ----THE CLOSING HYMN

### **"Thy Strong Word"** (LW 328 1&2, 4-6/LSB 578)

- 1. Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; at Thy speaking it was done;  
For created light we thank Thee, while Thine ordered seasons run.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!**
- 2. Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, dark as night and deep as death,  
Broke the light of thy salvation, breathed thine own life giving breath.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!**
- 4. From the cross Thy wisdom shining breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;  
From the cross forever beameth all Thy bright redeeming light.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!**
- 5. Give us lips to sing Thy glory, tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,  
Throats that shout the hope that fills us, mouths to speak Thy Holy name.  
Alleluia, alleluia! May the light that dost send  
Fill our songs with Alleluias, Alleluias without end.**
- 6. God the Father, light-creator, to Thee laud and honor be.  
To Thee, Light of Light begotten, praise be sung eternally.  
Holy Spirit, light-revealer, glory, glory be to Thee.  
Mortals, angels, now and ever praise the Holy Trinity!**



## ----- SENDING

*Pastor: Have peace knowing we are all with you.*

*Serve others knowing God walks before you.*

Those who wish to share in the celebration of Holy Communion may be seated.

## --- THE ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: May the Lord be with you!

**PEOPLE: AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**PEOPLE: WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**PEOPLE: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.**



Pastor: The tree of life in the midst of the garden was the tree of our defeat. Christ was lifted up on the tree of victory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored. And so we praise you ..

**PEOPLE: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD, GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT, HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY. HOSANNA, HOSANNA, HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST. BLESSED IS HE THAT COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST**

## ---- THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

After the pastor has consecrated the elements you are invited to come to the altar and receive communion. Please use the right or left aisle as you come forward to the altar. After the pastor has pronounced the blessing for your side, you may place your cup in the basket and depart the sanctuary down the center aisle. Go in peace, Serve the Lord.

*(Please remember that as you are leaving the sanctuary, others are still communing, please refrain from talking to others until you are in the Fellowship Hall, Thank You.)*

## --- ADDITIONAL HYMNS (On Projection Screens)

“Jesus Christ Is Risen Today ”

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

“Father Most Holy”

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

“You Are The Way Through You Alone”

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

# ---- THIS WEEK AT GRACE

## **Today**

**May 5, 2024**

Services

8:30 & 10:15 AM

Live-streamed on [www.gracelutheranpsl.com](http://www.gracelutheranpsl.com)

10:15 AM

Korean Church Worship

1:00 PM

## **Rest of the Week**

**May 6 - 11**

LWML Meeting

Monday, 1:00 PM

12 Step AA Meeting

Monday, 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Olivet School

Tuesday, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Crafter's Club

Wednesday, 10:00 AM

ACC Meeting

Wednesday, 12:00 PM

Korean Bible Study

Thursday, 10:30 AM

Grace Bible Study

Thursday, 11:00 AM

AA Meeting

Thursday, 7:15 PM - 9:30 PM

Sr. Walther League

Friday, 1:00 PM

Korean Church Prayer Gathering

Saturday, 6:00 AM

For complete calendar information, go to [www.gracelutheranpsl.com/calendar](http://www.gracelutheranpsl.com/calendar)

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK:** Richard Harms - 5/5, Vance Ablott & Linda Gannon - 5/6, Carol Miller - 5/9, Norm Neuberger & Hans VanDerlip - 5/11

**THE FLOWERS ADORNING THE ALTAR** are given to the glory of God by Kent Bowen's children in celebration of his birthday last Friday.



**LADIES:** LWML will have their monthly meeting **TOMORROW**, May 6. This will be the final meeting for this season so we will begin our meeting at **12:30 PM** with a potluck meal followed by Bible study and officer elections. All ladies are invited to attend for fellowship, fun, meal and some Bible study.

**SENIOR WALTHER LEAGUE:** This **Friday at 1:00 PM**, we will have the church fellowship open for everyone to come and socialize. We will provide some snacks, drinks and air conditioning. You can come to socialize, play cards or bring games you may have at home. Anything can happen! Let's try it! Leigh Liagre is setting it up. If you would like more information or to help, call or text Leigh at 772-418-4298.

**SECOND SUNDAY SCHOOL MOTHERS' RECEPTION:** Join us **next Sunday** for a brief Second Sunday School. Kids will share snacks, crafts, and a song with their families in the ACC Hall immediately following the 10:15 service to celebrate Mother's Day.

**OFFICE HOURS:** The “Church Office” is open in the ACC Complex from 9:00 AM through 12:00 (Noon) daily, Monday - Friday. The office is overseen on Monday by Diane Heinz, Tuesday - Friday by Kevin Garbers. Please feel free to stop by or call anytime during those hours. Office phone is 772 - 871 - 6599 After hours you can contact Kevin at 772-971-9200 or Pastor Cris at 770 - 328 - 5078.

**GIVING:** We are here to provide “Grace and Peace in a Confusing and Trying Time” to those in our church and community. Thank you for your past and continual prayers and financial support to Grace and your community. Thanks for your Support: [GraceLutheranPSL.com/give](http://GraceLutheranPSL.com/give)

**THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBER?** This month Grace received another \$184.00 from Thivent members. So far this year Grace Lutheran has received \$968 from Thivent Choice! Thank You! All “Choice Dollars” that are received go to paying down our mortgage on the new building. Thank you! Thank you Judy, Phil, Karen, Carol, Peter, Ed, Vance, Kevin, Leona, Shirley, Cheryl, Bertha, Victoria, Ed, Betsy and Bernard for directing your dollars to Grace.



**THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY:** THIS Thursday at 11:00 AM. Come here to the church or watch the Live Streamed for those at home as we study the book of Matthew.

**COMMUNION:** If you, or someone you know, would like to celebrate Holy Communion but prefer a small group or are unable to attend Sunday service, Pastor Cris is happy to celebrate the meal in a small group with you. **Please call the church at (772) 871-6599**, and Pastor Cris would be happy to set aside a time for you to come in and receive communion and partake of this wonderful meal.

**FROM THE ALZHEIMER'S COMMUNITY CARE CENTER!** There is a wish list of needs to assist in the operation of this center to help provide care for our clients. If you could help, it would be greatly appreciated. **Wish list:** Oatmeal Cookies - 04/30, Coconut Cream Pie - 05/08, Fruit Cocktail Cups - 05/13.

(Store Bought Items Only) (Dates listed indicate a special celebration on that day)

These items are needed regularly: Seasonal Crafts/Decorations, Balloons, Wild Bird Feed, Gift cards to Walmart for crafts, Assorted Bingo Prizes, Assorted Sugar Free Chocolate and Decaf Coffee. Thank you for your support!

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**5/05** *Worship assistants: 8:30 Vance A. / 10:15 Mike P.  
Scripture Readers: 8:30 Hans V. / 10:15 Heather P.*

**5/12** *Worship assistants: 8:30 Bob F. / 10:15 Dave V.  
Scripture Readers: 8:30 Judy F. / 10:15 Nancy O.*

***Readings: Judges 16:23-30, Romans 11:28-32, Matthew 22:34-46 (NIV)***

**QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK:** *His Eyes: The Book of Judges - Cultured Jephthah*

1. Can you think of a time in your own life where you approached God with a transactional mindset? Maybe a prayer bargain or feeling like you needed to "earn" God's favor? How did that make you feel?
2. Read Judges 11. Where did Jephthah come from? Who wanted him to be the leader? How is this different from the other Judges we've looked at so far in this series?
3. Why do you think Jephthah makes the vow that he does? What does this tell us about his view of God?
4. The sermon talks about God being a God of grace, not transactions. How can we better integrate this idea into our daily lives and avoid falling back into a performance-based faith?

## ***PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF..***

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*Susan Becker (Port St. Lucie Rehabilitation and Healthcare)*  
*Gerald (Jerry) Davis (Harbor Place, Senior Living Community)*  
*Diane Fox (Port St. Lucie Rehabilitation and Healthcare)*  
*Debra Lemke (A Touch of Class Adult Care)*  
*Norm Neuberger (Palms of St. Lucie West)*

*Mike Palmer and his family at the passing of his mother, Deborah Thompson*

Al & Doris Vollmann

Nancy Oldham

Thomas & Marilyn Piotrowicz

Claren Kerstner

Jenny Brendlinger

Joe Gannon

Judie Hunter

### **Friends and Family**

*Evelyn Scott (Surgery, Pastor Scott's mother)*

*Sarah Dowell Garcia and Fred Reynolds (cancer, friends of Lois Danzo)*

*Valerie Race (very sick, Gloria's niece in NY)*

*William Lemke (nephew of Victoria Thomason Diagnosed with bladder and pancreatitis cancer)*

*Donna Winters (Sister of Claren Kerstner)*

*Steven Zarrillo and family (who lost his wife Theresa, cousin of Leigh Liagre)*

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

***The lost and lonely people in the world that the message of Christ's love and forgiveness will be shared with them and they are able to find peace and joy in the knowledge of His resurrection.***