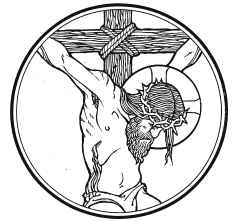


## Easter Bunny or Empty Tomb?

March 2024

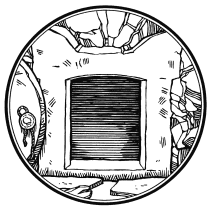
It seems as if there is no shortage on things to celebrate. The stores and online ads will remind you in case you forget. You can celebrate the changing of the seasons, moving into a new house, or getting a dog. It helps them sell stuff. I get it.

But what you will most likely not see too much celebrating over is the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. Yes, many stores and people will call it Easter but it will remain void of that Man who died for our sins and rose from that death alive. A Spring celebration is probably a more politically correct way for it to be marketed which at least is honest in what (or what is not) being lauded. The celebration of Easter should carry certain baggage with it - a joyful celebration that Jesus has defeated death and the grave for us and that all who believe in Him shall rise out of the grave alive with Him forever. But to celebrate this fact, one must also believe that they have sins for which Jesus had to die. It is to admit my sins and confess that Good Friday - the day we observe our Lord's crucifixion - is also a day that must take place for me. This is where the rubber meets the road and is likely why many are good with just the thought of Easter or the Spring celebration but don't want to delve too far into all that surrounds the Christian Easter.



So, enter the Easter Bunny. He's fun. He keeps real things safely at a distance. He won't mention to you that you had to be bought back from the grave by Jesus' shed blood and resurrection. He can't suggest that you might actually have sin that must be atoned for or else he might get canceled. He must not point to the empty tomb of Jesus and say, "Death, where is your victory, where is your sting?" because that would imply I actually need that Man, Jesus, to do what I cannot do which would be harmful to my ego. Which is why he's trapped being more of a bunny and not so much Easter and it's safe to celebrate bunnies. They're soft and cute and apparently either lay eggs or carry a bunch around with them. Either way, the Bunny will most likely be there to greet you at Walmart or Meijer as long as he behaves and sticks to promoting candy, tulips, and warm weather. Sure, he might be allowed to be near a little "He is risen" sign as long as Mr. Bunny stays in his lane and doesn't elaborate on who the "He" refers to on the sign if he wants to keep his job.

But on Easter the Christian Church will shout with all its heart "Christ is risen!" We will sing, *Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands, for our offenses given; but now at God's right hand He stands and brings us life from heaven (LSB 458)*. We will celebrate the fact that we have sins that Jesus died for but He rose from that death to give us new life. He has turned our season of darkness into the Spring of life eternal. This is the true celebration which we cannot be silent about! We will gather in joyful awe and receive from the altar the sweet Victor, Christ, the first fruits from the dead, which puts any Cadbury Creme Egg to shame.



So go ahead and color some eggs if you choose and get some candy. We have the real celebration of Easter anchored in our Lord rising from the dead and if you want to sprinkle that with chocolate and a little fun, great. It is a festival, after all. We will let the risen Christ be the main actor and let all other things stay in their lane.

In Christ,  
Pastor Suggitt

### LIFE QUOTE

The state can punish offenders, but it can't give birth to law-abiding citizens. The state cannot love or nurture a child. It takes a family. A radical thought, that, but off limits in our public conversations swept clean of moral discourse. Pray that this will change. *A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*



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