

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
EASTER DAY - DAILY WALK WITH CHRIST
Rev. John R. Hanson
April 4, 2021, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE

Janet Hanson, Musician

INTRODUCTION The darkness has passed. The promise of God is fulfilled. The love of God redeems us. Jesus the Christ, made flesh among us, has rescued us from the destruction the people had caused. Sing aloud and shout, all of you! Rejoice with all creation! Praise and bless the Lord our God; for Christ Jesus, who died our death, has triumphed and has won for us eternal life!

WELCOME AND VERSE

He has shown you, O people, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you? But to do [God's] justice and to love [God's] mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

We believe, Lord! Help our unbelief!

You know that you were ransomed from the useless way of life not with perishable things, silver and gold, but with the costly blood of Christ—as a lamb without blot or blemish. Christ, having been known before the foundation of the world, was made visible at the end of time for your sake; through him the faithful are in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1 Peter 1:18-21)

All praise and honor and glory is yours, O God!

You rescue us from the power of death and give us life eternal.

All the angels in heaven sing your praises!

For you have accomplished the salvation of all people.

The earth claps its hands! Seas shout the news! Stars and planets dance for joy!

For the Lord is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION God is good. **All the time.**

GOSPEL: John 20:1–18

Mary's account of Jesus' resurrection is brought to the disciples. The disciples rapidly return to find an empty grave. Mary remains and Jesus consoles her and commissions her as the first witness.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have

taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings

lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other

disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

HYMN

"This Joyful Eastertide"

Green # 149

This joyful Eastertide, away with sin and sorrow!
My love, the Crucified, has sprung to life this morrow.
Had Christ, who once was slain, not burst his three-day prison,
Our faith had been in vain.
But now has Christ arisen, arisen, arisen; but now has Christ arisen!

¹¹But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him

to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

GOSPEL RESPONSE All the time. **God is good.**

DIALOGUE

Jesus Christ, in your triumph over the grave and your resurrection from death, the heavens and earth rejoice!

We praise you, O God! For you are victorious over sin!

On the mountain of the Lord, all people will feast, and all wine shall be poured!

We praise you, O God! For you have prepared the table and our cups overflow!

The Lord has swallowed up death forever; the Lord has wiped away the tears from all faces!

We praise you, O God! For you have brought us from death to life!

The disgrace of God's people has been taken away from the earth because the Lord has spoken!

We praise you, O God! For you have given us joy and gladness!

HYMN

"Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing"

Green # 363

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing. His cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring. Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound to distant years in Palestine,
He comes to claim the here and now and conquer ev'ry place and time.

Not throned afar, remotely high, untouched, unmoved by human pains,
But daily, in the midst of life, our Savior with the Father reigns.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

There is Good News here today, but we need to be honest with God to understand what it means for us.

Lord God, we are not like the first witnesses of the Resurrection. We have not allowed you to be the true center of our lives. We do not treat the good news with importance in the sharing with others. We do not trust the resurrection to change our lives and see no urgency in the redemption you raise up. In fact, we can even let early mornings prevent us from being willing servants of Jesus. Lord, we have become disconnected, and we are not ready for your glory. Forgive us, Lord.

There is Good News this morning, because we do not own a single fear, or doubt, or hesitation the Lord our God does not overcome. It is by God's own faithfulness that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day. For Christ's sake our sins are forgiven. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we too are to become witnesses- apostles to proclaim the Resurrection of our Lord so that all may believe.

To the glory of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

We no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in both mind and heart the risen life we share with Christ; grow to the fullness of eternal life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit, as one God, now and forever.

Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

EASTER GREETINGS

Welcome each other. Welcome the stranger. Welcome all who come. As Christ welcomed everyone, no matter what their background, no matter what their social status; as Christ welcomed enemies and friends, outcasts and leaders, foreigners, and neighbors, let us open our hearts and homes and lives. Let us be Christ to everyone we meet.

CHILDREN'S SERMON "He IS alive!"

PRAYER

Jesus Christ, we greet you! Your hands still have holes in them. Your feet are wet from the dew; and with the memory of our names undimmed by three days of death you meet us, risen from the grave. We fail to understand how; we puzzle at the reason why. But you have come - to answer our questions by showing us your face. You are alive, and the world can rejoice again! Alleluia! Amen!

READING: Acts 10:34–43

Peter's sermon, delivered at the home of Cornelius, a Roman officer, sums up the essential message of Christianity. All who believe in Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection fulfilled the words of the prophets, receive forgiveness of sins through his name.

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹We are

witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

HYMN

"Jesus Christ Is Risen Today"

Green # 151

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia! Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia! Unto Christ, our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia! Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured, Alleluia! Our salvation have procured, Alleluia!
Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia! Where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

SERMON - *The good news that shaped the life and faith of the earliest believers is the same good news for us today. Just as questions arose among the women who came upon the empty tomb and Jesus' disciples who had to go and see for themselves, we, too, are often filled with doubt. But, once we believe, we are commissioned to proclaim the good news of Jesus. "This is the day of the LORD's victory; let us join in celebration!"*

HYMN

"Thine Is the Glory"

Green # 145

Thine is the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;
Endless is the victory, thou o'er death hast won!
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave clothes where thy body lay.

***Thine is the glory, risen conqu'ring Son;
Endless is the vict'ry, thou o'er death hast won.***

Lo, Jesus meets thee, risen from the tomb!
Lovingly he greets thee, scatters fear and gloom;
Let the Church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing;
For the Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
Life is naught without thee; aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love:
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Glorious Lord of life, by the mighty resurrection of your son, you overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him. Grant that we who celebrate with joy Christ's rising from the dead, may be raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us out as your witnesses to Jesus' resurrection that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.

COMMISSIONING PRAYER

Eternal God, your glory is revealed in the crucified and risen Christ. Bless us as we leave this assembly sharing your word and message of salvation. Nourish and strengthen all with whom we share this witness, that all people may experience your abundant love made known in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The God of life who raised Jesus from the dead now also sends the Spirit to renew the entire order of the earth, moving us from fear to hope, faith, and love. May God be merciful to us and + bless us, now and forever.

Amen.

We go in peace. Let us live-out the good news.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE SERVED AS YOU EXIT THE SERVICE

Worship, as an action, continues to change.

Use these questions to guide your thoughts as the Spirit may lead you.

Use the space to center your distractions in order to help activate your worship.

The obvious focus of Easter Sunday this year is the resurrection, but this year, the supporting readings all offer a tantalizing glimpse of the inclusive Reign of God as it was expressed through Jesus. The message that comes through is that the resurrection brings life and salvation not just to the Jews, but to all people. The Acts reading is taken from Peter's sermon to the Gentiles in Cornelius' house and celebrates God's inclusive love and life, and the Isaiah prophecy proclaims that God's salvation, and the feast that accompanies it, is for all people. In a similar way, Paul reflects on how Christ appeared to him even though he was persecuting the followers of Jesus.

The Gospels tell the story of the empty tomb – the moment of resurrection that made life available to all of the people that are mentioned in the other readings. The Gospel shows the inclusive grace of God in a reality that would have been shocking for the first believers – the first witnesses to the resurrection were women, and it was they who were given the responsibility of sharing the news with the men. The essential message of this significant day in the lesson is this – God has given life to all people, and it is in this inclusive resurrection community that we find and enjoy God's life. This is not just an individualist, escapist Gospel, but an invitation for the entire cosmos to enjoy the gift of resurrection together.

In churches around the world the resurrection will be the focus of worship, but for many, the celebration will simply be a remembrance of a miraculous event from the past, with perhaps a mention of a hope of life beyond the grave. But, if this is all the resurrection is, it has little value for us now – or for anyone else.

But, if our celebration can connect us with the living reality of resurrection life now, everything changes. In our homes and families, we can live knowing that there is always hope and life, even after times of grief or conflict. In our churches and communities, we can gather knowing that God's life is found together, and that we are able to bring life to one another through the grace, love, care, and compassion we show one another.

When we allow the resurrection to become a reality by which we live, and not just an idea that we remember, our mission changes from just trying to "get people into heaven" to bringing life to others in whatever way we can – big or small. When our lives become oriented around the resurrection, we cannot help but move away from just telling people about Jesus, instead to seeking to embody the life, the grace, and the compassion of Jesus in our own lives. The resurrection, then, is not just an end of life plan for us as individuals. It's The Principle by which the entire cosmos is ordered, and in which we participate when we share Christ's life in every way, and at every opportunity.

Devotional from John van de Laar at <http://sacredise.com>