

April 4th Worship
Easter Sunday

Introduction to the Day

Christ is risen! Jesus is alive, and God has swallowed up death forever. With Mary Magdalene we may feel astonished and confused, unsure of what to make of the empty tomb. But this is why we gather: to proclaim, witness, praise, and affirm the liberating reality of Christ's death and resurrection. In word and feast, we celebrate God's unending love, and depart to share this good news with all the world. Alleluia!

Easter Gospel – John 20:1-10

¹Early 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.

Thanksgiving For Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in
Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,

for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ,
that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church
when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey
as we share your life.
Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God,
now and forever.
Amen.

Prayer of the Day

God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gospel – John 20:11-18

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.

Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

Mary did what Mary knew. It was tradition that she would go and care for the body of her loved one. It was early on that first day - And I imagine it was early on that first day, because the day before was the Sabbath – and on the Sabbath, she rested – because that is tradition.

I imagine the angst of that Sabbath rest. She only wanted to do what she knew. So, early on that first day, Mary did what Mary knew. She went to care for the body of Jesus. She came to do what she knew, and she was met with the unexpected. She arrived and the stone was rolled away.

So she did the next best thing she could think of to do.

She ran and she told his followers, Peter, and the one whom Jesus loved, she ran and she told them, “the stone is rolled away. They have taken the Lord out of the tomb. We do not know where they've laid him.” In her mind Jesus' body has been taken. Understandably so. It is an incredible concept and idea and promise to grasp that Jesus truly would be risen.

She goes and tells the ones that followed him with her, that his body had been taken.

And THEY went. They didn't just go, but they ran! And they looked. They stooped down and looked in and they saw nothing. They saw nothing, and they believed. We hear that word, believed, and we think initially that they believed that he was risen. We think initially that they believe this thing that we have come to believe that Jesus has risen from the dead. He is no longer there. He has told them that this would happen. They looked in. They saw nothing. They believed.

We quickly come to learn that they didn't believe that Jesus was raised, but rather they believe what Mary had told them, that indeed his body had been taken. “For as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.”

And they returned home.

They went from that moment of having Mary, after the angst of Sabbath rest, waiting to go and do what she knew best, coming in, and I imagine her bursting into wherever it was that they were staying proclaiming, “they've taken the Lord! He's not there!”

So they ran. They went. And they looked. And they saw that indeed, he was not there, and they believed her and they returned to their homes...for what, we don't know.

But Mary having done all the things that she was conditioned to know to do in those moments, did the only other thing she could bring herself to do.

She remained.

She stood outside the tomb.

Weeping.

In her grief, in her angst of that Holy Sabbath rest wanting to just get to that day when she could do that next thing she knew how to do, in her grief she finally brought herself to go in and look in the tomb.

She was met again with the unexpected. She was met there this time with two angels, one at the head, and one where Jesus' feet would be.

“Woman, why are you weeping?” She's still in this belief and thought that his body had been taken. “They've taken away. My Lord, I do not know where they have laid him.”

She turns around and she sees, this man, this person, this figure, this unrecognizable presence, and she assumes him to be the gardener. “If you have taken him, tell me where it is that you have brought him. And I will take him from here.”

She still knows those things that tradition tells her to do. She is still in the mindset of needing to care for her loved one's body. “Tell me where it is that you have taken him. So I can do what I am conditioned to do in this moment.”

And in her grief, in her worry, in her anger, in her wanting to just get to the next step of that which she knows,

Jesus calls her by name. “Mary!”

It's in that moment that she knew what had happened. It's in that moment when her teacher, “Rabouni,” speaks to her, using her name, that she realizes the promise. In the midst of her grief and worry and angst and wanting to just do that thing that she knew he speaks her name. Jesus calls out into the unknown of her grief and says, “Mary! ... beloved”

“Teacher.” – She knows, hearing her name called, that it is her risen Lord and Savior.

As 21st century people of faith, as we have been on this Lent Journey Towards Wholeness, we have continually heard the promise of baptism. Whether it's been in our Lent Midweek where we've worked our way through Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know that I am God," or our Lent texts on Sunday mornings where we've heard the old Testament promises that all come back to and are seen through the lens of our baptism, we have heard that we too have a name in this story. As we have been on our Journey Towards Wholeness, we have heard our name called.

In the midst of our grief, in the midst of our wondering, in the midst of our angst of that Holy Saturday, in the midst of our wondering when we are going to get out of those three Holy days...

Our name has been called throughout this season of Lent and this Journey Towards Wholeness, as we have been reminded that it is in Baptism that we are made whole! That the name that Jesus calls when he calls out to Mary, he is calling out to us as well, he is saying, "Beloved."

As the skies opened up in his baptism and other moments in his ministry, "the skies opened up and say, 'this is my Son, my beloved,'" Jesus is saying that to us. When he calls Mary by name, he is saying to us "Beloved, I have risen."

Jesus speaks life and promise into this story. As Mary has come, doing the only thing she knows how to do, Jesus speaks life into the unexpected. When she doesn't find a body there, and her vision is clouded by wonder and doubt and worry and fear and concern, he calms that with her name. He calms that with our name. As he speaks to her in those moments, calling her by her name, he does the same for us calling us by that name we are given in our baptism. Beloved.

But, the story does not stop there. Jesus doesn't stop at telling her not to hold onto him. Instead, he gives her a mission. He knows that Mary does what Mary knows Mary is supposed to do when Mary is given this mission. He tells her to go.

"Go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father. To my God and your God.'"

With this promise, with this good news, she goes and does the only thing left to do. That which Jesus has told her to do. That which Jesus has called her into. "Go and tell the others this good news that you have encountered.

As we heard the message of Beloved Community that Jesus gives the mandate to love as he speaks with his followers in their last days together, he sends Mary now with this message of Beloved Life. Jesus' absence from that tomb on that day is a promise of Beloved Life. Jesus calling us and calling Mary by name is a promise of Beloved Life.

He gives Mary on that day, and he gives us on this day, that commandment to "go and tell."

Go and tell the good news that we know about this day. Go and tell of the new life that has been given to us. Go and tell of the victory that God has won over the grave.

Because that promise isn't just for Mary in that day in the garden. But rather it is put in her heart to go and share it with anyone who would listen. Why would we do it any differently?

Thanks be to God. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Praise to you for your power revealed in the resurrection! Fill your church with the power of your love that is stronger than death. Send us to tell the good news wherever death holds sway. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Praise to you for your life at work in the resurrection! Fill all of creation with your life. Bring it to blossom and flourish; use it to remind us of your persistent grace. Cultivate our care for what you have made. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Praise to you for the peace made possible in the resurrection! Fill the nations with your peace. Draw together people of all nations and languages; reveal new possibilities and inspire new beginnings. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Praise to you for the hope of the resurrection! Fill all in need with hope: those who are afraid or confused, those who are sick or suffering, those who are dying, and those who grieve (*especially*). Assure them of your promises. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Praise to you for the joy of your resurrection! Fill this assembly with joy as we are called your beloved in baptism. Multiply that joy so that we share it at home, at work, and in our community. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Praise to you for your faithfulness revealed in the resurrection! Fill us with trust, that we join with (*Benedict the African and*) all who have gone before us in proclaiming: "your mercy endures forever!" Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of love,
you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;
for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Words of Institution – We invite you to find bread and wine or juice and partake in this Holy Meal.

(Holding the bread) In the night in which we was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and broke it, gave thanks and gave it for all to eat saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

(Holding the cup) Again after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it for all to drink saying, "this cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. So often as you do this, remember me."

Once you've taken the elements say, "Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**"

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,

Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Re-Connect Opportunities will be suspended for this week (April 5-9) but we will pick up again next week.

We hope you will join us for any, or all, of these Re-Connect Opportunities throughout the week!

Stop in for coffee and conversation at 9 am on Mondays

TUESDAYS be sure to stop by for Bible Study starting at 11, followed by Lunch and Laughter at noon.

Wednesdays will continue to be our Faith Formation Days

Thursdays we will have the sanctuary open for prayer for 8 am to 3 pm.

Thank you to those of you who ordered Easter flowers. We will deliver your flowers to your home (or to others) the week after Easter so they can be enjoyed.

Jo Anderson & Keith Franson	In honor of Bryce Anderson family surviving COVID
Gena Coach	In memory of Robert Coach and Dakotah
Frank and Heather Garber	In honor and appreciation of the Quilters
Mavis Gardow and Family	In memory of George
Clarice Gardow	In memory of Robert Gardow
	In honor of children, Steve, Jeff, Mark Gardow, Julie and Scott Revoir; Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren
Steve, Jeff and Mark Gardow,	In honor of mom, Clarice Gardow
Julie and Scott Revoir	In memory of dad, Robert Gardow
Mark and Vicki Golden	
Gunderson Family	In memory of Bradford Gunderson, Ginny
Mike and Barb Huggins	In memory of our parents and grandparents
Bill and Bonnie Kuehn	In memory of loved ones
Cherisma Larson	In memory of Rodger C Larson
Diane Paulsrud	In memory of parents, sister, mother-in-law
Michael Paulsrud	
Lorriane and Bill Pire	In memory of Adeline Pire and our parents
The Quilters	
Ann and Jim Schlegelmilch	Given in memory of loved ones
& Kay and Bill Hagedorn	
Marie Sherman	In honor of my family
Lois Stolts	In loving memory of Helen Gibson
Roger and MaryLee Szymoniak	In honor of grandchildren Auburin Hamernik, Tyler and Tristan Szymoniak
Dean and Denise Tabor	In honor and appreciation of family
	In appreciation of friends
Robert Wheeler	In memory of Norma Wheeler