

Easter Sunday Worship
April 9, 2023
*Unfinished: Discovering God's Call in the Not Yet
Called to Resurrection*

Introduction to the Day

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34): Christ's resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God's faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God's endless love.

The Story Continues - Matthew 27:62-68

62 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³and said, 'Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, "After three days I will rise again." ⁶⁴Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, "He has been raised from the dead", and the last deception would be worse than the first.' ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.' ⁶⁶So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

Anthem: Risen

Easter Proclamation

P: With the stone rolled in front, who would have thought...

C: That joy would come out of sorrow?

P: Who would have thought...

C: That hope would come out of despair?

P: Who would have thought...

C: That life would come out of death?

ALL: But here we are

P: We know that our Redeemer lives and at the last, Christ will stand upon the earth, and we shall see God!
Alleluia!

C: We live in the space between no longer and not yet. No longer does death have the final word. Not yet is this truly realized.

P: In this unfinished time...

**C: We who are cross-marked and Spirit-sealed live our lives practicing resurrection in everyday life.
Christ is Risen!**

P: Christ is risen!

C: He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

Processional Hymn "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" #365

Greeting – The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, 14–24

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good;
God's mercy endures forever.

²**Let Israel now declare,
"God's mercy endures forever."**

¹⁴The LORD is my strength and my song,
and has become ¹ my salvation.

¹⁵**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents ¹ of the righteous:
"The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"**

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD is exalted!
The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

¹⁷**I shall not die, but live,
and declare the works of the LORD.**

¹⁸The LORD indeed punished me sorely,
but did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹**Open for me the gates of righteousness;
I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.**

²⁰"This is the gate of the LORD;
here the righteous may enter."

²¹**I give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and you have become my salvation.**

²²The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

²³**By the LORD has this been done;
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

²⁴This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

"I Know that My Redeemer Lives"

Heavenly Bells

Children's Message

Gospel: Matthew 28:1-10

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.

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.”¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher).¹⁷ Jesus 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.’”¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ

Sermon

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

Throughout Lent we have explored this theme of what it means to be a people Unfinished. And in that exploration we have dug into what it means to Discover God’s Call in the Not Yet. We have imagined what it means to be called to: Renewal, Values, Openness, Attentiveness, Regret, what it means to be Called by God, to experience God’s Presence, and now today, we are Called to Resurrection.

Our Lent Resource tells us:

“As people living in the resurrection we dwell as the presence of Christ amid this broken and hurting world. We proclaim the good news of God whose love is unconditional and unending. We strive for justice and peace in all the earth in all that we do, all that we say, and all that we are. And in and through it all, Jesus back from the grave, risen to die no more, goes ahead of us along the way, giving us the assurance that there is nowhere we will go where Jesus is not there with us and nothing we will experience that Jesus will not experience too. With this hope and this promise, we daily live this unfinished life, trusting that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God, so too shall we walk in newness of life, day in and day out, until the “not yet” is no longer and all will be as God has promised.”

We’ve asked ourselves a series of questions each and every week as we have dug deeper into these themes and how they connect to our lives as people of faith. But, there is one question that was constant.

What do I need for tomorrow?

This is a question that is at the forefront of the minds of the characters in our Gospel story for today. Imagine the experience they’ve had going back to Palm Sunday and throughout this last week. They saw, right in front of their eyes, the death that he told them he was to die, played out. Crucified on Friday there was a hurry to take his body down so as to not have to do work on the Sabbath day.

And then, they waited. And waited. For what I’m sure felt like an eternity. In their waiting, they asked, “what do I need for tomorrow?”

They all had their tasks. For Mary Magdalene and the others it was to care for his body. And early on that first day, she ran to the tomb to do what she was supposed to do. And it was empty.

So she ran to Peter. Peter, too, had been waiting. The last he interacted with Jesus was when he denied ever knowing him before the rooster crowed as Jesus said he would. Imagine that day of waiting for him. How he must have felt asking, “what do I need for tomorrow?”

We can all relate. For us that Holy Saturday is the moments in our own lives where we wonder if we will ever get to tomorrow, both the literal and figurative. And in that wondering we, too, ask ourselves, “what do I need for tomorrow?”

You see, we live in this space between no longer and not yet. Death no longer has the final say, but not yet is this truly realized. We find ourselves in this unfinished time where our stories are continually being written, not one having reached finality.

And, in this unfinished time we are reassured of the promise and call that we share in baptism that we are the presence of Christ in the world during this unfinished time. And in all of that, the uncertainty and the doubt, we are reminded that the Risen Christ is with us. Not only that, the Risen Christ goes ahead of us having endured the pain and suffering of this world, so that, when we go through it, we are given the hope that comes with the presence of Christ in our own suffering.

And no matter what, no matter how in order or completely messed up this thing called life is, the “not yet” will end with the fulfillment of the promises of God.

So, people of God, as you explore your own wondering of what do I need for tomorrow, know this, you do not go it alone.

If you find yourself struggling to feel the hope of the resurrection this day, that is okay. God is with you.

If you find yourself wondering if your day is coming soon, that is okay. God is with you.

If you find yourself overly hopeful without a worry in the world. Great! God is with you, too.

We are in this life as resurrection people together. Called to this time and this place for this purpose. To make the hope of the risen Christ known to all.

In our weeping. In our joy. In our sorrow. In jubilation and devastation.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

Song of the Day “Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds”

#367

The Apostles’ Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

You call your church to witness to your salvation. We give thanks for (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer and*) all theologians, preachers, and teachers who proclaim your gospel. Equip all the baptized to share the joy of the resurrection in all we say and do. Risen Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You bring abundant life throughout creation. The green blade rises, and all creation greets the resurrection dawn. Preserve vineyards and orchards and those who tend to them. Feed us with the fruits of creation. Risen Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You show your steadfast love without regard to borders, barriers, or human-made divisions. Infuse your justice in every nation of the world (*places of concern or conflict may be named*) that all experience the peace that only you can give. Risen Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You anointed your Son with the Holy Spirit and with power. Encourage us by his example in our ministries of healing, care, and outreach. We pray for all who are sick or hospitalized (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Sandy*). and for all health care workers who care for them. Risen Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You have put gladness in our hearts. Inspire musicians and dancers to rejoice with songs of victory. Bless the music ministries of this congregation and all who foster our assembly's song. Risen Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

As you have raised Jesus from the dead, you show us your resurrection promise. With your holy ones who have sung your praise (*especially*), free us from fear and empower us to go and tell the good news. Risen Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

Offering "Risen"

Good Shepherd Praise Team

Offertory Prayer

Generous God,
in this meal you offer your very self.
We give thanks for these gifts of the earth.
In the breaking of this bread
reveal to us the Risen One.
In the pouring of this wine
pour us out in service to the world;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

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

Communion

