

Easter Sunday-April 12, 2020 Bulletin

Prelude “*Christ Lag in Todesbanden*”

One: Christ Has Risen!

All: Christ Has Risen Indeed!

Welcome and Announcements

- The Session will be meeting on April 15th, to determine the next course of action.
- All other announcements are on the last page.

Call to Worship

One: He is risen! Jesus Christ is risen from the dead!

All: The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – the God of our ancestors – has glorified Jesus.

One: We gather to praise the risen Christ.

**All: We gather to worship the God of resurrections.
Amen.**

Hymn: “*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*”

Prayer of Confession

God, with praise and thanksgiving we celebrate the amazing truth that You bring forgiveness and new life. The resurrection of Jesus proclaims that nothing can separate us from Your love.

We need this assurance, God, because there are times when, like those first disciples, we are afraid, hiding behind locked doors, unwilling or unable to declare our allegiance to Christ. We ask You to change and transform us. Roll away the heavy stones of guilt, regret or disappointment. Remove whatever it is that keeps us from being Your Easter people – people who love You, who are loved by You, and who share Your love with all. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: (extracts from Romans 8:31-37)

As the angels said, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.’

(response)

One: Friends believe the good news.

All: Christ has risen, He has risen indeed

Children's Sermon

Scripture: Matthew 28: 1-8

Hymn "*Easter Song*"

Sermon: Easter Changes Everything!

Easter Changes Everything: Matthew 28:1-28

Portions adapted from a sermon by Jim Kilson SermonCentral.Com

Tomb, You shall not hold Him longer,
Death is strong, but life is stronger
Stronger than the dark, the light;
Stronger than the wrong, the right;
Faith and hope triumphant say; Christ will rise on Easter Day.

While the patient earth lies waiting
Till the morning shall be breaking
Shuddering beneath the burden dread
Of her Master, cold and dead,
Hark! she hears the angels say; Christ will rise on Easter Day.

And when sunrise smites the mountains
Pouring light from heavenly fountains
Then the earth blooms out to greet
Once again the blessed feet;
And her countless voices say; Christ has risen on Easter Day.
(Author: Phillips Brooks)

A man went on vacation to the Holy Land with his wife and her mother. While in Israel, the mother-in-law died from a heart attack. The couple went to a local undertaker, who explained that they could either ship the body home which would cost more than \$6,000, or they could bury her right there in the Holy Land for only \$350. The man said, "We'll ship her home".

"Surprised, the undertaker responded, "Are you sure? That's an awfully big expense, and we can do a very nice burial right here. "The man said, "Look, 2000 years ago they buried a guy here and three days later He rose from the dead. I just can't take that chance."

This morning, circumstances perhaps more than ever before find us like those first disciples of Jesus who, following His death, locked themselves away in fear for their lives. Unlike them, we hide not so much from an angry mob, but from a silent and capricious killer passing quietly among us leaving some apparently untouched, others slightly or deeply ill and still others unexplainably dead. Fear once again walks the streets.

What then can we learn today from this annual celebration of Christ's return to life that will help us face our life tomorrow? The answer now is surprisingly the same as it was back then, even though it happened some 2,000 years ago, Christ's resurrection from the dead changes everything. So let us once again rehearse the story that changed peoples' lives those first Easter mornings so as to strengthen our own faith in the God of miracle, the assurance of our salvation and our hope for a new life with Christ.

In our imagination let's travel back to that third day following the crucifixion of Christ Jesus. The God of all creation had been executed for the sins of all creation. His followers have scattered, locking themselves away behind closed doors, their faith shaken to the core. They knew from His own words that this was going to happen... but no one can ever properly prepare for an event of this magnitude.

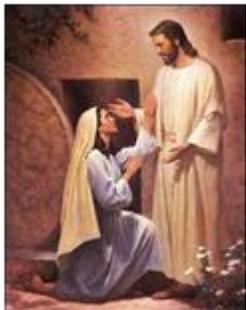
But what a liberating surprise awaits them. As promised, Christ conquered the grave and as He rose to seek out and greet His disciples, not only were their lives changed forever, but also were lives in the rest of the world for the rest of all time, right down to yours and my life today.

As Paul wrote to doubting Corinthian Christians so many years ago, If Christ did not rise from the dead then we [who call ourselves Christian] would of all people most to be pitied (1 Cor. 15:19). But in fact Christ did rise from the dead and that changes EVERYTHING.

Today let us visit with three of Jesus' closest companions

Three of the very first people to have life dramatically change
When they once again come face to face with the risen Jesus.

The first of these is Mary Magdalene.



She has received a lot of press in recent years. In 2000, Dan Brown wrote a book titled the Davinci Code, which was complete fiction though he presented it as fact. In 2006 it was turned into a block buster movie in which he claimed - contrary to every Biblical and church writing ever since - that Mary Magdalene even had a child by Jesus. Then in 2007 the Discovery Channel aired a spurious documentary suggesting that Mary Magdalene was buried in “The family tomb of Jesus,” right beside the bones of Jesus. Which makes the story of her encounter with the risen Jesus mighty strange.

Mary did go looking for a dead body – a sack of bones if you would –but what she unexpectedly found was an empty tome – no bones about it.

After which she met the very much alive Jesus! Her savior risen from the grave.

This meeting with Mary and for us changed everything because Jesus’ resurrection
VALIDATES OUR HOPE OF SALVATION

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

Mary had already had one life changing experience with Jesus. Scripture tells us that at one time she was possessed by 7 demons (Luke 8:2). Can you imagine her hopelessness, compounded by fear ... convulsions, day and night at the hands of these demons?

One day however she met a man who changed her life, it was Jesus who cast out those demons and gave her back the life she had lost. From that time forward she followed Him. Imagine her now, headed toward a tomb expecting to finish the preparations they had earlier begun on His dead body.

Walking along that dark morning, Mary thought of her own shattered dreams, her lost hopes. She like the others must have been ecstatic when Jesus came riding into Jerusalem, hearing the shouts of “Hosanna” filling the air.

Likewise she was probably filled with an equal amount of shock to discover that Jesus, this man who had saved her life had been arrested and put on trial for His own life.

Bitter must have been her tears at the foot of the cross watching the soldiers crucify Him... asking WHY!!! Her hope shattered, gone, in an instant – as Jesus bowed His head and died. The one who had saved her was now dead.

Gradually, the jeering crowds and the merely curious departed leaving only the soldiers forced to guard those dying prisoners and a small cluster of women, including Mary, who lingered nearby for the rest of the day until just before evening when Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus the Pharisee took their master's dead body down from the cross and carried it to a nearby tomb.

Now three days after His death, her tears may have stopped but all she felt was emptiness and despair. She and the other Mary came looking for a dead friend, but on this morning, when God rolled away the stone for the two women, that changed everything.

They were not prepared for what would happen next.



- First there was a great tremor as an angel of the Lord, blindingly bright, came and rolled the stone away then casually sat on top of it waiting the two women's approach.
- The guards on duty were so afraid they passed out, became like dead men.
- Then the angel addressed the women, Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who

was crucified. He is not here; for He has been raised, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay.

Ask yourself this question, why did the angel roll away the stone? Jesus was already gone, He didn't need help getting out.

The stone was rolled away, not so Jesus could get out but so that Mary could get in – which gave her a new found sense of her lasting salvation. The same Jesus who gave such assurance to Mary also validates our hope of salvation.

Christ by His actions saved Mary not once but twice - Physically & Spiritually.

Seeing the empty tomb, validated both the salvation that she had already gained

through Christ and the future salvation He had promised her would one day come. He can do the same for us as well today

Listen to Christ's earlier words to that other Mary who was also walking to the tomb that morning (Mary was a very common name – this one was the sister to Martha and Lazarus). Several days earlier standing in front of her brother's grave, Jesus had said to this Mary, *'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'* She said to him, *'Yes, Lord, I believe'* (John 11:25). Having then watched her own brother restored to life, I am guessing that this Mary more than the others was not too surprised to find an empty tomb.

That day, an angel had physically rolled a stone out of their way. These days God's Holy Spirit, sent to us by Jesus, comes to roll away the stones of fear, dread, uncertainty, from our lives (John 10:10) Jesus had said: I am come that they may have life and have it to the fullest!

Let me ask you – how full is your life of joy and hope? It should be overflowing today!

Because Jesus' resurrection validates yours and my hope of salvation – just as it did for both Marys that first Easter morning.

The next person we need to meet this morning is a man named Thomas, (one of the twelve Apostles). His meeting with the resurrected Jesus VALIDATES OUR FAITH IN THE GOD OF MIRACLES

I like Thomas – he's my kind of guy – I think history has given him a bum rap. Thomas was a realist: if I can see it and feel it, then its real.

Sure – he saw Jesus do some amazing things when He was alive ... but how is a dead man going to bring Himself back to life (even Houdini couldn't do that!).

Thomas would fit right in with the society that we live in today... I'll believe it if I can see it. He would probably be from Missouri – the "Show Me" State.

Chapter 20 of John's gospel records Jesus' first upper room meeting with the assembled disciples, for some reason Thomas wasn't there.

When he returns – after Jesus had left – they excitedly tell him that Jesus has risen, Jesus is alive again! But he refuses to believe it ("you just missed him!")

NO. Thomas wanted “proof”, *‘Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in His side, I will not believe.’* (John 20:25).

Thomas got his proof. A week later, Jesus returns to the disciples and this time Thomas is with them.



After quieting the other apostles – *“Peace be with you”* – Jesus turns to Thomas with this invitation, *‘Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.’* (John 20:27)

Thomas saw the truth for himself and his response, shows it (John 20:28)

Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’

Believing in Christ requires faith.

Many people today are like Thomas, what they have not seen they refuse to believe. Just like those “supposed theologians” who narrated ‘The Family Tomb of Jesus.’

They open the program intentionally misquoting the Bible – that there was indeed a rumor circulating in Jerusalem that the disciples had stolen the Body (Matthew 28:11-15). Then they imply that the four Gospel authors and the other disciples were all liars – because they maintain that is what probably did happen! Strangely, for the rest of the program, they then refer back to these same disciples whom they had earlier insinuated were liars for corroboration of their “scientific findings.”

You can’t have it both ways people! Either these Apostles and the members of Jesus’ family got together and concocted the biggest lie of all time – one for which they willingly died - for who knows what reasons – or that there could be no bones in the family tomb Jesus, because He is still using them.

Our Thomas – the realist of the bunch – met a very much alive Jesus who offered to show him His wounds as proof of who He was – and that He had truly come back from the dead.

When it comes to the resurrection of Jesus, as unbelievable as this seems, it stands out as an event that is more faith building, than faith shaking

When we examine the evidence, it is easier to believe that Jesus rose from the dead than believe He didn't. The Apostle Paul actually encouraged doubting Corinthian Christians to go to Jerusalem and interview over 500 witnesses who would gladly testify that they saw Jesus alive again – after they saw him die (1 Corinthians 15:16).

The fact that Jesus did rise from the dead, also builds our faith as well. Because faith is just as indispensable of an element in our Christian lives as it was for those first disciples. Scripture reminds us, *without faith it is impossible to please God* (Hebrews 11:6).

Jesus made seemingly unbelievable claims about His deity, His ability to forgive sins and our hope for eternal life. His resurrection validates each of these claims,

Look at what Jesus next told Thomas, '*Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe*' (John 20:29).

Surprise! At that time, Jesus was talking about us! We weren't there 2000 years ago, that doesn't mean that it didn't happen. We can't talk to 500 witnesses, but we can read the Biblical accounts, research 2,000 years of church history and listen to the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit – deep within – reminding us that Christ has risen indeed!

There was another Thomas, who had very strong doubts about Jesus. Thomas Jefferson also considered himself a realist. He just could not accept the miraculous elements of Scripture. He respected Jesus as a good man, even a great moral teacher, but he refused to believe that Jesus had returned to life after His death.

Thomas Jefferson went on to personally edit his own version of the New Testament in which all the supernatural references were physically cut from the pages. This is how Jefferson's Gospel of Matthew closes:

So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. (Matthew 27:59 – 60)

How sad that so many still refuse to believe that Jesus rose from the grave.

Just as the resurrection of Jesus validated Mary's hope of salvation and Thomas' faith in the God of miracles, it validates ours as well. Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, all died and were buried, where they remain to this day. You can visit

their graves if you wish ... “We serve a RISEN savior,” not one whose bones they could not find in His supposed family tomb.

The third person we need to meet this morning is Peter, his experience with the risen Jesus shows us how the resurrection.... **VALIDATES OUR HOPE FOR A NEW LIFE**

Several times after His resurrection, Jesus met with the Apostles continuing to prove that He was very much alive. But He kept coming and going, He wasn't always with them as He had been in the past. Which left Peter with plenty of time on his hands to think of what he had done – what he had sworn he would never do – the night Jesus was arrested!

I am sure that Peter was equally excited that Jesus had returned to life. But Peter knew – at least for him – that it was still finished! Sure all the other disciples except for John had run away and hid. But only he, when challenged had then sworn – three times – that he never knew this Jesus.

Well he was a fisherman by trade, so he might as well get back to the job he knew; Peter even got some of the other disciples to go fishing with him (John 21).

We read that they fished all night without catching anything, by morning they were getting mighty discouraged; unlucky as Apostles, now they are even unlucky as fishermen!

But just as morning breaks, there's this man standing on the shore, shouting out to them “cast your nets on the other side of the boat.” Well why not, nothing they were doing had worked; perhaps He could see something that they couldn't. So they cast their net on the other side and netted more fish than they could haul in.



Peter knew who it was, he had seen this trick before. He was so full of joy that he jumped out of the boat and swam to Jesus, leaving the others to drag the net to shore.

Just seeing Jesus had given Peter renewed hope for his life. His denials of Jesus were still probably fresh in his mind, but he had repented and come back to Jesus. If nothing else, he could at least be with his friend, still he figured he was no longer in the inner circle – and he had definitely lost his Apostleship!

But after this morning meal, on a private walk down the lakeshore with his resurrected savior, Jesus asks Peter three times: Do you love me? If so go feed

my sheep. Three affirmations to offset his earlier three denials. This was what Peter needed to hear, to know that he was still part of the ministry with his savior and friend.

Like Peter, we all stumble and fail from time to time.

Like Peter, the Lord offers us grace, not punishment.

Like Peter, each of us find in Jesus' resurrection hope for a new life.

When we understand the extent of His grace and love and willingness to help us start over, it makes us want to serve God even more.

Peter went from being a bragging coward on the night of Jesus' arrest to preaching the first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost. He ended his life leading the infant church, from the capital city of Rome, in changing the rest of human history.

Like Mary, Like Thomas, Like Peter.

Because Jesus lives... We can have an assured hope of our salvation.

Because Jesus lives ... We can have faith in the God of miracles

Because Jesus lives... We can live a brand new life in Christ

These three people met the risen Lord and it changed everything.

We can see what the resurrection meant to each of them, the question is, what does the resurrection of Jesus mean to you this morning?

For some Christ's resurrection means everything, you've staked your life now and for all eternity on Jesus...don't give up.

For others the resurrection is still something to ponder, don't doubt, listen to the witnesses and listen to your heart ... believe!

Still sadly for some others the resurrection means absolutely nothing. I hope that this is no one here today.

Let's pray about this.

Brief Prayer

Affirmation of Faith; Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried.

On the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall 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.

Invitation to Communion

Hear the gracious words of our Savior Jesus Christ:

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. No one who comes to me will I cast out.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Hymn of Preparation: “One Bread, One Body”

Great Thanksgiving: (read responsively)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give You thanks and praise, eternal God, Creator and Ruler of the universe. You are our God, and we are the creatures of Your hand.

You made us from the dust of the earth, breathed into us the breath of life

and set us in Your world to love and serve You. When we rejected Your love and ignored Your wisdom, You did not reject us. You loved us still and called us to turn again to You in obedience and in love.

Therefore we praise You, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of Your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the
Lord.**

Hosanna in the highest.

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Out of Your great love for the world, You sent Jesus among us to set us free from the tyranny of evil. He lived as one of us, sharing our joys and sorrows. By His dying and rising,

He releases us from bondage to sin and frees us from the dominion of death.

Remembering all Your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this wine from the gifts You have given us, and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Accept this, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died,

Christ is risen,

Christ will come again.

Gracious God, pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these, Your gifts of bread and wine. That the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By Your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who are baptized in His name, that we may be one in ministry in every place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

And now, with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray as Jesus taught His disciples:

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread, Pouring of the Cup

The Minister breaks the bread ...

The Lord Jesus, on the night of His arrest, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, He broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is My body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.

The Minister lifts the cup ...

In the same way He took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant sealed in My blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of Me. Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord, until He comes.

Hymn of Thanksgiving: "Give Thanks"

Prayer Requests

Birthdays and Anniversaries: Happy Birthday to Hortense Kenney on the 16th and Sherry Parker on the 18th

Benediction (Romans 15:13)

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Postlude "Lift High the Cross"

Concerns- April 12th

Arthur: Elizabeth- home

Barnes: Troy- (friend) stage 4 lung cancer

Benton: Brandon- (nephew) and family, son in ICU

Russ Conner- (son-in-law) working in Africa

Blair: James Thorne- (scout) rare skin infection, doing better

Katy Neal- (LHS student) scleroderma

Glen Murgacz- (friend) biopsy for bladder cancer

Boone: Jim Hedrick - (friend) waiting for test results

Michael -(son) out of work during pandemic

Chryssikos: Linda Arendt- (neighbor) disabled

Cire: Rowan

Clarke: Harvey & Weebie- she has caregiver now

Clarke: Ben Daniel - (Pat's grandson) deployed to Syria late summer

Cram: Winslow's-(friends of Sally) family & medical problems

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Military away from home

Diddams: Lois- problems with medications

Paul (brother)- loss of wife, not doing well

Dills: Kathy & her father

Dwyer: Karen Huddle- (friend) health problems

Fleming: family dealing with addiction and self- esteem

Steve Trombecky- (friend) home recovering

Foster: Thomasine Davis- (aunt) hospice care

Ellen- procedure at UVA

Joyce Abbott- (former member) cancer

Howard- (Tom's brother) pneumonia

Andre Nemenek- (Shepherds table cook)

prostate cancer

Gaston: Joseph (former pastor) prostate cancer surgery May 6th

Goodman: Barry Owen-(friend) cancer

Randall Sales-(SRHS coach) cancer

Katherine Saunders- (Hugh's daughter) hospice

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Hopkins: Bill & Dorinda- Bill knee replacement

Kuhn- Kibbey: Nancy Milton- (friend) cancer,

Alzheimer's

Rachel Rutledge-(granddaughter) experimental treatment

Dot- health issues, macular degeneration

Grandson- alcoholism

Eric Bryant- diagnosed with MS

Ledden: John- heart problems

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems

Steven-(son's boss) going blind

Tom & Betty Clark- downsizing, and Betty has new pacemaker

Norma Jean- (Gayle's sister) broken collar bone

Pat- (Al's sister) diabetes

McCauley: Alvin Jones- (co-worker) stroke

Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders

Forensic scientists who deal with crime

Rev. Pam Ledbetter-(friend) autoimmune disease

Doris Jean Coble- (cousin) in nursing home

Neal: Matt- (son) lost his job

Salley: John- (Betty's brother) struggling with alcoholism

David Etheridge- (fellow pastor) terminal cancer

Saunders: (Ronnie) Colin Bridges- (grandson)

Scott- (son-in-law) chemo and radiation

Scheurer: Jim Hedrick-(friend) cancer

Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer

Schubert: Gerda

Smith: Sonya's parents- travel mercies, moving parents here

Stetson: Nick's step-daughter

James & family-(son) in Colorado, has virus

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems

Zeph Cunningham- travel mercies

For hate to disappear

Toney: Judy- undergoing chemo

Karen Hyde-(friend) bladder cancer

Mike Gillespie- (friend) hospice care

Cal Rice- (former pastor) bone cancer, refused treatment

Nancy Jordan-(neighbor) recovering from surgery

Weeks: Mary Lohmeyer- (friend) doing well

Wilkerson: Ricky Wilkerson-(Dan's cousin) cancer

Van Dyke: Thomas Blythe- (friend) in hospital, fever, internal bleeding

Prayers for those dealing with loneliness

Prayers for victims of mass shootings

Prayers for the Middle East and persecuted Christians

Prayers that anti-Semitism be erased

Prayers for healing the divisive spirit among our leaders/nation

Prayers for an end of the coronavirus and healing for those infected

2020: An Easter Prayer For Our Time of Quarantine

Inspired and adapted from a UMC Pastoral Prayer: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/celebration-and-thanksgiving-on-easter-sunday-morning-a-pastoral-prayer>

Lord God of us all, of the living and the dead, of the faithful and the fearful. We give you thanks today for your love, your grace, and your power to bring new meaning and hope to our lives on this blessed Resurrection morning!

We thank you for the many friends and loved ones who, while they cannot be with us in person this day, they are still with us in our shared faith and hope both for this life and life to come. Who would have thought that such small things as a smart phone and video conferencing can still bring our families together in spite of the physical isolation of this time.

We thank you for the brilliance of the spring colors that surround us, the blooming flowers and trees, the emerald green grass springing to new life from the ground, just as our savior Jesus did on that first Easter morning. Today we may feel somewhat entombed, trapped in our homes, the fear of disease and death keeping us locked away from the world. But we know that a tomorrow will come when like Jesus long ago we will also be released to a new life.

Today, as we remember Jesus, who healed the sick and raised the dead. We lift up special prayers for all who are sick or dying be it Covid19 or Cancer or one of the many other ills that plague our fallen world. We thank you for the courage of all the doctors, nurses, first responders, and military, who personally daily are facing down this pandemic offering life and hope to those in their care. We ask your guidance, protection, strength, and encouragement for all these people, both the caregivers and those in need of care along with the researchers who are tirelessly seeking a cure.

Today, as we remember Jesus, Son of God, Song of God, who sang God's melody to us. Help us both to hear and to return the music and joy back to you, as we find ways to serve and help others even during these days of locked down economy. We lift up prayers for those who have lost work, lost pay, and who worry about things like food, insurance, house payments, and car loans. We thank you for all the extensions and forgiveness offered by companies, but we also pray as life returns that it will return to a new normal in which salaries are more equitable and necessary care is more affordable.

We remember Jesus, who consented to suffer and die at our hand. But in returning to life he taught us how to live for him, to be "living sacrifices" joyously laying down

our lives in service others, especially the last, the least, and the lost who just like us Jesus came seeking to save and who held a special place in his heart.

Today, Almighty God, We celebrate that nothing in life or death can separate us from Your love. Help us by to share Your love and offered life with the world by our outstretched helping hands, by the way we live and by the words we speak as we bear witness to the love, hope, and forgiveness extended to us by our risen savior.... as we daily proclaim to the world: Christ Jesus has risen! He has risen indeed!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Even though the church is not having services, we still are operating in other capacities and bills still need to be paid. Please mail your pledge or contribution or you can drop by the office, Mon-Thurs between 8 am -12 pm.

The Session will be meeting on April 15th, to determine the next course of action.

Since the Youth Fundraiser Lunch is cancelled, donations are being accepted so that several of the youth can attend camps this summer. Please make checks out to BPC and note on the bottom- Camps and Conferences.

Do you enjoy yardwork? If you do, we are looking for volunteers to work in the church yard mowing grass, weed eating and doing general yard work. If you are interested, please let the office know.

SCAM ALERT !!! The FBI has announced that there are many Covid19 internet and phone scams that are specifically targeting senior citizens;

- There are NO legitimate internet sites or telemarketers selling or sending “free of charge, except for postage and handling” home based Covid19 tests
- There are NO legitimate offers that can “sterilize the air in your home” by cleaning the air ducts.
- NO local health agency will give you a robo call informing that you have been exposed and need to purchase a Covid19 test.
- There is NO legitimate vaccine that can be offered from an internet site of phone solicitation (no such vaccine currently exists).
- NO Government based agency will ever ask you for money in advance related to Covid19 testing or treatment.

Happy Birthday!!

Hortense Kennedy- 16th

Sherry Parker- 18th