



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF SOUTH BURNABY, BC

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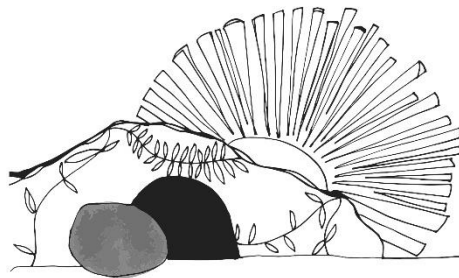
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Resurrection of Our Lord: Easter Day

March 31, 2024

Now the Feast and Celebration

Christ is risen! Jesus is alive, and God has swallowed up death forever. With Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, 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!

We at Grace Lutheran Church strive to reflect and proclaim the love of God shown to us by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit by providing an inclusive and supportive environment through loving care and community service.

A warm welcome to all who are worshipping with us in person or online! We appreciate your contribution to the community today: with your voice, your presence, and just the blessing that you are. May you be nurtured by God's Word, empowered by the love of Christ, and stirred by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in this service this day, for the sake of God's mission in the world.

Grace Lutheran Church worships, prays, and serves on the traditional and unceded lands and territories of the hən̓q̓əmi̓nəḥ̓ (Musqueam) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) speaking peoples.

GATHERING

OPENING HYMN AND GOSPEL READING

GOSPEL: John 20:1-2

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.”

Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! (#377) verse 1

GOSPEL: John 20:3-10

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.

Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! (#377) verse 2

GOSPEL: John 20:11-14

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.

Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! (#377) verse 3

GOSPEL: John 20:15-16

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).

Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! (#377) verse 4

GOSPEL: John 20:17-18

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.

Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! (#377) verse 5

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The grace of our resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, the love of our resurrecting God, and the fellowship of the Spirit of resurrection be with you all.

And also with you.

NOW THE FEAST (p. 4)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, you come to us with power beyond understanding. You lift all things out of the dust, you breathe life and love into every being, and you call us into communion with you and each other as you claim victory over death. On this day that we proclaim the glorious resurrection found in your Word and truth, may your name be blessed and our hearts opened to your redeeming grace, through Jesus Christ our Saviour and friend. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Acts 10:34-43

A reading from Acts.

Peter crosses the immense religious and social boundary that separates Jews from Gentiles in order to proclaim the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, so that God's forgiveness in Jesus' name would reach out to all people.

³⁴Peter began to speak to [the people]: "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."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 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 my salvation.

¹⁵**Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents 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.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

The core of the Christian faith and Paul’s preaching is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As the crucified and risen Christ appeared to the earliest of his followers, so we experience the presence of the Risen One in the preaching of this faith.

¹Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, ²through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

³For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (p. 8)

GOSPEL: Mark 16:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The resurrection of Jesus is announced, and the response is one of terror and amazement.

¹When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint [Jesus’ body]. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴When they

looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Open our eyes, O God, and soften our hearts, that through the work of your Spirit we might hear your truth and receive the life that you give, through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

As it was Spring Break these past couple of weeks, our family tried to do more activities together while the kids had a bit of extra time. But because it's Easter today, that meant that I had a bit of less time to spend with the family, so I guess it all balanced out. I blame the decision makers at the public school schedule planning department for completely disregarding pastors who have school aged kids. You know, all 3 of us.

Anyway, one of the activities we planned to do as a family was to go to the movies and watch Kung Fu Panda 4. Now, I should say that when we decided this, none of us have seen any of the other Kung Fu Panda movies, but we decided on watching the 4th one because we had these vouchers that are expiring like today, and it was the only kid-friendly movie in theatres right now. So because we knew we were going to watch the 4th installment of a franchise of movies that we never watched, that meant that we were going to spend some time watching Kung Fu Panda 1, 2, and 3. That were, conveniently enough by the way, streaming on 3 separate platforms. For this I blame the streaming companies for completely disregarding pastors who have school aged kids on Spring Break and also soon to expire movie vouchers.

But now that we're all caught up on the crazy Fong antics of the past week, I must say that I quite enjoyed the Kung Fu Panda binge experience. If you haven't seen them or know about them, they are these animated movies by Dreamworks that follow the adventures Po, voiced by Jack Black, who is this bumbling panda that turns out to be the fabled Dragon Warrior... and you know how I feel about dragons. He goes on different adventures defeating different villains with the help of a growing cast of supporting characters featuring talented actors like Dustin Hoffman, Angelina Jolie, and Jackie Chan as the monkey. The stories are set in ancient China, and it's pretty cool how they draw on a lot of factual things around the culture, the landscape, and even the fighting styles of that time period, while being an obviously fantastical movie series. What, with their talking animals, mystical kung fu powers, and Jackie Chan not doing his own stunts. Pure crazy talk.

On the most part, these movies followed the very typical formula for any successful animated movie geared towards children. Which is basically that there is a problem that needs to be solved, there are some likely characters who can solve it, but it ends up that it's the *least* likely character that ends up being the hero that fixes everything, saves the day, and recreates the paradigms of everyone who didn't initially believe in them. Watch any animated movie from

Dreamworks or Disney or whoever makes animated movies and you'll see that I'm right. It's always the least expected that become the saviour of them all.

And of course, just in my saying it in that way, all our minds are drawn to today, Easter. And of course to Jesus, who is the point of Easter and by all rights in that culture would have been the least likely to be the Saviour of us all, God's chosen Messiah. I mean, Jesus was poor, relatively unknown, and shamefully born from unwed parents. He wasn't educated, born in the right kind of place, or have the right connections. He didn't follow the traditions, didn't come into the city riding a warhorse, and he most certainly didn't seem intimidating or powerful by any stretch of the imagination in those days.

Even with all this against him, Jesus did end up being our Saviour. Jesus did end up being the Messiah. Jesus did end up showing the world a new way of seeing life, not one that promotes power in might, wealth, or fear, but one in humility, compassion, and service.

But that seems too easy and straight forward for an Easter sermon, doesn't it? I mean, that can't be all, can it? There must be more to all of this than just that, right?

Well, of course there is more to the Easter gospel message. Of course there is more than this obvious kid's animated movie plotline to commemorate the joys and hope of the resurrection of our Lord. Of course my sermon isn't over, it's just been like less than a page and a half so far.

Of course there is, why else would I even bring it up if there wasn't?

See, while the Kung Fu Panda did basically follow that same cookie-cutter recipe, each one of the movies added something a bit different and perhaps a bit surprising. Yes, the titular character did have to get over everyone's assumptions and perceptions of him as the Dragon Warrior, but in each of the movies, *he* had to get over the assumptions and perceptions that *he* had... of *himself*.

So the movies taught the lesson that while everyone has to work on how they see others, we also have to work on how we see ourselves. I thought was pretty cool, I'd recommend them.

And we see these themes throughout the readings today, even in the gospel of John which isn't technically part of our readings. There we see how Peter talks about equality in Acts and reminds us how we are equally loved and gifted by God. Then Paul talks about who he is and how that in itself is by the grace of God. And in the two gospel accounts we heard from today, we see how the women perhaps didn't believe that they would be the first messengers of those immortal words, "I have seen the Lord" and "He is risen."

And so it is with us often times, isn't it? Don't we often look at our own lives and think that we aren't good enough? Don't we often think that God probably wouldn't choose and anoint us for whatever role that might present itself? Don't we often think God wouldn't ever call us?

But even in those thoughts, comes the point of Easter. From the beginning of this story of our faith, no one really thought that they could be who they are as God's people. From Adam and Eve, to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to David, to Ruth, to Esther, and even to Mary the mother of Jesus, none of them believed at first that God would even consider them.

Just like how we might think that God wouldn't consider us.

Or maybe we would think that, but we deny it because, you know, it's easier to sit on the sidelines. It's safer to be out of the limelight. It's more comfortable to not have to do anything too spiritual or Christian-y. But the thing is, God does call us, God does choose us, God does love us.

Calls us not necessarily to be great and powerful warriors, but into community and right relationship. Chooses us not necessarily to lead people to higher heights and deeper depths, but to be God's own people in humble service to each other. Loves us not because we are so great and lovable, but because God simply decides to and sees us as worthy.

Because if God didn't, then Easter would have never happened. The resurrection would have never happened. God's unending forgiveness would have never happened. But it has and does and always will. We see it in the empty cross. We can feel it in the ups and downs of our lives. We can know it in who we are and in our welcome and belonging in this family of Christ.

Friends, this is the message of Easter. This is the hope of resurrection. This is the promise that God gives to us all, that we, even in our shortcomings, our sin, and disbelief in ourselves because of it, God lovingly sends to us grace, mercy, and salvation. We are lifted up and empowered to be not just moral and ethical people who can pray your socks off, but to be the best versions of ourselves. This doesn't mean that we won't make mistakes. This doesn't mean that we won't ever fall short. This doesn't even mean that we'll always believe in ourselves.

But it does mean that God calls us into something greater. It means that God recreates and reforms us to be saints even in our sin. It means that God loves us into forgiveness, resurrection, and salvation.

That even when we don't live up to the standard, we are still worthy. Even when we are bogged down by guilt and shame, we are still included and welcomed. Even when all we can see is death, we are still given life.

So in this season of Easter and beyond, may we fully embrace God's gift of love, life, and welcome, knowing that no matter who we are or where we're from or what our pasts look like, we all continue to be cherished, worthy, and forgiven people of God. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY Now the Green Blade Rises (#379)

CREED (p. 9)

Together with all those celebrating the promise of resurrection this day, let us confess the Christian faith with the Apostle's 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

Called to live a life of joy in the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with “God, in your resurrecting mercy,” and you all may respond with **hear our prayer**. God, in your resurrecting mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, you are good and your mercy endures forever, for you are our strength and our song as you save us from death. May we always lean on this truth in our communities and ministry, that all can find comfort in its promise. We lift up this day in prayer our neighbouring faith communities; those who use this building for worship, work, and play; our partners Anglican Church of Canada and Moravian Church in Canada; and our bishops, rostered ministers, congregations, and ministries of the ELCIC. In particular, we pray for Spirit of Life Lutheran Church in Vancouver and their pastor Aneeta Saroop; and North Thompson Ecumenical Shared Ministry in Barriere and Clearwater and their Anglican pastor Bruce Chalmers. God, in your resurrecting mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, your exalted hands have valiantly created all the world and everything in it, and you have entrusted it to us to live in and care for. May our stewardship of this planet be pleasing to you, that its beauty and resourcefulness be maintained for the generations to come. God, in your resurrecting mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, you do not punish our wrongdoings with death, but you deal with us with righteousness and grace. Teach this righteousness and grace to all world leaders and politicians, that their laws and judgements be fair and just. We remember in prayer those that we’ve sponsored to come to this country: Abraham Barhane; and Solyana Amanuel; as well as those who have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Filimon Abraha. God, in your resurrecting mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, you answer us when we call and you are our salvation as you bring us back into wholeness. We pray for those among us who are sick, who mourn, or who feel lonely, that we all might see and lean on the strength of your love. Especially we remember Beulah; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Bev and family; Bryan and Chona; Kathy and Raj; Phil; Sukhwant; John and Betty; Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Jeanette; Pat and Patty; Hwee Yang; Perry; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...
God, in your resurrecting mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, we rejoice and are glad in this day that you have made, for it is full of your grace, mercy, and love, and you remind us of all your promises of resurrection and everlasting life with you and all the saints. May the hope that these promises bring lift us out of our despair, and lead us

into the community of faith and love that you so graciously give. God, in your resurrecting mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your saving grace and everlasting mercy, seen in the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who revealed to us true grace, who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (p.11)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

O Lord, we give you thanks for your eternal goodness and enduring mercy. You are our strength and song and your salvation leads us into rejoicing. For even in our sin, you do not leave us in death but you raise us up into righteousness with Jesus your Son, the rejected stone that you made to be the chief cornerstone, whom you have sent to us to be one of us, revealing to all the ways of your saving grace and love.

For on the night that he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, where he took some bread and with thankfulness in his heart, he broke and shared it and said, "Take and eat, this is my body broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After they ate, he took the cup, and with the same thankfulness he shared that saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

It is in this heavenly food that you give that we see the marvellous acts that you have done, even as we together declare the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We rejoice and are glad, O Lord, in this day that you have made, for we are reminded of resurrection, eternal life, and your salvation through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (p. 13)

Saved by God's grace through the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see the joy of resurrection.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS: Lamb of God (p. 14)

Christ is Risen! Alleluia! (#382)

That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright (#384)

Be Not Afraid (#388)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, we have been fed by your love, your grace, and your mercy, and you have redeemed us into your salvation forever. Empower us as your Easter people to live a resurrection life, proclaiming your goodness to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our resurrected Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Now may the truth of the empty tomb,
the love of a merciful God,
and the power of a forgiving grace
surround you and guide you the blessing of resurrection,
today and always.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: We Know That Christ Is Raised (#449)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, live as a people resurrected by love.

Thanks be to God.

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