



**Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!  
Alleluia!**

Many people, maybe even some we know, may not understand that Easter greeting spoken by Christians. We who are given faith by God's grace know what those words mean for us. Christ has overcome death, thus, we will not suffer eternal death through faith in Christ. Our sin has been forgiven through our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His Son Jesus for all our sins! Eternal life is ours through Christ. Jesus has died for us and we have peace with God and our fellow brothers and sisters in Him. The peace we have with God is different from that which the world longs for; the world around us struggles to find peace and never achieves it because we live in a sinful world. The peace believers have is the **“peace of God that passes all understanding”** because it comes from Christ; His death and resurrection. This peace cannot be attained by our effort, but comes through the Gospel given, coming from God's grace in Christ.

The Resurrection of our Lord, Easter Day, is the high point of the Church Year! Indeed, it is the focus of the entire life of Jesus for us that after He suffered in His Passion and was punished and died for us on the cross. Now in His Resurrection He is the Victorious Lord who conquered sin, death and the devil forever securing life and salvation for us that we would live with Him forever.

The Holy Gospel for The Resurrection of Our Lord: Easter Dawn, is **St. John 20:1-18**. Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early while still dark and saw the stone was taken away from the tomb. After running to Simon Peter and the other disciple (John) she told them, **“they have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid Him.”** Peter and John went, but did not understand what they saw.

Verse 11 tells us, Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, then going and looking in saw two angels sitting where the body of Jesus had lain. They asked, why she was weeping? She says, **“They have taken away my Lord...”** Turning around, she sees Jesus but does not recognize Him. Jesus speaks to Mary in her sorrow, **“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”** After she explains some more, Jesus says to her in verse 16, **“Mary.”** She turns and says to Him in Aramaic, **“Rabboni” (which means Teacher)**. One word, **“Mary”** and she recognizes her Savior. The Word of God accomplishes His purpose, the Word does what it says; it gave Mary recognition of Jesus; **Isaiah 55:10-11**. Mary's life is changed, she goes to the disciples and says, **“I have seen the Lord.”**

Notice how quickly her grief has turned to joy. Notice how she recognizes His voice as He speaks one word to her; “Mary.” The Resurrection of our Lord brings a new beginning to us, by God's free gift of grace. As quickly as her sorrow turned to joy so also is the guilt of sin removed from us, we too are given new life in Him for the Resurrection of Christ is the beginning of all things new and of eternal life with Him.

As we begin April 2025, Easter two weeks away, we know the eternal future we have in Christ from His death and Resurrection. We are given a new beginning in our Baptism sharing the same “Easter Joy” as Mary experienced when she recognizes Jesus by His voice, His word. We too recognize our Savior's voice as Jesus says in **St. John 10:14, “I am the Good Shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me...”** Jesus is Himself the Word of Truth who gives us forgiveness, life and salvation.

Life is not new to us in the sense that suddenly our problems disappear. We still live in a sinful world, we are afflicted with original sin. Our risen Lord Jesus Christ carries us through all of our troubles because He has conquered our enemies of sin, death and the devil giving us eternal hope.

Christians sometimes say we “live this side of the cross or on this side of Easter which was a glorious day. Do not think the best is over, the best is yet to come. Paul says in **Colossians 3:2-3 “Set your mind on things that are above, not things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”** In the crucified and risen Christ, you are justified. You are sanctified. You are called to live a new life in the risen Christ, a different life from the world around you. As Christ died for you and your sins are buried with Him in Baptism, so as He rises from death, you too rise to a new life now and one day to eternal glory when Jesus returns again! Each day we receive God's rich and generous grace is a new day given through Christ's Resurrection. Each day is a day of forgiveness, a day of love and mercy for us from Christ, a day of His grace!

Donna and I pray for God's continued “Easter Joy” for all of you in our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as you receive His grace and mercy new to you each day in Christ, looking forward to the days He gives through His love. A Blessed Easter Season to all of you! **Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

**In His Service,**

**Pastor Ahrendt**