

Service for Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020 – Provided via Elim’s website, Email, and Facebook

Greeting

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Christ’s resurrection truly brings life to everyone. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

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.**

Easter Hymn

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Text – 14th Century Latin Carol

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Jesus Christ is risen today. Alleluia.

Our triumphant holy day. Alleluia.

Who did once upon the cross. Alleluia.

Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia.

Hymns of praise then let us sing. Alleluia.

Unto Christ, our heavenly king. Alleluia.

Who endured the cross and grave. Alleluia.

Sinners to redeem and raise. Alleluia.

But the pains which he endured. Alleluia.

Our salvation have procured. Alleluia.

Now above the sky he’s king. Alleluia.

Where the angels ever sing. Alleluia.

Sing we to our God above. Alleluia.

Praise eternal as his love. Alleluia.

Praise him, all you heavenly host. Alleluia.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia.

The Word

Sorrow gives way to “fear and great joy” when two women are sent by an angel to proclaim the good news: Jesus is risen!

The First Reading for today is from the 3rd Chapter of Colossians.

¹If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

The Gospel for today is from the 28th Chapter of Matthew.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Message

Portions of today's message were taken from commentary written by Rolf Jacobson, Professor at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

This year, during the seasons of Lent and Easter, we are living in a time that we've never faced before in our lives. Due to this global pandemic, we are living in fear...what if someone dear to me or I get sick? We are living in isolation, loneliness, and despair. The news before us is filled with doom, with scarcely anything positive in sight. Rolf Jacobson, Luther Seminary professor says, *The reality of both the bad news and the good news of the resurrection seem so much more tangible at this time. So today, Jacobson, says and we hear, *the good news of Easter, in a Good Friday world.*

One of the first things that I do every morning is to look at the total number of cases of COVID-19 in the state of North Dakota. Next I look at the number of cases in Cass County and the number of deaths. The number of deaths in North Dakota isn't too high. But for the families suffering with grief and sadness, these deaths are real. It is not something to be dealt with easily. There is suffering to be sure. However, in the United States the total number of deaths is staggering, exceeding the number those who died in the devastation of 9/11.

Was it really any different for the three women who went to Jesus tomb? Mary Magdalene had to go to the tomb on Sunday morning, the first Easter. She went there with Mary, the mother of our Lord. These women knew Jesus personally – in fact, he was quite well-known in the area. Again, Jacobson points that *Jesus was the itinerant teacher who did signs and wonders, whom some said was the long-awaited Messiah.*

As a friend of Jesus', and some say she was with him during the last week of his life, Mary knew she must go to the tomb. Mary Magdalene knew Jesus well. Yet, when she encountered him just outside the tomb, Mary thought Jesus was the gardener. She did not recognize her Lord...not until Jesus spoke her name. "Mary." It was at that moment she knew this man not as the gardener but Lord, Jesus the Christ. Mary knew at this precise time that the risen Jesus was the work of God. The One whom gives resurrection and new life. How similar is this to the creation story in Genesis where God creates life for all...for life in relationship with God and with one another AND with all of creation itself. Isn't this the work of the risen Christ? To bring reconciliation to God. To bring reconciliation with and for all people. To bring peace and love to all those who are hurting, loving those who are unlovable – just as Jesus loved the hurting, the hungry, the

homeless, the outcasts. That is our call on this most holy of days, the Resurrection of our Lord. It is the call to us all the days of our lives. There is no escaping that.

During this time of the pandemic, we face uncertainties: illness, economic struggle, and even death, but we can be assured that we are not alone. We are facing this threat together. We are all in this together, which is the message of all the hearts we see on so many windows at this time. And we do have a call in this time. We are called to love with the same love that Jesus took with him to the cross. He gave us all his love by forgiving each and every one of our sins and promising us eternal life. This is ongoing work of Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord, in this world. He has gone before us to the eternal heavenly home to prepare a place for us. He will not leave us alone at the end of our lives. We will be with him always and forever.

Yes, Jesus is alive just as he promised. Even those near and dear to him did not understand when he told them he would rise again in three days. But Jesus is risen. Jesus is risen! Alleluia! He is risen indeed! This should certainly change the way we do things, the way we relate to one another – with respect, with compassion and love. Yes, Jesus is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Easter Hymn

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing

Text - Cyril A. Alington

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Good Christian friends, rejoice and sing!
Now is the triumph of our king!
To all the world glad news we bring:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The Lord of life is risen this day;
Death's mighty stone is rolled away;
Let all the earth rejoice and say:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Praise we in songs of victory
That love, that life which cannot die,
And sing with hearts uplifted high:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Your name we bless, O risen Lord,
 And sing today with one accord,
 The life laid down, the life restored:
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prayers of the People

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

God of resurrection, from the very beginning you give the church the gift of women as your witnesses: as preachers, teachers, and leaders, especially our Bishops Elizabeth and Larry. Open our ears to their proclamation this day and always. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All your creation praises you—the earth hums, the seas pulse, the stars shine, and the galaxies whirl in glorious harmonies to honor you. Let us hear and blend our voices in the song. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The countries of the world experience disunity and conflict; we set our minds on fear and greed rather than on your rule of justice and steadfast love. Build up all countries on your cornerstone of peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We weep with those who weep, and mourn with those who mourn. Cradle the fearful, the suffering, and the dying, assuring them of your loving presence, especially Kimberly Kamppanion and her family as they mourn her Grandmother Gladys Brewer's death, and Ron Anderson as he mourns his brother Glenn's death. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord of healing, protect those who have not been affected in this pandemic. Heal those who are sick, and grant those who have lost loved ones to the virus, the comfort in the promises of the resurrection. Guide us to help where we can. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Risen Lord, you went ahead of us into the grave and defeated the powers of evil. Inspire us to live our lives in this resurrection hope and draw us to you in our final days. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray together the pray we have been taught.

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed by 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. Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead
raise you to new life, fill you with hope,
and turn your mourning into dancing.

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Christ is risen, just as he said.

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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