

# Morning Prayer

# Easter Day

## The Resurrection of Our Lord, Jesus Christ

April 4, 2021

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=ei94MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3I2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: 782611

## Prelude

## Announcements

## Opening Hymn

Hymnal 180

*He is risen, he is risen*

1 He is ris - en, he is ris - en! Tell it out with  
2 Come, ye sad and fear - ful - heart - ed, with glad smile and  
4 He is ris - en, he is ris - en! He hath o - pened

joy - ful voice: he has burst his three days' pris - on;  
ra - diant brow! Death's long sha - dows have de - part - ed;  
hea - ven's gate: we are free from sin's dark pris - on,

let the whole wide earth re - joice: death is con - quered,  
Je - sus' woes are o - ver now, and the pas - sion

ris - en to a ho - lier state; and a bright - er

we are free, Christ has won the vic - to - ry.  
 that he bore— sin and pain can vex no more.  
 Eas - ter beam on our long - ing eyes shall stream.

*Presider* Alleluia! Christ is risen.  
*People* **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

**The Invitatory and Psalter**

*Presider* O God, let our mouth proclaim your praise!  
*People* **And your glory all the day long!**

**Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen!  
**O come let us worship. Alleluia!**

**Invitatory**

Alleluia.  
 Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; \*  
 therefore let us keep the feast,  
**Not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, \***  
**but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.**  
 Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; \*  
 death no longer has dominion over him.  
**The death that he died, he died to sin, once for all; \***  
**but the life he lives, he lives to God.**  
 So also consider yourselves dead to sin, \*  
 and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia.  
**Christ has been raised from the dead, \***  
**the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.**

For since by a man came death, \*  
by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.  
**For as in Adam all die, \***  
**so also in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia.**

### **Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

- <sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; \*  
his mercy endures for ever.
- <sup>2</sup>**Let Israel now proclaim, \***  
**“His mercy endures for ever.”**
- <sup>14</sup>The LORD is my strength and my song, \*  
and he has become my salvation.
- <sup>15</sup>**There is a sound of exultation and victory \***  
**in the tents of the righteous:**
- <sup>16</sup>“The right hand of the LORD has triumphed! \*  
the right hand of the LORD is exalted!  
the right hand of the LORD has triumphed!”
- <sup>17</sup>**I shall not die, but live, \***  
**and declare the works of the LORD.**
- <sup>18</sup>The LORD has punished me sorely, \*  
but he did not hand me over to death.
- <sup>19</sup>**Open for me the gates of righteousness; \***  
**I will enter them;**  
**I will offer thanks to the LORD.**
- <sup>20</sup>“This is the gate of the LORD; \*  
he who is righteous may enter.”
- <sup>21</sup>**I will give thanks to you, for you answered me \***  
**and have become my salvation.**
- <sup>22</sup>The same stone which the builders rejected \*  
has become the chief cornerstone.
- <sup>23</sup>**This is the LORD’s doing, \***  
**and it is marvelous in our eyes.**
- <sup>24</sup>On this day the LORD has acted; \*  
**we will rejoice and be glad in it.**

**Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen!  
**O come let us worship. Alleluia!**

### **The Lessons**

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter began to speak to Cornelius and the other Gentiles: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how 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. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not 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. He 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. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

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

**Canticle Q: A Song of Christ's Goodness**

*Anselm of Canterbury*

Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you; \*  
    you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.  
**Often you weep over our sins and our pride, \***  
    **tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgment.**  
You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds, \*  
    in sickness you nurse us and with pure milk you feed us.  
**Jesus, by your dying, we are born to new life; \***  
    **by your anguish and labor we come forth in joy.**  
Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness; \*  
    through your gentleness, we find comfort in fear.  
**Your warmth gives life to the dead, \***  
    **your touch makes sinners righteous.**  
Lord Jesus, in your mercy, heal us; \*  
    in your love and tenderness, remake us.  
**In your compassion, bring grace and forgiveness, \***  
    **for the beauty of heaven, may your love prepare us.**

**Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

A Reading from Paul's First letter to the Church in Corinth.

<sup>1</sup>Now 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, <sup>2</sup>through 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.

For 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, <sup>4</sup>and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. <sup>7</sup>Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. <sup>9</sup>For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup>But 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. <sup>11</sup>Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

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

Hymn

LEVAS 43

*Because He lives*

1. God sent His Son, they called Him Je - sus; He came to love,  
2. How sweet to hold a new - born ba - by, And feel the pride,  
3. And then one day I'll cross the riv - er; I'll fight life's fi -

1. — heal, and for - give; He lived and died to buy my  
2. — and joy he gives; But great - er still the calm as -  
3. - nal war with pain; And then as death gives way to

1. par-don, — An emp - ty grave is there to prove my Sav - ior lives. —  
 2. sur - ance, — This child can face un - cer - tain days be - cause He lives. —  
 3. vic - t'ry, — I'll see the lights of glo - ry and I'll know He lives. —

Be - cause He lives — I can face to - mor - row; — Be - cause He lives —

— all fear is gone; — Be - cause I know — He holds the

fu - ture, — And life is worth the liv - ing just be - cause He lives. —

### Third Reading

John 20:1-18

A Reading from John.

<sup>1</sup>Early 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. <sup>2</sup>So 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.” <sup>3</sup>Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup>The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>He bent

down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup>for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples returned to their homes.

<sup>11</sup>But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; <sup>12</sup>and 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. <sup>13</sup>They 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." <sup>14</sup>When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Jesus 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." <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup>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.'" <sup>18</sup>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.



*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## **Sermon**

### **The Apostles' Creed**

*The Presider begins*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
**creator of heaven and earth;**  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.**  
**He 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,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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.**

## **The Prayers**

*Presider* Hear our cry, O God.  
*People* **And listen to our prayer.**  
*Presider* Let us pray.

*The People's Respondent, the Presider, and the People*

**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.**

V. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;  
**R. Govern and uphold them, now and always.**  
V. Day by day we bless you;  
**R. We praise your Name for ever.**  
V. Lord, keep us from all sin today;  
**R. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.**  
V. Lord, show us your love and mercy;  
**R. For we put our trust in you.**  
V. In you, Lord, is our hope;  
**R. And we shall never hope in vain.**



### *The Collect of the Day*

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. **Amen.**

### **Intercessions and thanksgivings**

*Presider* Eternal and loving God, through the glorification of your Son Jesus you have taught us to follow him through death into eternal life: Glorify your name in us, as we bring before you the concerns of the world, saying: Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.

*Intercessor* Blessed Father, your Son Jesus has taught your Church that when a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it bears much fruit: Empower us in our journey of sacrifice and compassion to follow Christ in such faithfulness that we may be glorified with him. Empower our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Moises, Elizabeth, Donald and Craig. Empower all ministers, priests, deacons, ministry teams, those in formation; and our brothers and sisters worshipping at Trinity Church, Monroe; and Ascension, El Siebo, and St Anthony of Padua, Carreton, in the Dominican Republic. **Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.**

*Silence is kept.*

Almighty One, you have driven out the ruler of this world through the glorification of Jesus: Put your law of love within the hearts of all who hold authority among the nations,

that they may hear of joy and gladness, so that the broken body of the world may rejoice. **Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.**

*Silence is kept.*

Bring the joy of your saving help to all who suffer throughout the world [especially \_\_\_\_\_], that they may hear of joy and gladness and be healed. **Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.**

*Silence is kept.*

Gracious God, you have promised that all who serve your beloved will be honored in your sight: Have mercy upon this community, that all may know you, from the least to the greatest, and follow in the way that Christ has shown us. **Create in us clean hearts, o God, and renew a right spirit within us.**

*Silence is kept.*

Let our prayers ascend to Jesus, our eternal high priest, as we offer up our intercessions and supplications [especially for \_\_\_\_\_]. We thank you for the incarnation of your Son Jesus, who shares our sorrows and our joys. Hear our praise and thankfulness for all the blessings we enjoy [especially for \_\_\_\_\_]. We entrust into your life all of those who have surrendered their lives into your eternal keeping [especially \_\_\_\_\_]. May they rest in your peace. **Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.**

*Silence is kept.*

*Presider* Holy One, your Son Jesus has taught your Church that when a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it bears much fruit: Give us the joy of your saving help again, and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit, o God, as we follow Jesus in service to your world, that the salvation and glorification you have accomplished through his cross and resurrection may extend your eternal life throughout creation. Create in us clean hearts, O God. **Amen**

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. We remember your death, Lord Christ; we proclaim your resurrection; we await your coming in glory. And since we cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. **Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let us never be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.**

*The Presider then says*

My brothers and sisters, I invite you- wherever you are- to take into your hands the gifts you offer today. Gifts of food, gifts of money, gifts of whatever form, and join me as we offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good our vows to the Most High.

Let us pray.

Loving God and merciful Creator, whose hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: we come to you with thanksgiving and praise. We offer to you this day our gifts of time, talent, and possessions, knowing that all we are, and all we have, is a gift from you. **Please accept these gifts, and help us to reach out to others as you, our God, have reached out to us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **Intercessions and Thanksgivings**

*Officiant* Jesus Christ is risen today, our triumphant holy day. Alleluia! So let us pray to our Lord, saying, “To you we offer praise eternal; Alleluia! Alleluia!”

*Intercessor* Heavenly King, for us you endured the cross and the grave. When we were yet sinners, you redeemed and saved us. Bless our Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Moises, Elizabeth, Donald and Craig, all ministers, priests, deacons, ministry teams, those in formation; and our sisters and brothers worshipping at St John’s, Westland; Cathedral of the Epiphany, Santo Domingo, and St Bartholomew, San Cristobal, in the Dominican Republic. May we, your church, sing your eternal praises everywhere we go. To you we offer praise eternal; **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Silence is kept.*

Incarnate Love, where hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain, call forth new life by your touch. Bring forth life in the barren places of this world. To you we offer praise eternal; **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Silence is kept.*

Author of Life, you are the ruler of creation. All things created on earth sing to your glory. From the death of the winter, raise the fair beauty of earth. To you we offer praise eternal; **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Silence is kept.*

Living Savior, you hold the future. You bless and restore our families, our communities, and our world with babies and children. Though they face uncertain days, we trust them to the certainty of your endless and eternal love; we give you thanks and praise [for \_\_\_\_\_] and all the blessings of this life.

Jesus the healer of the world, pour out your balm on our souls, and the souls of all in pain or sorrow. Be the source of life for all people. Hear our prayers for these whom we remember before you [\_\_\_\_\_].

Purify us, O Lord, from all evil that we may rightly see you in the eternal light of your resurrection. By your victory, bring [\_\_\_\_\_ and] us from death to life eternal. To you we offer praise eternal; **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Silence is kept.*

*Officiant* O God, who by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light: Grant that we, who have been raised with him, may abide in his presence and rejoice in the hope of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be dominion and praise for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **Prayers for those celebrating their birthdays and anniversaries**

*In April, we celebrate the birthdays of Kitty, Jan S, Kathy W, Katherine, David, Ellery, and any others you wish to remember in prayer.*

*Prayer for a Birthday*

*BCP p.830*

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants Kitty, Jan, Kathy, Katherine, David, and Ellery, as they begin another year. Grant that *they* may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen *their* trust in your goodness all the days of *their* lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Today we celebrate the anniversaries of those you wish to remember in prayer.*

*Prayer for an Anniversary*

*BCP p.429*

Eternal God, creator and preserver of all life, author of salvation, and giver of all grace: Look with favor upon the world you have made, and for which your Son gave his life, and especially upon *this/ese* couple/s. Grant that their wills may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they may continue to grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their lives. **Amen.**

## **The General Thanksgiving**

*The People's Respondent, the Presider, and the People*

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies,**

we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
 for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
 to us and to all whom you have made.  
 We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
 and all the blessings of this life;  
 but above all for your immeasurable love  
 in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;  
 for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
 And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,  
 that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,  
 not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
 by giving up our selves to your service,  
 and by walking before you  
 in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
 to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
 be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

### Closing Hymn

Hymnal 207

*Jesus Christ is risen today*

The musical score is presented in two systems. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn, and the second system contains the remaining four lines. The music features a simple, hymn-like melody with a steady accompaniment.

1 Je - sus Christ is risen to - day, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 2 Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 3 But the pains which he en - dured, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 4 Sing we to our God a - bove Al - le - lu - ia!

our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 un - to Christ, our heaven - ly King, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 our sal - va - tion have pro - cured; Al - le - lu - ia!  
 praise e - ter - nal as his love; Al - le - lu - ia!

who did once up - on the cross, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 who en - dured the cross and grave, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 now a - bove the sky he's King, Al - le - lu - ia!  
 praise him, all ye heaven - ly host, Al - le - lu - ia!

suf - fer to re - deem our loss. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 where the an - gels ev - er sing. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia!

**Dismissal and Blessing**

*A Priest says*

We are not sent forth into a world where Christ is absent. It is God's world, and in it Christ awaits us. We go forth to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as themselves. We go to strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being **Amen.**

My sisters and my brothers, go now in peace, in the name of + the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia!  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Postlude**



**REGARDING OFFERINGS TO ST. BARNABAS CHURCH**

**To make an offering to St Barnabas**, please mail your check to the church: 20500 W Old US-12, Chelsea MI 48118-1309. Mail is being collected daily.

**CONTINUING OUR DONATIONS OF FOOD AND FUNDS  
TO FAITH IN ACTION**

Faith in Action is continuing to provide leadership in collecting donations to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas. They will be in need of our continuing help in the weeks of winter still to come.

**Needed right now:** *boxed/shelf-stable milk, cooking oil, salt/pepper, spices, coffee, tea bags, sugar, flour, canned tuna, crackers, cake mix, canned frosting, dish soap, women’s hygiene products.* You may bring your donations to FIA, or to Nancy who will see that they get there. **If you bring food directly to FIA**, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. If you write a check, please make it to *Faith In Action*. The **next Food Drive at the church** will be **April 18**. The building will be open for you to leave your donations.

Financial donations to help us combat the continuing effects of the pandemic can be made by PayPal at [www.faithinaction1.org](http://www.faithinaction1.org), by Facebook, or by mailing a check to *Faith in Action, 603 S. Main Street, Chelsea MI 48118*. **If you need help, please call FIA at (734) 475-3305**

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**Upcoming Commemorations**

- April 4 Martin Luther King, Jr., Civil Rights Leader and Martyr, 1968
- 5 Pandita Mary Ramabai, Prophetic Witness and Evangelist in India, 1922
- 6 Daniel G. C. Wu, Priest and Missionary among Chinese Americans, 1956
- 7 Tikhon, Patriarch of Russia, Confessor and Ecumenist, 1925
- 8 William Augustus Muhlenberg, Priest, 1877; and, Anne Ayres, Religious, 1896
- 9 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Theologian and Martyr, 1945
- 10 William Law, Priest, 1761

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**April 4, 2021 – Easter Day**

**Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

“On this day the Lord has acted.” The psalm for today is jubilant with praise and celebration, declaring that God has acted victoriously on behalf of the rejected, the oppressed, the underdog, the ones who are facing death at every corner. The God of this psalm is alive and active. The God of this psalm is one whose “mercy endures for ever.”

It is a God that many of us may find difficulty seeing in this painful year of death and despair. How can God be alive and well when my neighbors are not? And yet the vision of the God of life is often most clearly seen in the valley of death. The God of life presented in Scripture is the God who knows death intimately and has come through it. God is not ignorant when it comes to death, and God is not ignorant of our current struggle. God finds us in the struggle and brings us to life. So today, like the Israelites, we celebrate the God of life who meets us at the brink of death.

- What does it mean to rejoice and be glad in the God of life when we are surrounded by death?

**1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

My son and I like to walk in the woods near our house and collect acorns. Sometimes I hold the acorns in my hand and think about the tree from which they came. I think about how the forest is made up of hundreds of trees that came from hundreds of acorns from hundreds of other trees. The forest might seem like an unchanging, static presence, but it is dynamic—always growing and passing on life to life.

In today’s passage from 1 Corinthians, the author paints a similar picture of the Church, which springs forth from Christ’s resurrection. Experience of that life-giving resurrection was received by St. Paul from Cephas, the twelve, five hundred others, James, and other apostles (sadly, Paul skips mentioning all the women). It was then handed down by St. Paul to the Corinthians themselves. And some time down along the line, knowledge and experience of Christ’s resurrection has come to us, today.

For this reason, Easter is not simply a celebration of an historical memory, but like the forest through which my son and I walk, it is a celebration of an ongoing mystery that continually takes place in the life of the dynamic, ever-growing, and ever-changing Church. It’s noteworthy that in this passage, St. Paul does not say to the Church, “You were saved,” but rather, “You are *being* saved.” Thus, on this Easter Day, we not only remember a resurrection that took place 2,000 years ago but we also experience our own participation in the ongoing resurrection of Christ.

- What implications might the notion of “you are being saved” instead of “you were saved” have on Christian living?
- How does seeing Easter as an ongoing saving event differ from seeing it as a one-time historical moment?

**John 20:1-18**

“Doing nothing often leads to the very best kind of something.” So says Winnie the Pooh in the 2018 Disney film, *Christopher Robin*. The film features a grown-up Christopher Robin, who has become so consumed with his “important” work at his company job that he scarcely has time for his wife and daughter and has all but forgotten about his childhood friends in the



Hundred Acre Wood. However, with a helpful reminder from his childhood friend, Pooh, Christopher Robin learns to slow down again and notice what is really important in life.

It's a familiar story, particularly in our hyper-productive, consumeristic world. Will we be too busy with our to-do lists to notice the miracle of Easter this year, or will we stop to do nothing in order to find the "very best kind of something?"

That is exactly what we see Mary Magdalene doing in the gospel reading for today when she experiences a life-changing encounter with the risen Jesus. As soon as Peter and the other disciple had seen the empty tomb, they were off again, presumably to find some sort of "fix" to the problem of a robbed grave. Not Mary Magdalene. Rather than running away to find something to do about the problem, she took the time to stop and notice. To notice her own trauma and loss – and to weep. To do nothing but to feel. And it was there in her quiet weeping that she was given the great privilege of being the first person to see the risen Jesus face-to-face. While Peter and the other disciple had gone off to do important things, Mary stayed to do nothing, which led "to the very best kind of something." We are often called to spring into the action of an important to-do list, but if we never slow down to notice the world within and the world around us, we might completely miss the transformative miracle of the Resurrection.

- With whom in this passage do you most identify?
- How might you find some time to do nothing this Easter season?

*This study was written by Deacon Derek Larson, Seminary of the Southwest.*

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### **Our Mission:**

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ, and to serve Jesus by serving others in the world, guided by the values of Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



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