

Pastor Roy's Sermon from Easter - April 16, 2017

Today we celebrate hope, faith, and new beginnings. Easter Sunday morning—Christ's resurrection—is why we gather on Sunday mornings for worship throughout the year! We are remembering the source of our hope and life. Resurrection is what it's all about. Christmas is a celebration of God with us. In Easter we celebrate that there is only life, that death is temporary, a transition to a greater communion—yes, a painful transition for those who remain. But Easter is a celebration of God's life which has no limit, no beginning, no end. Yes, God is present, and yes, this presence is life itself!

We see the Marys, we feel the earth shake, we see the angels and the empty tomb. We see the risen Lord. The wonders of life all around us shout that death is defeated. Sure, sometimes it doesn't feel that way, but the empty tomb is the big picture. Resurrection's light illuminates death's shadow of fear. Life and light grow from the darkness. He is alive! Christ is risen! Alleluia! (Alleluia, he is risen indeed!)

The seeds of life grow in the ashen dust of death. Death's best effort is denied. Fear is overcome by hope. The angels say, "Do not be afraid, Go, tell the disciples to go back to Galilee where he will meet them!" Jesus says the same thing. Go, tell, and go back to Galilee!

The women meet Jesus in his raised body. He is no longer as he was before he died, but now they are filled with hope and peace and life. Yes, they will miss him when he is not with them. No, they will not despair that he is dead and gone and no longer with them. He will now always be with them. And they are to return to their homes and live this new reality.

This resurrection is not something they look forward to. Resurrection is now!

They will commune the rest of their days with a living Lord. No longer islands, alone, unsure, afraid, but vessels and conduits of the life and the love of God. Every day, every moment they are freed by his presence, they now can offer his life and his love to all around him. No more fear. No more despair. Only hope. Only faith. Only love.

For us, resurrection is not what happened 2000 years ago. Resurrection is what happens when we gather. Resurrection happens when we remember that our Lord is not dead but lives. Christ lives in us as we live in communion with all that is alive. Never to die, never to be isolated, or shamed, or left behind. We are caught up together in love, in mercy, in life.

Resurrection is not mostly about understanding or believing what happened in the past, it is embracing this holy mystery in all that we do, and say, and even think. Resurrection is now.

The women at the tomb are told to go. Go live! Go tell! Go be full of life and Joy! We can let go of our fears and focus on what is truly real! Relentless life and peace!

Happy Easter, let us share in the joy of the women at the tomb and as they go to tell and live the good news!

Alleluia, the Lord is risen!