

## Pastor Roy's Easter Sermon - March 27, 2016

Christ is Risen! He is Risen, Indeed!

**Disciples: What just happened?** The disciples are surprised by Jesus' death on a cross and again by his resurrection. They resisted his death, they resisted his resurrection. The women come bearing idle tales of men in dazzling white robes. We assume that none of the disciples believed anything until Jesus meets them behind locked doors. But according to Luke, the women describe these celestial visitors with the same language as when Peter, James, and John have their experience with Jesus on the mountain of transfiguration. Perhaps the dazzling white clothes give Peter and John pause, then run to check out the grave—as the pieces started to come together in a strange, unexpected, further life-changing way.

**Disciples and Us: What is Resurrection faith?** Of course, even after they see, touch, talk to, and listen to Jesus, they still must learn to trust, to have faith beyond themselves. In time they, like all of us, learn to trust the small seeds of faith which begin within and grow, unexpectedly, surprisingly, mysteriously. This faith from Jesus is open to questions **without** clear answers, pain and suffering, losses with uncertain futures. Faith in resurrection, faith in the interconnectedness of all of life—no matter what—this faith overcomes alienation and death with rest, peace, and the joy of profound relationships everywhere we look—when we look with the eyes of resurrection faith.

The **temptation** of Easter is to believe that all our troubles should be over. No, the **joy** of Easter is that all of our troubles are now infused, filled with the hope of love, the power of a relationship with **life itself**. . .with God.

Our Easter **challenge** is to see that resurrection is always, all around us. New life is right here. The challenge is to have the eyes, ears, hands and feet of faith. Resurrection is right in front of us, every moment. Christ is with us in our faith. Doubt is not about whether or not God exists. Doubt is failing to see the life of God all around us. And so we discipline ourselves to trust, to hope, to allow ourselves to fall into a faith that embraces the unity of all of life which is God revealed in time and space. The universal Christ spirit. Resurrection is the universal Christ spirit at work.

Jesus' resurrection is **our sign** as Christians that life and love are greater than fear and death. Yes, we worry about our own death. We dread separation from those we love. Fiercely, if we are honest. But faith in Jesus' resurrection gives us courage to *accept* death for what it is and *proclaim* what death is **not**. Death is an acceleration in our journey of communion with God. Our example, Jesus, courageously released his life to reveal the true Source—God. Love and justice rather than survival are the essence of life. He proclaimed in his death that life is not about eating and breathing and clinging to our independent existences. True life is always about the greater good.

And so, Christ's resurrection gives **courage** to seek life and find it all around us—to discover in Christ a love which will never let **us** go. A love which brings us into deeper communion. Our celebration today gives courage to love and work for justice. These are the essence of life for which Jesus gave his life. His resurrection gives us courage to do likewise.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen, Indeed! Amen.