

Grace Lutheran Community, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2023: Easter Sunday

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The sermon text for today is based on the text John 13

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Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!” So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) Then the disciples went back to where they were staying. Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?” “They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. He

asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).

17 Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them that he had said these things to her.

Have you rushed here today to look into the tomb that we remembered only three days ago? Have you come eagerly to see again the grace and love of God in action with the tomb no longer with the stone keeping a dead man inside rather the stone we find is rolled away and we are reminded by the angels that He is not here, He is Risen!.

What a climax to this story. We started out with the contrast of Love and hate. The love of God poured out in His only Son Jesus who now is alive and the hate of the world toward the light of the world, that which is love, God in human flesh.

While this is a happy ending, it comes at a cost. Love, the deep love of God, came at a cost. God gives up His only Son who

humbles Himself in obedience to a horrific death on a cross at Calvary.

So what does that mean for us? The work of God has been completed, finished as we heard Jesus say on the cross. His words are not simply saying it was His time to die, but that all God had planned is now done through that act of deep love on the cross. We now stand here at the dawn of the Easter Day to cry out Jesus is not in the tomb, rather He is Risen. He is alive.

So we no longer live in darkness. In the deep darkness of sin and eternal death, rather by faith we now rise and walk in the light of the world, the Risen Jesus Christ.

We live boldly now as children of the light, as forgiven, redeemed, recreated and renewed people of the light. We no longer live by our flesh but by the very power that raised Jesus from the dead. We live by the spirit, not in the sense of a warm and fuzzy vibe or spirit, or by the spirit of the age. NO. We live by the spirit of God.

We lives as people who live in Christ.

Yet do you find yourself sometimes looking for Jesus where you cannot find Him? Like Mary do you ask if someone has taken Jesus away?

Jesus is with us always, He is found in His very word and His spirit living in us opens our eyes of faith to Jesus through His holy word as we spend time, reading, hearing and meditating upon it.

Let us not look for Jesus in our struggles in life in the tomb where we might feel Jesus has no power to change us, heal us or forgive us. Let us hear Him as He calls our name and then sends us to go and tell others Jesus is alive.

This Easter let that light of the Risen Lord Jesus shine in you and through you into the world sharing the good news with those around in all you words and actions and then let that extend into every day that you are alive on this earth.

Amen.