

Sermon followed by Service

April 17, 2022 - Easter Sunday

Luke 24:1-8

Victory - what comes to mind for you? Maybe you think of a special game, a special team, a victory parade, a victory lap. I think of that picture, the end of World War 2 - Times Square, New York City - people cheering and dancing and kissing in the streets. I think of the "Miracle on Ice," the US hockey team beating the Soviets. The rush, the release, the relief - victory sure feels good, doesn't it?

Last week, Palm Sunday, we got a taste of victory. Jesus rides into Jerusalem as King, almost like a victory parade. Crowds come out to meet Jesus, waving palm branches and cheering: "**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**" The taste of victory was in the air.

But that was like forever ago. Not just for us. For the women on that first Easter, any thought, any hope of victory was long gone. They weren't up before dawn rushing to see victory happen, and they sure weren't rushing to celebrate victory, hoping to get a good spot, a spot up close for some victory parade. No, the women were up and awake, I imagine because they were so heartbroken and anxious they couldn't sleep. You've had nights like that, haven't you? Now they're getting on with their day feeling beaten. Not beaten and bloodied; perhaps worse - beaten down, beaten down inside. For the women on that first Easter, any thought, any hope of victory was long gone - buried in the tomb with Jesus.

Why? Why so beaten? Think of what Jesus meant to those women. He was their hope for a better life, their hope that they mattered. Without Jesus, they were just names and faces in a crowd of people being run over and ground down by people like Putin. Without Jesus, they were just part of a people pretending to matter while the world chewed them up and spit them out. Without Jesus, they were just part of a people living a life that would always and forever end in death. Without Jesus, doesn't sound like much of a life, does it? The women wanted better; we all want something better than that, don't we?

So, without Jesus, what was the way to a better life? For some - eat, drink, and be merry - "This is as good as it gets." For others, eat, drink, and be miserable - "It is what it is." For still others, what was their way to a better life? Work hard, live right; clean the house, fix the house; build a better life, buy a better life. But what always seems to happen? In this world, no matter what we do, someone,

something always seems to come along and puts us back where we started - living a life that always and forever ends in death. Sound familiar?

So what did the women do? They looked to God for a better life outside this world. But his Church was so toxic and corrupt: more about self than about God, more about being true to self instead of true to God, more about doing for self instead of doing for God; and so more about judging and making excuses - judging others and excusing self - than about God's grace and justice. In the church of Jesus' day, it wasn't easy to find hope in the church. But these women, they weren't the kind to just throw stones at the church and excuse themselves. They knew their history. They knew how they had failed God and fought God and forgotten God. They knew they weren't good enough for God and couldn't make themselves good enough for God. Oh, that's an awful feeling, isn't it? Worse, it's an awful reality.

But then, Jesus found them. He shared with them an invitation: **“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.”** He shared with them a promise for today: **“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things, everything you need will be given to you as well.”** Even better, he gave them a promise for forever: **“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”** And Jesus showed them why they could believe his invitation and promise. He showed them and shared with them a power from out of this world. With a word, with a touch, he healed the sick. With a word, he drove out demons. With a word, with a touch, he even raised the dead. This Jesus wasn't just some talker. This Jesus showed himself to be True. He showed himself to be the Messiah, the Savior that God had promised. He showed himself to be from God, and not just from God; he showed himself to be the Son of God, God himself.

With Jesus, these women found they mattered and they didn't need to worry and be afraid. In sickness and trouble, out in the world of evil, even in the face of danger and death - with Jesus, they didn't need to worry and be afraid. They weren't alone and on their own. They had Jesus, and with Jesus, they had God for them. Yes, that's right. With Jesus, they had God - the Creator of the Universe - for them. With Jesus, they didn't need to be afraid of God. God wasn't against them - judging them here with trouble, some day judging them forever in hell. No, with Jesus, they had God for them, here and forever. That's right, with Jesus, they could know that there's more to life than just this life. With Jesus, they had a better life ahead of them in heaven. So with Jesus, they could live like there's

more to life than just this life. They didn't need to live with their lives focused on pain and pleasure - avoiding pain and satisfying pleasure. With Jesus, they could live like life has a greater purpose - with Jesus, we get to share the life and the love, the power and the promise of God.

Wow! With Jesus, life was looking so good, so full of hope. With Jesus, the women in our lesson were ready for a victory march, a victory lap, a victory parade. With Jesus, the women were ready to live a victorious victory life.

But now, their Jesus was dead. They saw him dead. They saw him buried. And all their hopes, their hope for peace, their hope for life, a better life, a life right with God; all their hopes were buried with Jesus in that cold, stone grave. What an awful, empty place to be. I imagine most all of us have had a taste of that hopelessness at some point.

But we know something the women didn't know yet. Jesus wasn't dead in that grave. In fact, Jesus was already running his victory lap. Early Easter Sunday morning, Jesus raised himself; he raised his body back to life. One of the first things he did was take a victory lap in hell telling Satan and everyone else down there: "I win; you lose!" Jesus' death on Good Friday wasn't Satan's victory; it wasn't death's victory. Jesus' death on Good Friday was part of Jesus' victory, part of your victory. With his death on the cross, Jesus paid for the sins that would damn us to death and hell. With his death on the cross, Jesus wiped out and wiped clear all the guilt that Satan worked so hard to put between us and God, to separate us from God. With his death on the cross, Jesus cleared the way for God to say to you: "I will be your God, and you will be my people. I've got you - forgiven. I've got you - safe with me for time and for eternity." Jesus' death on the cross wasn't Satan's victory. Jesus' death on the cross was part of Jesus' victory. With his death on the cross, Jesus cleared the way for you to enjoy life right with God.

With Jesus dead on the cross, with Jesus dead in the grave, the women didn't see that. All they could see were their hopes buried and dead. But when they got to the tomb, what did they find? Jesus wasn't there. Instead there were two angels waiting to share the good news: "**He's not here! He's risen!**" "Jesus is alive and looking to meet up with you!" Now it wasn't just Jesus on his victory lap, and just his angels cheering and sharing the Good News. Now it's the women, and then his disciples; and now it's us! Jesus is bringing us and gathering us into his victory parade.

We get to live with the Jesus who beat death. We get to live with the Jesus who broke the power of sin and Satan. We get to live with the Jesus who sets us right with God. We get to live with the Jesus who invites you and promises you and powers you for a new life, a victorious life with him. Yes, we get to live in victory! Amen.



The Resurrection of Our Lord

April 17, 2022

Pre-Service Music

"In Christ Alone"

Arr. James Koerts

"I Know That My Redeemer Lives"

Setting by Michael Burkhardt

"Easter Hymn"

By Dan Kreger

"Christ, the Lord, is Risen Today"

By Richard Bradley

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today, Alleluia!"

By Healey William

Order of Service

Opening Hymn

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today; Alleluia"

Hymn 438

Jesus Christ is ris'n 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 heav'nly King, Alleluia!
who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia! sinners to redeem and save. 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!

Please stand to sing the final stanza

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia! praise eternal as his love; Alleluia!
praise him, all you heav'nly host, Alleluia! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

Minster: Christ is risen!
Congregation: He is risen, indeed!

Easter Dialogue

M: This is the day the Lord has made;

C: **Let us rejoice and be glad in it.** *(Psalm 118:24)*

M: Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

(Ephesians 2:4-7)

C: **Since we have been raised with Christ, we set our hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.** *(Colossians 3:1)*

M: Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. *(Colossians 3:2-3)*

C: **When Christ, who is our life, appears, then we also will appear with him in glory.** *(Colossians 3:4)*

M: Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. *(Romans 6:3-4)*

C: **What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?** *(Romans 6:1-2)*

M: But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. *(1 John 2:1)*

C: **He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.** *(1 John 2:2)*

M: Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen, indeed!**

Choir

“Magnificent, Marvelous, Matchless Love”

Hymn 577

*Magnificent, marvelous, matchless love; too vast and astounding to tell,
forever existing in worlds above, now offered and given to all.
O fountain of beauty eternal, the Father, the Spirit, the Son.
Sufficient and endlessly generous: magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

*Creation is brimming with thankfulness, the mountains, exultant they stand;
the seasons rejoice in your faithfulness, all life is sustained by your hand.
You crown ev'ry meadow with color, you paint ev'ry shade in the sky;
each day the dawn wakes as an encore of magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

Refrain

*How great, how sure; his love endures forevermore.
Magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

*What grace, that you entered our brokenness; you came in the fullness of time.
How far we had fallen from righteousness, but not from the mercies of Christ.
Your cross is our door to redemption; your death is our fullness of life.
That day, how forgiveness flowed as a flood: magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

Refrain

*How great, how sure; his love endures forevermore.
Magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

Bridge

*United in your resurrection, you lift us to infinite heights.
Could anything sever or take us from magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

Refrain 2X

*How great, how sure; his love endures forevermore.
Magnificent, marvelous, matchless love.*

The Word of God

M: Almighty God, by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you conquered death and opened the gate to eternal life. Grant that we, who have been raised with him through baptism, may walk in the newness of life and always rejoice in the hope of sharing his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be dominion and praise now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

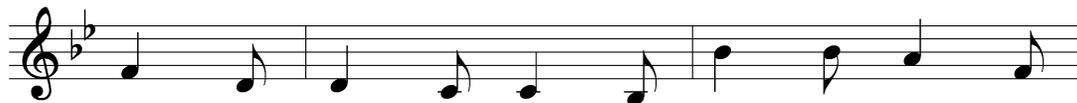
Choir

“Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed”

Hymn 447



1 How can it be, the One who died has borne our
2 For joy a - wakes as dawn - ing light when Christ's dis -
3 Where doubt and dark - ness once had been, they saw him



sin through sac - ri - fice, to con - quer ev - 'ry
ci - ples lift their eyes. A - live he stands, their
and their hearts be - lieved. But blest are those who

sting of death? Sing, sing "Hal-le-lu-jah!" v. 2
 friend and King; Christ, Christ, he is ris - en!
 have not seen, yet sing "Hal-le-lu-jah!" v. 4

Refrain

Christ is ris-en, he is ris-en in-deed! Oh, sing "Hal-le-lu-jah!" Join the cho-rus, sing with the re-deemed:
 (Fine)
 "Christ is ris-en, he is ris-en in-deed." v. 3/v. 5

Once bound by fear, now bold in faith, they preached the truth and pow'r of grace and pouring out their lives they gained life, life everlasting. Refrain

The pow'r that raised him from the grave now works in us to pow'rf'ly save. He frees our hearts to live his grace; go, tell of his goodness. Refrain

The Gospel of the Resurrection

Luke 24:1-12

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" Then they remembered his words.

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

M: Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen, indeed!**

Explanation of the 2nd Article of the Apostle's Creed

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

Hymn of the Day

"Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands"

Hymn 440 v. 1-6

Men sing v. 3

Women sing v. 4

1 Christ Je - sus lay in death's strong bands for our of -
 2 No son of man could con - quer death, such ru - in
 Men 3 Christ Je - sus, God's own Son, came down, his peo - ple
 Women 4 It was a strange and dread - ful strife when life and

fens - es giv - en; but now at God's right hand he
 sin had wrought us. No in - no - cence was found on
 to de - liv - er; de - stroy - ing sin, he took the
 death con - tend - ed. The vic - to - ry re - mained with

stands and brings us life from heav - en.
earth, and there - fore death had brought us
crown from death's pale brow for - ev - er.
life, the reign of death was end - ed.

There - fore let us joy - ful be and sing to
in - to bond - age from of old and ev - er
Stripped of pow'r, no more it reigns; an emp - ty
Ho - ly Scrip - ture plain - ly saith that death is

God right thank - ful - ly loud songs of
grew more strong and bold and held us
form a - lone re - mains; its sting is
swal - lowed up by death; dis - graced, it

al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
as its cap - tive. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
lost for - ev - er. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
lies de - feat - ed. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Here the true Paschal Lamb we see, whom God so freely gave us;
he died on the accursèd tree—so strong his love—to save us.
See, his blood now marks our door; faith points to it; death passes o'er,
and Satan cannot harm us. Alleluia, alleluia!

So let us keep the festival to which the Lord invites us;
Christ is himself the joy of all, the sun that warms and lights us.
Now his grace to us imparts eternal sunshine to our hearts;
the night of sin is ended. Alleluia, alleluia!

Sermon

Hymn

"In Christ Alone"

Hymn 510

In Christ alone my hope is found; he is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings
cease! My Comforter, my all in all; here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe;
This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones he came to save.
Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied;
For ev'ry sin on him was laid; here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay, light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day, up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am his and he is mine, bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the pow'r of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny.
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man can ever pluck me from his hand;
Till he returns or calls me home, here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

Easter Prayer

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

M: Lord of life, fill our hearts with Easter joy today and always. Set in our hearts and minds your victory over death and the grave, sin and Satan, and all the trouble of this dying world. Through the good news of your resurrection victory, renew our hope and revive our faith. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

M: Jesus, by baptizing us into your name, you have connected us to your life and death and resurrection to life. You have put our sin to death and have given us a new life to live with God. Enable us, in every temptation and trouble, to think of ourselves as dead to sin and alive to you, so that we may walk in newness of life in all we do. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

M: Lord, in this fallen world, death and sorrow surround us. Touch the hearts of those who grieve the loss of a Christian they love. Direct their eyes to your empty tomb and ease their pain by reminding them that their loved ones will one day rise again. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

M: Lord, so many people hurt with a struggling hope or even no hope. Let the message of your resurrection and new life reach them and awaken faith in their hearts. Use us to bring your word of life to hearts and souls hurting for hope. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

M: Lord, stay with all who are suffering. In your wise mercy, heal those who are sick or suffering and struggling with broken bodies and hearts. As you know best, grant relief to those whose struggles in life seem unending and overwhelming. [We pray especially for...] Remind them that your victory over death and the grave, sin and Satan, sickness and disease, and all the troubles of this world ... remind them and all of us that your victory is sure and certain! Lord, in your mercy,

C: **Hear our prayer.**

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

C: **Risen Savior, help us to live in your victory, today and always! Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Blessing

M: Go now into God's creation with bold confidence, living and declaring the truth that Jesus is alive. Go in the grace, the peace, and the strength of the Father who has raised the Son through the power of the Holy Spirit. Alleluia!

C: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn

"I Know that My Redeemer Lives"

Hymn 441

I know that my Redeemer lives! What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead; he lives, my everliving head!

He lives triumphant from the grave; he lives eternally to save;
he lives all-glorious in the sky; he lives exalted there on high.

He lives to bless me with his love; he lives to plead for me above;
he lives my hungry soul to feed; he lives to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me rich supply; he lives to guide me with his eye;
he lives to comfort me when faint; he lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears; he lives to wipe away my tears;
he lives to calm my troubled heart; he lives all blessings to impart.

He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend; he lives and loves me to the end;
he lives, and while he lives, I'll sing; he lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.

He lives and grants me daily breath; he lives, and I shall conquer death;
he lives my mansion to prepare; he lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to his name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

Postlude

"I Know that My Redeemer Lives"

By Kevin Hildebrand

Gathering of Offering

An offering can be an act of cheerful worship to thank God for his blessings and to support his ministry at St. John. We have an offering plate at the front of the church and an old wooden church in the back entry. The vast majority of our church and school ministry is made possible by our weekend offerings. May the Lord bless you! And may he use your gifts to be a blessing to many others!



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Service Participants

Preacher and Presiding Minister

Organist

Choir Director

Choir

Musicians

Pastor Kevin Raddatz

Mrs. Monica Wintrone

Dr. Tim Samelson

St. John Senior Choir

Mr. Justin Wintrone, *trombone*

Mr. Steve Lemerand, *timpani*

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