

He is Risen!

(Editor's note: The following inspirational Easter messages were contributed by local ministers.)

Christian Life Center 40 days that shook the world

Matt. 28:1-9

"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him." Now I have told you.' So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy. 'Greetings,' He said. They came to Him, clasped His feet and worshiped Him."

Acts 1:3

"After His suffering, He showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God." All four Gospel writers included the Easter story. The names of those who saw Christ after the resurrection are carefully recorded. The historical evidence for the resurrection is stronger than that of any other miracle mentioned in Scripture. The Apostle Paul also gave the importance of this event in I Corinthians 15:14: "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." The most important event to Christianity is the resurrection. Take away this fact and it is just another organization trying to do good to mankind. The resurrection is what gives the Christian faith its dynamic.

The symbol of the church is really the empty tomb, not the cross.

Jesus did not return to the Father right away after the resurrection, but remained for 40 days to give evidence to His resurrection. The world would never again be the same because of those magnificent post-resurrection appearances.

The first thing He did was show Himself to His followers. He appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden. He appeared to the women returning from the tomb. Later that same day, He came to Peter. Luke tells us of Christ's dramatic appearing to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The Lord spoke to more than 500 believers on a mountain in northern Galilee.

What's even greater is the fact that He is still appearing to men and women today. We can meet Him whenever we open up our hearts to Him and let Him come in and take up actual residence in our lives. He will change our whole way of life. Paul says in Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

The disciples encountered the resurrected Christ during those 40 days. What about you? Have you encountered Him during your life? Those 40 days that shook the world still live on in the lives of believers today. Jesus Christ knocks at the door of your heart, offering you eternal life. What will you do with the resurrected Christ today? Will you let him in?

Pastor Tim Van Cleave

Church of the Nazarene

Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid

This is Holy Week. Easter Sunday is coming. Don't hurry into Easter. Rather remember, the beauty of resurrection Sunday is made brighter when you take the walk through the many dark places that occurred during Holy Week.

First, the garden where our Lord prayed His agonizing prayer.

Second, then follow Him into the court of injustice.

Third, then labor with Him up the hill called Golgotha.

Fourth, feel His pain when nailed, blow-by-blow, as He was laid on the cross.

Fifth, experience His emotions of rejection, suffering alone on the cross. His disciples and friends abandoned Him. He felt that God His Father had forsaken Him.

Sixth, watch as His lifeless body is removed and carried away.

Also this week be reminded that He took your place. He took the punishment of your sin. Pray as you journey. Pray for yourself. Pray for lost people. Pray for your church. Pray for a glorious day of resurrection celebration. Invite Christ to come to your place of worship and raise some people dead in sin to new life.

I am impressed when someone says, "I know God, that's why I follow Him by faith." However, I'm not impressed when I hear someone say, "I don't need to go to church on Sunday," or "Oh, I believe in God." Why Am I not impressed by faithless believers? James 2:19 says it fully well.

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that-and shudder.

Rejoice in Christ's new resurrected life. Live for Him, today, tomorrow and for eternity. You need not be afraid and shudder and tremble.

Jesus said, Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

The Rev. Duane Jones

St. Patrick Catholic Church Resurrection faith

The Acts of the Apostles, the Gospels, and St. Paul refer to apparitions of Jesus after he died on Calvary. These included apparitions to Mary Magdalen, the Apostles, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. It would seem that all of these people had a special responsibility to proclaim the kingdom of God. Some of them dared to go outside on that first Easter morning and venture to the tomb. The holy women went. They had linen, oil, and perfume. They were going to assure His proper burial. John and Peter made their way there. John being much younger, got there quicker. Yet, he waited and let Peter enter first. All of them must have been surprised.

Obviously, the account of the resurrection is about Jesus. Yet an interesting sidelight is about the "others". They came to the tomb. They saw Him in the Upper Room. They witnessed Him by the lake. Something happened to them, and they believed. Were the apparitions granted to them because they believed? Or to strengthen them for the difficulties and persecutions ahead? We do not know.

So, Easter is about belief. It is about belief in the resurrection of Jesus. It is about the belief that inspired the apostles to preach his teachings at the risk and the sacrifice of their very lives. They must have come to realize that light overcomes darkness, good overcomes evil, and life overcomes death.

We who have not seen Him, are nonetheless, asked to put our faith in Him. So, it is appropriate that we recall His words to St. Thomas. As you will remember, Thomas had doubted. Thomas had stated, "I will never believe it without probing the nail prints in his hands, without putting my finger in the nail marks, and my hand into his side, I will not believe." Very emphatic words. When the Lord appeared to him, He said: "Thomas take your finger and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Do not persist in your unbelief, but believe." Then Thomas had responded: "My Lord, and my God." Jesus then said to him: "You became a believer because you saw me. Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed." May these words of Jesus strengthen each of us on our spiritual journey.

Fr. Gerry Condon

Pioneer Memorial Hospice

Thank you, Jesus

Thank you, Jesus Christ, that through your death, burial and resurrection, we all have been given the opportunity to choose eternal life. Those who follow you, Jesus, here on earth will also be able to follow you in resurrection and be with you forever.

Rev. Patti Smith, Hospice Chaplain

All Saints Episcopal and Hope Lutheran Churches

Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

On Easter Sunday, Christians around the world will unite in this ancient acclamation of faith—faith in a Lord and Savior who has redeemed the world, not just through his death but also through his life and resurrection. Death is swallowed up in victory, and all of creation rejoices in new life.

So, what does a day over 2000 years ago have to do with us in Heppner? Everything! For because of this day we are assured of forgiveness of sin, of the power to begin life anew after our worst screw ups, and of life everlasting as we believe in this Risen Lord.

The resurrection of Jesus affects our daily life, not just our eternal destiny. For because of the resurrection, we no longer have to be captive to our fears or our doubts; we are able to rise above our problems to see them through the eyes of the resurrection. Those are the eyes of hope and of faith.

I said to someone recently that for some of us, faith is a gift—for some seem able to have an immediate response of faith to trials and tragedies. For some of us, faith takes work—it takes the discipline to remember what Christ has done for us, to claim the power of the resurrection, and to taste and see that God is good. Whether you experience faith as a gift or that which takes a bit of work, faith still comes from God. Only a God who has risen from the dead can break the powers of death and give to us faith.

Christians are an Easter people...basking, if you will, in the Light of the resurrection; awaiting Christ's return; and assured of a radical and life-changing Love. For the night before He died, Christ told His disciples, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you."

Easter people live in Love. As we look anew at this Easter season, may we remember that it is not just about us—it is about reaching out in love to those who need it most. Live in Love.

Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!
The Rev. Janis Johnson



Holy Week church schedules

Ione Community Church

The Maundy Thursday Candlelight Communion will be held April 5 at 7 p.m. Thirteen candles will light the sanctuary, one for Jesus, and 12 for the disciples gathered for the last supper. One at a time, a candle will be snuffed as those in attendance hear how that disciple, and each one of us, has betrayed our Lord. Only the Christ candle will remain lit as they partake of communion. Participants will leave the service in darkness, anticipating the events of Good Friday.

An Easter ham and pastry breakfast will be held on Sunday, April 8, beginning at 8:30 am. Ham, muffins, fruit, juice and coffee are on the menu. Breakfast will be served anytime between 8:30 and 9:30 am. The breakfast is free and donations will be accepted.

The Easter worship service will be held on Sunday, April 8, at 10 a.m. Note the time change. Worship will be at 10 a.m. to allow people to come to breakfast, stay for worship, and still be home around 11 a.m. Anyone wishing to donate an Easter Lily should deliver them to the church by 9 a.m. Saturday, April 7. A sign up sheet to indicate "in memory/honor of" will be provided. That information will be printed in the Easter worship bulletin. Those participating are reminded to take the Easter Lily home on Sunday.

Sonrise Service

The Easter 'Sonrise' service will be held this Sunday, April 8, at 7 a.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds in Heppner.

Speaker will be the Rev. Keith Brudevold of the Heppner United Methodist Church.

The service is sponsored by the South Morrow County Ministerial Association.



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