

April 17, 2022

Easter Sunday

John 20:1-18

CHRIST IS RISEN/INDEED HE IS RISEN

What are some of the ways we show Joy? Well, to show joy means that there must be something that makes you happy or excited. This morning we are very happy and excited because Jesus has risen from the dead. Just as He said He would. Since He has risen from the dead we have a greater understanding of the Bigness of God's love for us. God sent Jesus to save us from our sins and death. With Jesus's resurrection, He has destroyed death by His death so that we can share in eternal life in heaven. That is one big reason to be joyful and to celebrate today.

There are so many ways to show, share and express our joy with others. Joy is meant to be shared with other people. We greet each other with the prayer "CHRIST IS RISEN, and the answer, INDEED HE IS RISEN". We come to church just as the sun is peaking over the horizon.

Just as Mary Magdalene did at Jesus's tomb two thousand years ago this morning. We make noise by ringing the church bells for a little bit longer. Some pastors shoot off fireworks to share their joy. We don't know any of them. We eat special foods that are prepared for this day. We eat chocolate which makes everyone happier. We give gifts of chocolate and hunt for Easter eggs. Though I have never seen a rabbit

lay an egg. Yet they are in their possession. There are so many things that make this day so special.

There are so many ways to express and share our joy today. We have so many reasons to be happy and joyful. I encourage you to share it all with others. Even your chocolate. Maybe next year we'll have some fireworks.

On Good Friday I talked about the idea that love was in the background of the day's events. It was there, but it required a different way to look at the scenes of the day. This morning love comes into a sharper focus and takes center stage. The gospel tells us that Easter starts out with love. Mary Magdalene is going to Jesus's tomb. She really and truly has no practical reason to be there. When you think about it everything has been looked after. Jesus's body has been washed, anointed and wrapped. There is nothing more that need to be done. Mary comes to the tomb out of love and respect for Jesus. That is her only reason to be there this morning and they are great reasons. Can you imagine if she did not make her way to the tomb, we may not have known about the resurrection for days or weeks later. Love is the reason we learn about the resurrection of Jesus this morning. Mary's trip to the tomb is similar to how we visit the graves of our loved ones. We too, cannot do much for them, except visit them out of love and respect. Love is the reason Mary is at the tomb as the sun rises this morning.

With Jesus's resurrection we now have a greater understanding of God's love for us. The events of the last three days take on a new meaning and make more sense. Jesus's resurrection is the completion of the incarnation in its fullness. Now we are starting to understand God's love for us by sending Jesus to us. This morning Jesus

accomplished all that He was sent to do for us. Sin and death have been destroyed by His death and resurrection.

Jesus came to be amongst us out of His love for the Father and us. It was out of love for us as children of God that He came, died and rose from the dead. We say this a lot at this time of the year. Yet I truly do not think that we understand this in its complete fullness. Our human minds are limited to understanding the infinite and divine. We only understand as much as our human minds are able. That might be a good thing though. Easter leaves us to ponder the beauty and the pain of the incarnation. All of it done by the love of God for our sake. Love is the perfect place to start. It is something that we all feel and experience. This is the place where God chooses to meet us and touch our lives.

This morning we come to the realization that we are all Children of God! Not just a creation, but a relation. We realize this as we come to better understand God's love for us. I suspect that we always were, just that today it finally dawns on us. It took the death and resurrection of God Son for us to realize and understand this. As children of God there is nothing that can separate us from Him and His love for us. That is a very powerful love. Christ's resurrection has destroyed the barrier of death that use to separate us from God.

There are so many reasons to celebrate and be joyful today. We are celebrating love in its earthly and celestial expressions. The first Easter was motivated by love and it still is today. Share the joy of Easter and all that it contains in its fullness. May the love, joy and awe that was experienced by Mary Magdalene on the first Easter morning be in your hearts today. God bless and INDEED HE IS RISEN, Pastor D