



Easter Sunday
Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church
March 31st, 2024

Wandering Heart: "And I hope"

We might expect that, after denying Christ, Peter would cower in shame—or perhaps even run away in an attempt to leave his past behind him. Instead, when he hears the news from the women, he doesn't dismiss them like the other disciples. He gets up and runs to the tomb. When he peers into the empty tomb and sees the linen cloth, he is filled with awe. Even after the biggest failures, even after the worst case scenario has happened, can we run toward hope? Like Peter, will we keep going? Will we keep looking for God in our midst?

Call To Worship

L: Yesterday we thought death had won. Yesterday we thought all was lost. Yesterday we thought Christ was gone.

C: But not today. Today we know that love has won. Today we know that hope is real. Today we know that Christ is here.

L: We have a reason to hope. **C: We have a reason to sing!**

L: Alleluia! **C: Alleluia!** L: Christ is risen **All: Christ is Risen Today! Alleluia!**

Call to Confession

In the Gospel of Luke, the women come to the tomb, and to their surprise, instead of finding Jesus, they find angels. The angels tell the women, "Jesus is not here," and when that answer is met with confusion, the angels say, "Remember what he told you." Remember. It's one of the words Jesus used at his last supper, and it's one of the first words we hear at the empty tomb. Remember. I think this call to remember is why we need the prayer of confession and these words of forgiveness every single week. It's not enough to hear of God's grace once. We need to hear it over and over again, week after week. We need to be reminded that God's grace and mercy will never run out. So friends, let us run to God like the women ran to the tomb. Let us tell the truth of our lives so that once again we can be reminded that our God is a God of grace, mercy, and love. Let us pray so that we can remember. Join me in the prayer of confession:

Prayer of Confession *(Brief Silence)*

L: The stone is rolled away! **C: We assume it is a mistake.**

L: The angels say, "He is not here!" **C: We assume their news is fake.**

L: The women tell the story, **C: but we do not want to hear it.**

L: Peter runs to the tomb, **C: but we do not understand.**

L: Forgive us, God, for thinking an empty tomb is nothing more than a prank.

C: Forgive us for seeing discarded burial cloths and still holding tight to death.

L: Forgive us for pushing away reasons to hope when you are alive and well in the world.

C: Teach us to see what you see. L: Unravel the threads of our unbelief. **C: Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness

L: The angels tell the women, "Remember what Jesus told you." So, church, remember this: You are seen. You are forgiven. You are held in God's grace. All of this is true. Grace and mercy abound for you. Remember this. **C: Amen!**

Prayer for Illumination

L: God of new beginnings, **C: On that first Easter morning, the disciples struggled to hear the good news. Doubt clouded their minds. Negativity took root and hope vanished with a simple shake of their heads. As we return to this familiar text, help us to hear differently this morning. Open our ears that we might hear the sound of Alleluias ringing through this text. Open up our minds that the mystery and joy of Easter might feel within reach. Open up our hearts that we might believe the unbelievable. And like Peter, in this hearing, may we move closer to you. God of the empty tomb, we are hungry for your good news. Speak to us now. With hope in our hearts we listen and we pray, amen.**

Word

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good; God's mercy endures forever.

Let Israel now declare, "God's mercy endures forever."

The LORD is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

The right hand of the LORD is exalted! The right hand of the LORD acts valiantly!"

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

The LORD indeed punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them and give thanks to the LORD.

"This is the gate of the LORD; here the righteous may enter."

I give thanks to you, for you have answered me and you have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

By the LORD has this been done; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel- Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵ The women were terrified and bowed 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 but has risen. ⁶ Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again." ⁸ Then they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹ But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Message

Hymn of The Day

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

(Verse 2&3) ELW #365

Affirmation of Faith

L: We Confess, **C: We may weep through the longest nights. We may stare at the empty tomb with more questions than answers. We may run our fingers over the burial cloths and still long for more. But today, we are a people of hope. We believe in new beginnings. We believe that the God who created the world is stronger than death. We believe that Jesus abides among us, healing, teaching, and leaving fingerprints throughout this world. We believe that a tomb could not hold him. We believe that the sun does rise. We believe that**

Peter was there with questions, awe, and faith the size of a mustard seed. We believe that the story is not over yet, for God is among us. Today we are a people of hope.

Offering

Offering Song

Give Thanks

Gray #170

Prayer of Thanksgiving/Prayer of the People

L: God of today and tomorrow, God of the garden and the tomb, God of our faith and our doubt, we are running toward you. Like Peter on that Easter morning, we simply cannot stay away. So with beating hearts and wide eyes, **C: we have arrived in this sanctuary, bringing with us questions, hopes, joys, and concerns. Hear these prayers as we draw closer to you.**

L: God of the dawn, we start with our hopes: **C: Thank you for the gifts of this world that instill buoyancy in us. Thank you for the curiosity of children, for the sound of your people singing in unison, for crowded tables and neighborly kindness, for the sun after the rain, the spring after the frost, love after loss, and faith after doubt. Like Peter, we have countless reasons to hold onto hope. Highest among them is the joy and promise of this day. Thank you for these holy breadcrumbs on the journey of faith.**

L: However, before we found ourselves in the garden, before the joy and the alleluias of this day, we found ourselves at the foot of the cross. So for the things that erode our hope, for the things that stitch doubt and fear into our hearts, we ask for your comforting hand. **C: Wrap your arms around all who are still locked in that upper room. Wrap your arms around all who cannot find healing after their longest night. Wrap your arms around all who look for reasons to hope, but cannot find those breadcrumbs amidst reasons to grieve.**

L: Holy God, like Peter, fan the flames of our faith. Like Peter, invite us to step out of our boats. And like Peter, use us to care for those in need, to tell your story, and to build a better world.

C: We remember, and we believe.

L: So, with awe-struck, wildly-beating, grateful hearts, we run toward you. With feet in the garden and eyes on the cross, we pray to you. **C: Amen.**

Holy Communion

The Institution of the Lord's Supper *1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

L: ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,

ALL: "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

L: ²⁵ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying,

ALL: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

***Lord's Prayer**

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Invitation to the Table

Communion Distribution (All Are Welcome to Receive Communion Here at GA Church)

Post Communion Blessing

Post Communion Prayer

L: Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **C: Amen.**

Sending

Benediction

Beloved wanderer, as you leave this place, may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve. May you look for God in every face. May you find the courage to get out of the boat, to run to the tomb, and to speak of your faith. And when the world falls apart, may you hear God’s voice deep within, saying, “Take heart, it is I, be not afraid.” You are called. You are blessed. In both your ups and your downs, you always belong to God. Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news. Amen.

Sending Hymn

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

(Verse 4) ELW #365

Dismissal

P: Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

**C: To Share the Good News of God’s and to Word serve the community and the world.
Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Bulletin Donated: By Sharon Beckstrom in Memory of Kim Beckstrom

****PLEASE RETURN BULLETINS AFTER SUNRISE SERVICE****

Mission Statement of Gustaf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.

Matthew 22:39 ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord’s real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ’s name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament.

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