

Third Sunday of Easter
April 18, 2021

Prelude

Christopher A. McCroskey

Centering Words:

For all who lose sight of hope, adjust our perspective, catch our eye, and touch us, Risen Savior, with your surprising presence.

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Call To Worship:

Dan Greshel

Open Our Eyes

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.

Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.

From *The Faith We Sing* Copyright 2000, Abingdon Press, 2086.

Opening Prayer:

O Great Spirit, whose breath gives life to the world, and whose voice is heard in the soft breeze: We need your strength and wisdom. Cause us to walk in beauty. Give us eyes ever to behold the red and purple sunset. Make us wise so that we may understand what you have taught us. Help us learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock. Make us always ready to come to you with clean hands and steady eyes, so when life fades, like the fading sunset, our spirits may come to you without shame.

By your Spirit we pray:

From *The United Methodist Hymnal* Copyright 1989, The United Methodist Publishing House, 329.

The 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. Amen.

Affirmation of Faith: The Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.

And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination:

Open our ears that we may hear and our hearts and minds that we may receive your word O Lord our rock and redeemer.

New Testament Reading Acts 3: 12-19

Psalm 4

Epistle Reading 1 John 3:1-7

Special Music

Christopher A. McCroskey

Gospel Reading: Luke 24: 36b-48

Sermon *From Proofs to Commissioning*

Hymn:

Filled with the Spirit's Power

Filled with the Spirit's power, with one accord
the infant church confessed its risen Lord.
O Holy Spirit, in the church today
no less your power of fellowship display.

Now with the mind of Christ set us on fire,
that unity may be our great desire.
Give joy and peace; give faith to hear your call,
and readiness in each to work for all.

Widen our love, good Spirit, to embrace
in your strong care all those of every race.
Like wind and fire with life among us move,
till we are known as Christ's, and Christians prove.

From *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Copyright 1989, The United Methodist Publishing House, 537.

Benediction:

Remember that Christ has no body on earth but ours, no hands but ours, no feet but ours. Ours are the eyes to see the needs of the world. Ours are the hands to bless the people we meet. Ours are the feet to do good in Christ's name. May the works of our hands be Christ's work in the world. Amen.

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Response:

God Be with You till We Meet Again

God be with you till we meet again;

by his counsels guide, uphold you,

with his sheep securely fold you;

God be with you till we meet again.

From *The United Methodist Hymnal* Copyright 1989, The United Methodist Publishing House, 673.

Leading in Worship Today

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Assistant: *K. C. Warble*
Choir Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey* Soloist: *Dan Greshel*
Church Musician

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...

Kathy Aiello Oren Edwards Patsy Shuler Dean Frye Lynn Martin Kelsey Tolliver
Steve White Latson Lewis George Taylor Steve Aiello Kay Jordan

Shut-Ins: Shirley Butler; Esther Carter; Carolyn Hardee; Francis & Gillett Hipp; June Hutto; Georgeann Pace; Shirley Padgett; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; Wayne Tallon; Irvin Wells

Family and Friends: *Lisa Baghdady (a friend of Edwa Meek); Chip Hooker (Wayne Hooker's father); Robert Bradley (Business Associate of Simon Ross); Dave Burrell (Business Associate of Tommy Gleaton); Gene Odom (grandfather of Mark Branham); Gary Becton (friend of Mark Branham); Audrey Cassidy (sister-in-law of Mary Louise Robinson); Rusty Browning (friend of Erin Derrick); Monnie Tiller, Mrs. Miles, Jerry Fowler (friends of Chris Derrick); Donna Walker (coworker of Jack Stevens); Kelly Knapp (wife of Laurie Knapp's nephew); Paul Kidney (son-in-law of Charles & Jackie McNeill); Ruby Pennington (friend of Laurie Knapp); Sara Krisnow (niece of Marty Johnson); Rick Baldwin (nephew of Tommy Johnson); Judy Bauer (cousin of Marty Johnson); Iris Turlington (aunt of John Zeigler); Betty Jean Newton (sister-in-law of Mary Kamoroff); ; Tonya Spires (friend of the Derricks); Linda Hargett (stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); Ollie Shelly (friend of the Derricks); Brenlee Carnes; Danielle Spotts (co-worker of Kathy White); Vickie Edwards (neighbor of Kathy White); George Duke, Brenda Grier (friends of Lynn Martin); Heather Stevens, Diane Kelsey, Erma Ruff, David Price & Family, Mark Leonhart, Ty Moore, George Dorn (friends of Kay Jordan); Teddy Derrick (uncle of Arvan Derrick); Haidee Baehr (friends of Ruth Frady); Dianne Schmotzer (sister-in-law of Gale Frady); Dan Connor, Denise Paul (cousin of Gale Frady); Billy Johnson. Max Johnson (friends of Gale Frady); Ray Culbreth's Group House; Nellie Gantt (mother of friend of Ray Culbreth); Amelia Zinski (great-niece of Linda Maloch); Wayne Blair (son of Dot Johnson); Xavier Crane (grandnephew of John Ballentine); Janet Beck (friend of Jo Ann Heiting); Vera Von Glahn (sister-in-law of Jo Ann Heiting); Michael Carter (son of Esther Carter); Adam Lavender (son of Phil Lavender)*

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com.

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 04/11 Worship: 24

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 04/11 \$ \$2,600.00

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS.”



Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

The Congregation
John D. Jordan
Jonathan Holston
Rev. Dr. Cathy Jamieson

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform

...repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in **HIS NAME** to all nations ...
LUKE 24:47, NRSV

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Luke 24: 36b-48

Cleopas and the other disciple have rushed back to Jerusalem from Emmaus to tell the others of their encounter with Jesus on the road. As they rush in, they hear the excited voices of the others as they hear that Jesus has appeared to Simon. You can imagine the excitement, the doubt, the wonder, the questions, the disbelief. You can imagine all sorts of responses from the different disciples, both men and women. Remember that we do not know the number of disciples present as there were more than just the twelve, well, eleven at this point

Then, suddenly Jesus is there! Jesus stands among them! They are startled and terrified! I sure would be. They think they are seeing a ghost. (Remember to this point only Simon, Cleopas and the disciple with Cleopas, has seen Jesus).

The first thing Jesus says to them is, "Peace be with you." Jesus' first desire is for the disciples to be at peace. He seeks first to calm the fears and anxieties. He alleviates any depression. He calms the emotions that the disciples may be feeling.

When Jesus comes and stands in our midst, when Jesus stands with us, that is the first thing we receive. Jesus deals with our emotional burdens. He calms our anxieties and fears. He gives us the peace that comes from having an encounter with the risen Savior who was sent by God to restore our relationship with God.

Consider how often we feel at peace after we have read our Bibles and gone to God in prayer. How often do we feel a sense of calm and peace when we enter a church sanctuary or some other place where we have encountered Jesus. The first thing Jesus gives is peace to allay our troubled minds and emotions. Peace given so we may become aware of Jesus' presence in our lives.

After giving peace to the disciples Jesus tells them to look at the nail holes in his hands and feet. Touch him, see that he is flesh and bone. He gives them evidence that what they are seeing is Jesus. Jesus would be identified by the nail holes in his hands and feet. Yes, this is Jesus. He gives evidence that he is alive. He is flesh and blood. This is his physical body. He tells them to use their senses- touch and sight- to know that this is Jesus and he is alive.

Even as there are those who continue to disbelieve and wonder after seeing and touching, Jesus offers final confirmative evidence that he is physically alive and not a ghost or spirit. He asks for something to eat. This is definitive proof that this is the living flesh and blood Jesus, for a ghost or spirit cannot eat food. Jesus offers the disciples proof that he is alive.

Jesus offered the disciples proof that he had been bodily resurrected so they would know that the resurrection was a reality. They would know that all that was written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead was the truth. They would know that Jesus was the Messiah, God's anointed one, not any other claimants to messiahship that were to come. By these proofs they would know that Jesus is the Messiah who lives on in their lives.

Even though we have faith in the truth of the resurrection, I believe that Jesus continues to provide us proof that he is alive and present in our lives. We are given proofs that Jesus is among us. Many people who are dying relate experiences with Jesus. One woman with cancer related seeing Jesus walking over the tops of

mountains coming toward her. A former parishioner told me of hearing his deaf mother talking to someone a few nights before she died. When he went to check on her, she said she was talking to Jesus. Kay's mother would chant, "the Master's on the way" in the weeks before she died.

But it is not just at death that we may have proof of Jesus' presence in our lives. We experience the presence of Jesus during communion. We experience the presence of Jesus in Baptism. We experience the presence of Jesus in our worship.

It is not just in the "holy" acts where Jesus is present in our lives. Proof of Jesus' presence in our lives is in everyday mundane life. Last Friday we were getting ready to go to Ashton and Charlie's when my phone rang. I looked at the screen and it said, "Wireless Caller." Usually when I get a call from them, along with "Potential Spam" and "Unknown Caller", I let it go to voice mail figuring if it is someone that wants to talk to me, they will leave a message. Otherwise, it is probably someone trying to sell me an extended warranty on my car or some Medicare plan.

This time though, I swiped across the screen to answer the call. It was a former parishioner from St. John who was calling to see if I would be willing to do the funeral of a man who was a constituent but not a member of St. John. The caller told me that the family did not want a pastor who did not know the man to do the service and wondered if I would do it. I readily agreed. I believe that it was Jesus who pulled my thumb across the screen because this was a family in need. This to me is proof that Jesus is alive and present with us.

Jesus gives the disciples peace, calming fears and anxieties so they may know the truth. Jesus gives us peace, calming the emotions that may interfere with our knowing his presence. Jesus gives the disciples proof that he is alive and living so they understand what it means to be God's Messiah. Jesus gives us proof that he is alive and present with us. Jesus gives us proof so we may have true faith, that is, full confidence in him. Jesus gives the disciples peace and proof. Jesus gives us peace and proof.

Jesus gave the disciples peace and proof so they could understand. So, they could understand that Jesus' message of repentance and forgiveness of sins was to be proclaimed to all nations. Jesus gave peace and proof that sin was forgiven and repentance, turning from the rule of the world to living according to God's rule, was accomplished through his suffering, death and resurrection. They are witnesses of these things.

This is more than just praising the disciples for sticking with Jesus. They really didn't do that great a job of that three or four days before. In the Greek, witness is not a noun but a verb. A more accurate translation of verse 48 is, "you bear witness of these things." The disciples are commissioned to bear witness to Jesus and the resurrection beginning in Jerusalem and to all nations. They have received proof of the truth of the resurrection and now they are to bear witness, as one would in a court of law, to this truth. They are to bear witness to the truth that Jesus was God's means of forgiveness and repentance.

The disciples were not to sit back in their Lazy Boys saying, "Yep, we saw the resurrected Jesus. We touched him. We watched him eat so he wasn't a ghost. Yep, it happened." They were to go and tell the city of Jerusalem, then to go tell all the nations, all people, that Jesus was resurrected. Jesus did suffer and rise from the dead for the forgiveness of sins and so humans could repent. Humans could live according to God's rule of love instead of the world's rule of self. They were commissioned to go and bear witness of the truth of Jesus' resurrection.

This commission was not just given to those disciples in that room in Jerusalem 2000 years ago. It is a commission that was given then but continues now. The commission to go and bear witness to the truth of Jesus' resurrection was given to all disciples of Jesus then and for all time to us today, in this building and for those of you watching online.

We are to bear witness to Jesus. We are to bear witness that Jesus is alive, God is alive, the Holy Spirit is alive and present with us today. We bear witness by living our lives aligned to the life and teaching of Jesus. I read a poll of reasons people quit going to church and the overriding theme was that there was a disconnect between what people read in the Bible and what they saw in church. What they saw in church in the way people interacted and confessed did not reflect the life and teaching of Jesus. If we are to bear witness to Jesus, we must live our lives according to the life and teaching of Jesus.

We share our stories, our proofs, of Jesus present in our lives today with others. We all don't have to start preaching from the street corners. But we all can share our stories over a cup of coffee with a friend. We are to bear witness by telling people of Jesus and God's love for them and most of all by living lives that represents Jesus to others.

We have received Jesus' peace. We have our proofs of the resurrection and the coming of God's kingdom. Now let us bear witness in everything that we say and do so that all people may know of the forgiveness of sins and repent to live according to God's rule. So, all may be restored into God's kingdom.