

Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Aberfoyle Park

Home Worship Service

Led by David Christian

April 24, 2022

Songs

[*Beneath the Water*](#) CCLI#6179573

[*Lord I Need You*](#) CCLI#5925687

Bible Reading

John 20:19-31

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." ²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." ²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." ²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." ³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Message

“Do you believe in life after death?” The boss asked one of his new employees. “Yes sir” the new recruit replied. “Well then, that makes everything just fine, because yesterday after you left to go to your grandmother’s funeral, she called in to see you!”

After Jesus’ resurrection he called in to see his disciples. They didn’t expect him either. The doors were locked for fear of the Jews. If they’d known Jesus was coming they might have been even more afraid. They might have dead-locked the doors. They had denied Jesus. They had disowned Jesus. They had deserted Jesus. Now they were locked in their fear and guilt. Then Jesus came and stood among them. **THE PRESENCE OF THE RESURRECTED CHRIST TRANSFORMED EVERYTHING.** Jesus came and opened the doors which fear had closed. That’s what the resurrection does. Jesus comes and opens every locked door - Jesus comes and stands among us and opens the door to faith, and to forgiveness, and to worship, and to witness. Jesus comes and opens the door to LIFE, now and forever. Jesus stepped into the midst of his fear filled, guilty, miserable followers, and Jesus becomes the LIFE of the party. Everything changes, everything is transformed - forever! Nothing is the same. Every Sunday is resurrection day. Every day is a day to live resurrection life.

FROM DISCOURAGED LONERS TO JOYFUL WORSHIPERS. Then Jesus came and stood among them and said: peace be with you. After this he showed them his hands and side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. The same Jesus who died is with the disciples, fully alive, bringing peace to them, forgiving them for all their failures, leading them to rejoice in his presence.

Too often we’re still living behind locked doors, afraid of what God thinks of us, afraid of what others will say or do to us, afraid to believe the promises and presence of Jesus, afraid to step out to share the good news of Jesus. We’re living as though Jesus is still dead. We’re living as though we’re still mourning his death. We’re living as though it’s irreverent to celebrate and get excited about Jesus. How dreadfully sad, and wrong. No wonder the church seems boring.

The first sign of the resurrection is that that Jesus turns sorrow to joy. Jesus is with us bringing peace, and forgiveness and great joy. This is worship. Jesus stands in our midst and gives us the blessings of his resurrection - forgiveness, life and salvation, and with these gives his love and joy. Jesus wasn’t raised from the dead to go to heaven. Jesus was raised from the dead to stand in the midst of his people. Jesus loves to be in the midst of his gathered people. Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them. Zephaniah says: The Lord your God is in your midst... he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exalt over you with loud singing, as on a day of a festival. this is worship: That the risen Lord loves to be with his people, giving us all his resurrection gifts... victory over sin, death and the devil. Jesus loves to be with us, and loves to have us gather with him. Jesus loves to forgive us and give us peace. Jesus loves to come to us in bread and wine, and bind us to himself. Joyful worship is the first sign of the resurrection. We can’t afford to miss it. Every Sunday is resurrection day, and every day is a day to live the new life of the resurrection. But not all were at worship that first day of the resurrection: But Thomas was not with them when Jesus came.

FROM FEARFUL SKEPTICS TO BOLD WITNESSES. Those who had met with Jesus went to the one who hadn’t. Those who had seen Jesus told the one who hadn’t seen Jesus. Those who had come to faith in Jesus told the one who hadn’t. Those who had found forgiveness and peace and joy in the presence of Jesus told the one who was still locked in his guilt and doubt. Those who were called to

mission by Jesus, immediately went out on their mission to Thomas. AS THE FATHER SENT ME, SO I SEND YOU.

A church that believes in the resurrection is a witnessing church. A church that gathers to meet with the risen Christ in worship, goes out from worship into the world to tell the good news of the resurrection to those who weren't at worship. We are either a missionary or a mission field. All who gather for worship are missionaries. All who do not gather for worship are the mission field. All of you who have gathered here today to meet the risen Christ and receive his peace and forgiveness and joy and faith and life, are now sent out to bring these same gifts to those who are not here. The normal Christian life is to gather to meet with the risen Christ in worship each Sunday, and to go as sent witnesses to all who are not at worship because they are still locked in doubt or disobedience, or are worshiping other gods like work and sport and family, or are locked in guilt or despair. (Esther led 118 out of 136 people to Christ in a quarantine centre in Vietnam.)

FROM TRAPPED DOUBTERS TO DYNAMIC BELIEVERS. A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them... Thomas was with them... Thomas was with them... Although the doors were locked Jesus came and stood among them and said: PEACE BE WITH YOU. Then he said to Thomas: Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Do not doubt, but believe. You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink! The disciples had witnessed to Thomas. They had brought him back. But would this doubter believe? One thing is clear. FAITH COMES FROM WHAT IS HEARD, and the disciples had proclaimed the risen Christ to Thomas, and now his eyes were opened to see the risen Christ, and Thomas confessed: MY LORD AND MY GOD. In one fell swoop Thomas moves from doubt to faith, to bold confession of faith, to worship, and finally to missionary to India and martyr.

The transforming presence of the resurrected Christ sets us free from doubt to become dynamic believers in the resurrected Christ. This leads to bold confession of faith, joyful worship and committed mission from our front door to the ends of the earth. Since the resurrection of Christ, no day, no Sunday, can be the same. You cannot be the same, for Jesus stands in your midst leading you to dynamic faith, to joyful worship and to bold witness to those who still live without Christ, without faith, without worship, and without hope for eternity. God has had the last laugh over death. Jesus has come to be the LIFE OF THE PARTY FOR ALL PEOPLE, FOREVER. Amen.

Song

[Like an Avalanche](#) CCLI#5806713

Confession and Absolution

Dear Father, we confess that we have sinned against you and one another in many ways. We have failed to live in the joy of the resurrection. We have been slow to share the joy of the resurrection with others. We have hidden in the Church and in the sceptical crowd, rather than

make a bold confession of Easter faith. We have fed our doubt more than our faith. Have mercy upon us and forgive us for Christ's sake. Amen.

Jesus died and rose again to take away your sin, dispel your doubt and restore you to new life of earth, and the sure and certain hope of eternal life in heaven. In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I declare you forgiven for all your sins. Go in peace and joy to live the new life in the resurrected Jesus Christ. AMEN.

Prayers

Prayer points to ponder:

- He is Risen! It's more than a story, it's a declaration that you are with us today and always, in every circumstance and every season. It's a promise that you will turn our sadness into joy, our sin into forgiveness, our doubt into belief. Help us live as the resurrected people we are and to become dynamic believers and bold worshippers for you. He is Risen indeed!
- We ask for your continued wisdom and guidance on our Call process, for our Call Committee and for the Pastor you are preparing to call to Our Saviour.
- We lift our Board for Ministry, our staff and volunteers who are picking up extra responsibilities in our Pastoral absence. Bless the work they are doing and provide them with your guidance and the assurance of your constant presence.
- We pray for your comfort, help and healing to those suffering or those who may be feeling isolated from others.
- Be with those struggling with loneliness, depression, sadness, financial or health concerns. We pray especially for people in our own community. Remind them of your unfailing love and care for them and prompt each of us to reach out to those who need our support and friendship.

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

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. He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in

the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favour, and give you peace. Amen.

Song

Endless Light CCLI#6177300