

Ephesians 1: 15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Within us, among us, before us,
CHRIST IS COME TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW

The resurrection ushered in a new dimension of being, a new dimension of life in which, in a transformed way, matter too was integrated and through which a new world emerges.

Pope Benedict the 16th

I choose to believe in some kind of bodily resurrection because it localizes the Christ mystery in this material and earthly world and in our own bodies, the only world we know and the world that God created and loves.

Richard Rohr

Death is the ultimate weapon of the tyrant; resurrection does not make a covenant with death, it overthrows it.

NT Wright

Christ is becoming all in all, loving himself in us and pouring into us and into the world the power of his resurrection. It is already here. It is available

Thomas Keating

Today's BIG WORD, the seventh in our series of words which are profoundly formative of Christian Faith, is RESURRECTION. I have wondered this week, is this word the most significant of all the words we have been pondering Sunday by Sunday since the first of the year? The reason I say this is that Saint Paul seems to base EVERYTHING having to do with the faith he is preaching on the centrality of the resurrection. "If Christ is not raised then your faith, our faith, is futile," he says.

When Paul talks about resurrection as crucial to Christian Faith, the theological question has always been, is he (and the Gospel writers too of course) talking about a bodily resurrection, a re-animation of his corpse, or is he talking about a powerful interior conviction of Jesus as present, a living Spirit, in the hearts of his followers--the question of his corpse being irrelevant?

A re-animation of Jesus' corpse "on the third day," as the story goes, defies our sense of how the world is set up to function right? It's much easier we say, it even makes more sense, we say, that Jesus' SPIRIT came to his disciples on the third day in a powerful way... and to Paul on the Damascus road. It tends to make more sense to suggest that Paul and the disciples experienced Jesus' SPIRIT than Jesus' risen and re-created corporeal BODY. Although to a person of strict rationality, both of these options can be a stretch, and any talk of resurrection, whatever it may mean, is nonsense. These folks might go so far as to say Jesus was a good man whose teachings and example live on... .period.

The SPIRIT argument has been made in recent years by a popular writer, Marcus Borg, who often suggested (in arguing against Jesus' body coming back to life) that nothing happened on Easter morning that could have been captured on video tape. The BODY argument has recently been made by a scholar named NT Wright. (Borg and Wright co-authored a book before Borg passed away a few years ago.)

I am inclined to think that what we understand and how we define for ourselves the events of Easter morning, and what this word ,resurrection, means to us, is a very personal thing and that these things have to do with what we have come to know of God in our hearts--our sense of how God works in the world and in our lives. As our sense of God's ways changes with time, our sense of what we mean by resurrection might also change.

In my own journey into God, I have become progressively more aware that there is infinitely more of God that I cannot intellectually comprehend, progressively more of God than what I can manage to get my head around. So for many years I have been moving ever more deeply into the expansive and infinite mystery of the God who, with love, always with love, can do far more in me and with me, than I can ask or imagine. And I have experienced God as pretty good at consistently defying my expectations. God IS a God of surprises, as our sign board says.

Which is why I have come to be more and more at home with the idea that God raised Jesus bodily. It fits that criterion of a God who defies, again and again, what we think God can do or will do. After all, what's more audacious and liberating than rendering death, as a tool of fear or dominating power, impotent? What's more deeply loving and healing than to banish hopelessness and cynicism from this world? Who could have imagined? Maybe a handful of Prophets. But even THEY had not imagined anything like Easter morning.

A risen body, freshly alive and mysteriously re-fashioned-----his face not always recognizable but his voice was, and his wounds were-----a risen body given by God to the world as a marker of God's determination to assure us once and for all time of God's zealous determination to free us from every fear and bring us to rest in God's unfathomable peace.

A risen body, freshly alive and mysteriously re-fashioned, given by God to the world as a promise of the world's destiny--a promise that God has in Christ initiated a re-fashioning, a healing, a renewal of the material creation in God's image. To speak in terms of evolution, on Easter morning in the year 33 AD there suddenly was manifested a graced and glorious hint of the world God is calling into being, a world of matter and spirit completely unified.

It's a world we get to participate in creating and cherishing, insofar as we allow ourselves to be filled with Spirit... with the eyes of our hearts enlightened, to know nothing but hope and the riches of God's power moving in us, traces of the same power that brought Christ Jesus forth, alive, from his crypt.

On NPR-----there was a story about an aging female Olympic long jumper. 2020 will be her last Olympics. Her coach affirms this by saying "father time is undefeated." This may be true in terms of athletic performance, but in the bigger picture, the Gospel of Resurrection is defiant. Even now a new creation of timelessness in God is coming to be.

I look back on our 20 years together, friends, as a church family-----the transformation, the renewal, the energy-----I have been baffled by it all. In no sense do I have a sense that I did anything to cause any of it. It's been "done to us" as we, Christ's own body, have been willing to be "done to" by a God of infinite but so gentle and subtle power, the power of resurrection pulsing in us, filling us with the fullness of him who fills all in all. And I do not cease, my friends, to give thanks for you!

Amen and Alleluia!

SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD-GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

February 24, 2019

In Jesus' Name, Greetings!

Music for Gathering

God of life made new, raise us up this day.

EASTER DAWN AWAKEN US

Loving Christ, live, new, in us.

GOD OF LOVE, SURPASS ALL POSSIBILITY

O anxious soul, still wrapped in death, come out, walk free, walk free

CONFIDENT MORNING OF HOPE AND FAITH, BE OUR NEW AND ONLY WORLD

Lighting of the Candles

“The Spirit will guide you into all truth” John 16

“Praise to the Lord the Almighty” Jubilation Ringers

Sharing Christ's Peace

590 Kum Ba Yah

The Morning Prayer and Musical Response

Silence

“Wherever your foot may rest, he has passed...” Caussade

Children's Circle

All children thru 5th grade are welcome to come forward. A small outreach offering will be collected for our money jar. Following this time of sharing and prayer, children may attend their very own

“Worship and Wonder” time together in our classroom annex. Child care is offered for infants and toddlers but they are also welcome in the sanctuary.

Prayer for Illumination

With you beside us, we do not fear

WHEN WE CALL TO YOU, YOU ANSWER, SETTING US ON A NEW PATH, AMEN.

THE LESSON EPHESIANS 1: 15-23

The Meditation “The Fullness of Him” Rev. Rob Carr

**Glorious Lord of Life, you have delivered us from sin and death,
and made your whole creation new.**

You have brought with the dawn a new beginning and an empty tomb.

Grant us strength and humility to enter into life.

Silent and spoken personal prayers of thanksgiving confession, intercession

“I Surrender All” Jubilation Ringers

The Offering

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.
As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

569 Jesus Remember Me 3x

The sorrows of this world, all our pain and regret, are passing
GOD'S TENDER COMFORTING PRESENCE IS ETERNAL
The illusion of our separateness is strong, causing us grief
BUT IN GOD'S LOVE WE REALIZE OUR ONENESS
Our deep presence in one another is eternal
EVERYTHING ELSE IS PASSING AWAY

Welcome to the Table
The Words of Institution

We live in hope of that day
WHEN GOD WIPES EVERY TEAR FROM OUR EYES
Hope that is not mere wishful thinking
BUT CONFIDENCE THAT THE DAY IS ALREADY DAWNING IN US
May you be made strong with all the strength of his glorious power
CHRIST IN US, THE HOPE OF GLORY

The Communion Prayer

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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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.

Following the Lord's Prayer, please come forward by rows to receive the loaf and the cup.

The cup is non-alcoholic by choice of the congregation
Gluten free crackers are available on the table for those who prefer this option
Children also celebrate communion weekly as part of "Worship and Wonder"

677 Let There be Peace on Earth

Gracious Beloved, help us to welcome the light and walk in it always
SHOW US THE WAY WE MUST GO TO ETERNAL DAY, AMEN

TO OUR GUESTS-----WELCOME!

**SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD AND GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE
WE WALK HUMBLY, LOVE DEEPLY, LIVE SIMPLY, AND SERVE JOYFULLY**

We are delighted to include you today. Your presence and participation is a gift to us all. We hope you experience among us the warm spirit of our family of faith and the gracious touch of Christ upon your life. Refreshments and welcoming conversation are available after worship in the Community Room just down the hall. More information about NOCC and the Disciples of Christ is available via

Facebook and these websites

www.nocckc.org www.kcdisciples.org www.disciples.org

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

THIS WEEK

Monday 6PM Troop 90
Tuesday 945AM Men's Bible Group
Tuesday 6PM Pack 900
Wednesday 7PM Music Ministry
Saturday 745AM Men's Breakfast at Kate's
Saturday 9AM Centering Prayer
Next Sunday WELCOMING THE STRANGER EVENT FOR YOUTH 3PM
Community Christian Church

UPCOMING

BIG WORDS SERMON SERIES CONTINUES

Next Sunday----Second Coming

ASH WEDNESDAY OBSERVANCE WITH HOLY FAMILY PARISH
MARCH 6 7PM

REGIONAL DISCIPLES WOMEN'S SPRING RETREAT AT TALL OAKS
MARCH 8-9

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS BEGIN MARCH 13 6PM

REZOUND BELL CHOIR IN CONCERT APRIL 14 3PM

EASTERTIDE RETREAT APRIL 26-28 MARILLAC CENTER

YOU, ME AND THE ENNEAGRAM MAY 11, 16, 23

JULY 22-23 DISCIPLES GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN DES MOINES

Keep these items in mind as you consider the remarkable ministry of our friends at CHERITH BROOK with those experiencing homelessness. Blankets Blankets Blankets! Tennis Shoes, Cold Meds, Band-aids, Bike Locks, Gloves, Hats, Chapstick, Belts of any size, men's and women's undergarments. Cherith Brook Local Honey for Sale! Contact Eric 816-241-8047