



Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

This familiar Easter greeting is a confession of faith and belief in the Resurrection of Christ! The statement and response are taken from the angel's words **"He is not here, for He has risen, as He said" St. Matthew 28:6 (St Mark 16:6; St. Luke 24:6)**. As we greet each other with these words of joy we are assured from the Sacred Scripture that God's promises are made and indeed kept in Jesus Christ, our Savior! The Resurrection of Our Lord is the Chief Festival of The Church Year; a great celebration of victory. For Christians, Easter is a time for all to boldly proclaim our Savior's victory as we gather to thank and praise God for His work of salvation accomplished through Christ! But Easter is not just one day celebrated and then that's it. Rather, it is a whole season, including The Ascension of Our Lord 40 days following Easter. In fact, because He walked out of the tomb on Sunday morning, the first day of the week, each Sunday throughout the church year is a celebration of His Resurrection.

The Celebration of The Resurrection of Our Lord is most joyful because we know that Christ has overcome our enemy the devil, our sins have been forgiven and we are assured through faith of eternal life. Not so long-ago Easter Sunday might have meant pretty spring dresses for the girls, maybe a new pair of shoes for the boys, a family meal along with time outside with cousins and hopefully the promise of warmer weather. Perhaps we have lost a little bit of that excitement today, which is sad. But the joy that Christ gives us is always there because nothing can separate us from God's love for us in Christ.

We may not be as worried about a big meal, new clothes or anything else. We may not be able to spend time with family either. Yet, none of this diminishes the joy we have in Christ our Savior. Maybe we can look forward to Easter and its season with a renewed vigor of service in God's Kingdom as we thank God for His love for us in Christ. God has called us to work here together in this time and place using the opportunities presented to us by The Holy Spirit. One such opportunity is Vacation Bible School which will be held near the end of May into June and there will be need of help. Our children and those in our community need to hear about God's great love for all people and how He has kept His promise of a Savior by sending Jesus Christ. Vacation Bible School is always a wonderful opportunity for all to work together to the glory of God as we teach the next generation the faith into which they have been baptized.

As eager as we are to get out and enjoy spring we can be equally excited in sharing the Gospel message as God has called us here at St. Paul's. There is much to do in God's Kingdom and He calls us to serve Him with our various gifts and abilities to the glory of His Name. We do so in gratitude for what Jesus has done for us. By His life, ministry, suffering, death and resurrection we now have peace with God and are freed from the oppression of sin and invited to work in His Kingdom, that many would hear the Easter message of deliverance from sin, death and the devil forever!

We gather on Easter morning greeting each other with the words of joy first spoken by the angel announcing that Jesus was not to be found in the grave among the dead. Instead, He had walked out of that grave under His own power having accomplished The Father's Divine will; that of salvation secured and delivered by Christ. He has overcome death that we might have life. **"Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:54b-57 ("The Great Resurrection Chapter").**

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In Christ,
Pastor Ahrendt