



Community CRC

Oakdale

EASTER

GOD'S DEFINITIVE SMILE

LUKE 24:1-12

04-04-21

All = bold sections – read together

Leader = regular font – leader reads (choose or rotate leaders)

Sung together = italics

NOTE: Please have a white candle ready to light.

Affirmation #9

Because **people shape culture**, we will teach, empower and equip all to be credible witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ and agents of his mission of making all things new. We will be proactive in how we engage culture, seeking not to be shaped by it but to be shapers of it.

Welcome

Happy Easter! He is risen! **He is risen indeed!** We gather to worship and today we focus on the resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and what that means for us today. May we make the most of our time together to grow deeper into our identity as disciples of Jesus, living in the hope of the resurrection of our bodies when Jesus bodily returns again.

May the love and joy of the Father, the grace and peace of the Son and the courage and comfort of the Holy Spirit be ours in abundance today!

Call to Worship – Psalm 103

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!



Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!

Song – O Praise The Name -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqBpifDpNKc>

*I cast my mind to Calvary
Where Jesus bled and died for me.
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet.
My Savior on that cursed tree
His body bound and drenched in tears
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb.
The entrance sealed by heavy stone
Messiah still and all alone
O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forever more
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God
Then on the third at break of dawn,
The Son of heaven rose again.
O trampled death where is your sting?
The angels roar for Christ the King
O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forever more
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God
He shall return in robes of white,
The blazing Son shall pierce the night.
And I will rise among the saints,
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face
O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forever more
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God*

Christ Candle – Kazakhstan

We light the Christ candle as a visible sign of God's presence with us; that he has come as light into a world of darkness. We light the Christ candle to remind ourselves that Jesus is the light and that in him we become light too. We are never a light on our own. The light we have and can offer to others is the light of Jesus of Nazareth. May we be God's light in 2021.

Jesus of Nazareth said that to be a Christian means to be maltreated for his name's sake (Matthew 5:11) and the apostle Paul said that "everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12). Mistreatment as a disciple of Jesus is not a matter of *if* but a matter of



when and a matter of *degree*. Hope is a vital aspect of being a disciple of Jesus. This is especially true under heavy persecution. In America, the land of religious freedom, we have it pretty easy in that there is minimal outright persecution against Christians. **May we make the most of our religious freedom to honor Christ and give credible and coherent witness to him! At the same time, may we be aware of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world who don't share the same freedom that we do. The 35th place that is most challenging to be a disciple of Jesus Christ is Kazakhstan.**

Of the 18.5 million people living in Kazakhstan, 4.8 million are Christians (26%). In Kazakhstan, the government continues to work to maintain and increase its control over society. It is illegal for non-registered churches to gather, forcing them to go underground and leading to police raids during worship services. Any religious literature must be approved by the government. Christians converted from Islam bear the brunt of the persecution from the state, families, friends and their communities – including house arrests for long periods, physical violence and excommunication from their community.

Prayer Points: Please pray for Kazakh believers and for church leaders, especially those pastors who lead secret churches and those believers who converted from Islam. Pray for their security amid increasing restriction and government control. Pray for converts under house arrest for leaving Islam and turning to Christ. Pray for the government authorities who seek to suppress or eradicate Christianity. Ask God to open their eyes to His truth.

Jesus is the Light. We are a light. Shine His light!

Light the Christ candle at this time

Song – Living Hope -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f2FXxDVO6w>

*How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness, Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished, the end is written
Jesus Christ, my living hope
Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven
The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Savior, I'm Yours forever
Jesus Christ, my living hope
Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name*



*Jesus Christ, my living hope
Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope
Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope
Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope
Jesus Christ, my living hope*

Song – Agnus Dei/King Of Kings -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBp63773Cxc>

*Alleluia alleluia
For the Lord God Almighty reigns
Alleluia alleluia
For the Lord God Almighty reigns
Alleluia holy, holy
Are You Lord God Almighty
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb
You are holy, holy
Are You Lord God Almighty
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb
Amen
In the darkness we were waiting
Without hope without light
'Til from Heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets
To a virgin came the Word*



*From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in Your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake You died
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
And the morning that You rose
All of Heaven held its breath
'Til that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored
And the Church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel shall not faint
By His blood and in His Name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty*



Praise forever to the King of Kings

We praise forever to the King of Kings

Centering Litany of Praise – From Every Moment Holy, Volume II – A Liturgy of Praise to Christ Who Conquered Death

Hear the word of the Lord:

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but now has been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. – 2 Timothy 1:9b-10

The powers of darkness sought to swallow you, in death's black waters, O Christ. But going under that flood, you drank death down like a river. You drank death's reservoir dry.

All praise to you, Lord Christ!

You swallowed death for us, and by that act of willing sacrifice, you pushed death back upon itself, like the last lapping wave at the turning of the tide; that high water mark now fading, as death's dominion ebbs out for all time, its power to terrorize God's people forever destroyed by God's own passage through it.

Through death, O lord, you gave us life!

You have made all things well, Eternal King!

You have made all things well, O Christ!

Death's dark shroud has been rent ragged and pierced through by the first dawning of your resurrection light. And after your return, after the final splintering of that dark night, death will possess no lasting fame; the works of death will win no glory for its name. Hear this promise, O children of God, hear and know: Death will surely die forever, his shoddy works undone, his usurped crown torn from his palsied grasp, his impotence unmasked, his power to harm shattered for all eternity like shards of thinnest glass.

**Receive the glory due your name,
Lord Christ!**



The grip of death already slips. It cannot slow the steady progress of resurrection, now advancing, one day to be made visible in the full outworking of its infinite glad implications.

The door that led to death has been remade by Christ into the door that opens into everlasting life.

You have made all things well.

You have made all things well, O Christ!

Offering – Ripon Christian

Since 1928, Ripon Christian has been providing students with excellent academic training for a wide range of careers and higher educational levels, while at the same time offering opportunities and encouragement for significant spiritual growth. The heart of their mission is to prepare Christian leaders for the 21st century who will joyfully live out their faith in a sovereign God while humbly serving those around them as Jesus did.

We remember that giving is an act of faith, a practice of hope and an expression of love.

(You can give by sending your offering to the church, P.O. Box 217, Oakdale Ca 95361 or consider giving online through your bank. Our deacons can help you with this if necessary.)

Scripture Reading – Luke 24:1-12 (main verses are 6 & 7)

These verses, in sublime simplicity, describe the most amazing feat that the world has ever known (other than the incarnation) – someone traversing death, life after death and into life after life after death. This is the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It involves a transphysicality; that is, an objective bodily, organic change. Jesus was born of Mary, born out of a sinful nature. He was reborn as the new Adam, the better Adam. He is the firstfruits of all those who are in him; that is, he is the first one to make it through and provide hope for a future bodily resurrection when he comes again. All those who have died in Christ have died forgiven but bodiless. Their bodies remain on earth. The resurrection guarantees for disciples of Jesus Christ, the body and the soul/spirit will be perfectly reunited, mind-blowingly better than before and that we can imagine. The following will be a short reflection on the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, what it means and the hope that we have because of it – and, the tension it creates with our current experience of being his disciples in a world of sin and evil that we too still contribute to.

With this in mind, please read Luke 24:1-12

Gospel Message – He Has Risen! (Death Is Defeated)

Resurrection = ***Life after life after death*** (say together and out loud) = the conquering of death. Note:

- Lazarus did not experience resurrection because he died again. He did experience life after death.
- Jesus is the only one who has ever experienced resurrection (life after life after death)
- Those in Christ will be bodily resurrected when he comes again
- Those who have already died in Christ will also be physically resurrected when he come again

The resurrection of Jesus Christ means that death is defeated!



Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have hope! We are not only forgiven of our sins and declared righteous in Christ through his perfect life and sacrificial death on the cross, but we also have been “re-created” in Christ, born again, and new creations of his through the resurrection. We are “resurrected” to eternal life in him. Death does not have any power over us and does not have the final say. Death is now a doorway and no longer a dead end for disciples of Jesus. Furthermore, we are new creations in Christ now, before we are bodily resurrected. We have been born again and are united with Christ through the Holy Spirit. This is why we sometimes say that we live in the already but not yet. We have already been saved and raised with Christ but we still wait for our resurrection bodies and a new heaven and a new earth to live with Christ and fellow believers forever.

Alleluia! Death is defeated! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

All people need hope. Living in the “already and not yet” tension as disciples of Jesus is challenging. It’s challenging because there are competing hopes to place our faith in: money, success, health, happiness, approval, comfort, material things etc. It is challenging because sometimes our hope is focused on the wrong thing. A disciple’s hope is not just a hope to get through this pandemic; not just a hope to get back to weekly worship; not just a hope to not get sick, die or pass it on to someone who does; not just a hope to have enough food or drink or affirmations or money. These hopes are good but temporary. We need the eternal hope of Jesus Christ that extends beyond this life into the life to come as the foundation and focus of all other hopes. Without the resurrection, our faith and hope are in vain.

Alleluia! Death is defeated! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

For disciples of Jesus, the hope of future bodily resurrection is grounded in the past resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Jesus is our hope – not health, not wealth, not security, not comfort. Our bodies will die but those in Christ will receive new and better bodies when he returns. The wealth of the world is incomparable to the inheritance we have and will have in Christ! Earthly securities are always breached but the security we have in Christ can never be compromised in any way. The comforts of this world are mud pies in the slums compared to sand castles of joy and delight on the beach in Jesus now and infinitely more in the age to come. But even more important than these benefits, we get to bodily be with Jesus! Talk with him; hug him; see his smile, hear his laugh, touch him and be touched by him...Thus, our hope is in him: Jesus, the one who was crucified. Jesus, the one who died. Jesus, the one who was buried. Jesus, the one who passed through death and was resurrected. Jesus, the one who ascended to heaven. Jesus, the one who will come to judge the living and the dead. Jesus, the sovereign King and loving Lord of creation and creature! Jesus our risen Savior and Lord!

Alleluia! Death is defeated! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Note: There are two responses to Jesus’ resurrection:

1. Worship – vv. 8-9
2. Conspiracy – vv. 11-15

May our lives be lives of worship to Jesus! May we recognize and repent when we undermine our witness of Jesus and act more like the religious leaders against him. May we, by the Holy Spirit live out our Easter identity as new creations in Christ, full of hope to be with Christ and for our future inheritance & resurrection bodies. May we have a cruciform (crucifixion shaped) faith that runs deep; may we have a resurrection hope that abundantly overflows and may we have a gospel love that unconditionally builds up those around us: family, neighbors, friends, strangers, co-workers and those in need.



Alleluia! Death was arrested! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Spend some time reflecting together on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here is a great quote from John Calvin to reflect on as well:

“We now come to the closing scene of our redemption. For the lively assurance of our reconciliation with God arises from Christ having come from hell as the conqueror of death, in order to show that he had the power of a new life at his disposal. Justly, therefore, does Paul say that there will be no gospel, and that the hope of salvation will be vain and fruitless, unless we believe that Christ is risen from the dead, For then did Christ obtain righteousness for us, and open up our entrance into heaven; and, in short, then was our adoption ratified, when Christ, by rising from the dead, exerted the power of his Spirit, and proved himself to be the Son of God. Now, though he manifested his resurrection in a different manner from what the sense of our flesh would have desired, still the method of which he approved ought to be regarded by us also as the best. He went out of the grave without a witness, that the emptiness of the place might be the earliest indication; next, he chose to have it announced to the women by the angels that he was alive; and shortly afterwards he appeared to the women, and, finally, to the apostles, and on various occasions.”

Communion Meditation

Professing: (Apostles Creed)

**We believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose and ascended to heaven
Where he is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come to judge the living and the dead.
We 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.**

Proclaiming: 1 Corinthians 11:23b-25 (Paraphrased)

On the night of his betrayal, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it saying, “this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” After the meal he took the cup of wine and pouring it out said, “this wine is my blood, a new covenant of grace poured out for the forgiveness of sins.”

Remember and believe that the body & blood of Jesus was given & shed for the forgiveness of sins.

Song – Worship Christ The Risen King -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYuYfN6GxB8>

*Rise, O church, and lift your voices,
Christ has conquered death and hell.
Sing as all the earth rejoices;
resurrection anthems swell.*



*Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the risen King!
See the tomb where death had laid him,
empty now, its mouth declares:
"Death and I could not contain him,
for the throne of life he shares."
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the risen King!
Doubt may lift its head to murmur,
scoffers mock and sinners jeer,
but the truth proclaims a wonder
thoughtful hearts receive with cheer.
He is risen, he is risen,
now receive the risen King
We acclaim Your life O Jesus
Now we sing Your victory
Sin or hell may seek to seize us
But Your conquest keeps us free
Stand in triumph stand in triumph
Worship Christ the Risen King*

Song – Christ The Lord Is Risen Today -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8eBcalYPo8>

*Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Earth and heaven in chorus sing, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!
Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where's thy victory, O grave? Alleluia!
Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!*

Song – Because He Lives -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBvU7arNhQs>

*I believe in the Son
I believe in the Risen One
I believe I overcome
By the power of His blood
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive
Because He lives*



*Amen, Amen
Let my song join the one that never ends
Because He lives
I was dead in the grave
I was covered in sin and shame
I heard mercy call my name
He rolled the stone away
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive
Because He lives
Amen, Amen
Let my song join the one that never ends
Because He lives
I can face tomorrow
Because He lives
Every fear is gone
I know He holds my life my future in His hands
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive
Because He lives
Amen, Amen
Let my song join the one that never ends
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive
Because He lives
Amen, Amen
Let my song join the one that never ends
Because He lives
Because He lives*

Sending as Disciples of Jesus

God has definitively smiled upon his creation, upon humanity, upon us, upon you. God's love led him willingly to the cross and death so that he could conquer sin and ultimately death that we might have life in him and ultimately life after life after death. Therefore, we live in hope. We do not fear death for we know it has been conquered in Christ and we, being united with Christ by grace through the Holy Spirit will experience this victory too when he comes again to forever makes things perfectly right. Forever! **Yes – we are alive because he lives!!**

We are sent out by God into the world as his witnesses. As we go, may we know with our minds and believe with our hearts and confess with our mouths the gospel of Jesus Christ and his kingdom. And may we live in a manner worthy of that Good News at work, at home, at school and in our neighborhood to the glory of God and through the person and power of the Holy Spirit.