

EASTER DAY, 2020
Virtual Grace

*During the Hymn introduction, Zach leads a procession 'the short way' with the Cross, Sue and Jane go to Quire, Zach goes to Altar.
The Choir sings the hymn.*

Opening Hymn - "Hail thee, Festival Day" stanza 2 (*Hymnal 1982, #175*)

Hail thee, festival day! blest day that art hallowed forever,
day whereon Christ arose, breaking the kingdom of death.

2. He who was nailed to the cross is Lord and the ruler of nature;
 all things created on earth sing to the glory of God:

Hail thee, festival day! blest day that art hallowed forever,
day whereon Christ arose, breaking the kingdom of death.

Fr. Ed goes to Ambo.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hello and welcome to "Virtual Grace"
 from Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Honesdale, PA.
I'm Fr. Ed, the rector of our wonderful parish.
When things settle down and we're able to travel again,
 we hope you might visit us in person.

Odd, isn't it - Easter celebration in an empty Church.
Yet, it *is* Easter and we celebrate. "Alleluia! Christ is risen!"
 And we will rise from the valley of the shadow of death with Christ.

If you are in any pastoral need at all, call me, 24/7.
 No matter the virus, I am ready to come to your spiritual aid.
And if you are able, make your contributions - your offerings of sacrifice -
 to the continued ministries of Grace Church,
 through the mail or through your bank's electronic avenues.

Come now, and let us praise God.

+ 2 +

In the name of God the Creator, ✚ God the Sustainer, and God who Sanctifies all.
Amen.

CONFESSIO

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor:

Celebrant: God of all mercy,

All: we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.

We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.

We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.

Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

Celebrant: May Almighty God in mercy receive our confession of sorrow and of
faith, strengthen us in all goodness, ✚ and by the power of the Holy Spirit,
keep us in eternal life. Amen.

COLLECT of the DAY

Let us pray:

Living God, long ago faithful women proclaimed the good news of Jesus' resurrection, and the world was changed forever: Teach us to keep faith with them, that our witness may be as bold, our love as deep, and our faith as true.
Amen.

Revised Common Lectionary Prayers

CANTICLE

Antiphonal by half-verse; Zack chants first half, Sue, Jane, Fr. Ed chant second half.

*Christ being raised from the dead will never | die again; *
death no longer has do-|mini-on | o-ver | him.
The death that he died, he died to sin, | once for | all.
but the life he lives, | he lives | to God.
So also consider yourselves | dead to sin. *
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. | Al-le- | lu- ia.*

Sue goes to Ambo; Fr. Ed to the side.

GOSPEL

Hear now the Gospel of Christ according to St. John:

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb... She turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means, 'my Teacher').

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord."

John 20:1, 11, 14, 16-18

Here ends the reading.

Sue goes to Quire; Fr. Ed to Ambo.

MEDITATION

Two weeks ago, the dean of our Cathedral, Tony Pompa
reflected on what I hope is a familiar Gospel story of Jesus
approaching the grave where his friend Lazarus had been placed.
The sisters, Mary and Martha, stood nearby as Jesus wept,
and then he did the craziest thing, he says to the dead,
“Laz, get out of there!”
Though Jesus, having to be formal, official, and holy,
has to proclaim for those others standing nearby observing, what he will do,
“Lazarus, come forth!”
I still like “Laz, get out here!”
Dean Pompa suggested that Jesus is standing at the tomb of death,
the tomb of Lazarus, our tomb of fear, and calls us out.

This Easter we are in this crazy quantum un-reality
when Jesus, like Lazarus, is in the tomb, and is now out
We are standing looking into the tomb and find ourselves reflected in the tomb.
And Jesus stands in the Garden and says to each of us, today, “Come out!”

“Yea, though I am walking through the valley of the shadow of death,” we say,
“I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.”
But the mystery of the 23rd Psalm is that we’re not yet at the end of the story,
we are trying to encourage ourselves,
like Dorothy on the Yellow-Brick Road.

I think of it when I’m backpacking.

+ 5 +

We look around us in fear, expecting a wolf to jump upon us,
or it's a mother bear I'm watching for, following the cub I've just seen.
When I'm backpacking, it's always another hour or two more to the shelter, maybe.
The darkness falls upon the mountain, and I begin to worry.
The shelter is there - somewhere - ahead, I know it... I pray it!

Like I think the Psalmist is doing, I reassure myself with those thoughts,
Jesus waiting at a log cabin, a warming fire, a hearty meal, and a cup of mead,
and an eternal destination of refreshment, nourishment and rest.

In truth, the message of Easter isn't really about Jesus.

It's Jesus' story about us.

As Dean Pompa suggests, Jesus is calling to us, along with Lazarus.

So, let us shake off the shrouds that bind us,
and let us laugh at the devil, singing loudly,

“Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!”

AMEN.

As Fr. Ed moves to the Altar:

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

The Lord is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

Let us join in singing, “Alleluia, alleluia, sing praise the Risen Lord,” Hymn #178

*Fr. Ed and Zach dress the Altar during the singing of the hymn.
Sue and Jane sing from their places in Quire.*

HYMN refrain, st. 2, refrain of “Alleluia, give thanks” (*Hymnal 1982, #178*)

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the living Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his Name.

2. Spread the Good News over all the earth:
 Jesus has died and is risen.

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the living Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his Name.

Fr. Ed remains behind Altar; Zach returns to Acolyte stall.

The CREED

Fr. Ed: Let us profess our Baptismal faith in the words of the Apostles’ Creed:

I believe in God,
All: **the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living 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.

Zach to Ambo. Fr. Ed to side of Altar.

PRAYERS

Form II, BCP p. 385

In peace, joy, and humbleness of heart, let us pray:

silence for a moment

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for Justin the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael our Presiding Bishop and Kevin our own Bishop; for the Diocesan staff; and for all ministers and people.

I ask your prayers for this parish family, and for all who are isolated from their community of faith. Pray for the Church.

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people. Pray for justice and peace.

I ask your prayers for the poor; the sick, especially Keegan, Jane, Linda and Peter; Luisa; Michael; _____ the hungry; the oppressed, and anxious; and those in prison, especially Justin and Mitchell. Pray for those in any need or trouble.

I ask your prayers for those anticipating death. Pray for the dying.

I ask your prayers for the departed, especially John, Theresa, Dorothy, Kathleen, Thomas and Joseph; those who have died by violent acts, and complications of the coronavirus. Pray for those who have died.

I ask your thanksgiving for families with whom we live and love; for first responders, health-care workers and all who offer of themselves for the betterment of others. Pray for all for whom you care.

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored, especially Magdalene, Salome and Mary. Pray that we may have grace to glorify and proclaim Christ in our own day.

Let us conclude our petitions as we pray together in the words which Christ himself taught us, saying:

Our Father...

+ 8 +

Zach to chapel doorway.

Fr. Ed to front of Altar.

BLESSING

May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, who has Created us, † God Almighty who has Redeemed us, and God the Almighty who continually Sanctifies us, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

Fr. Ed to organ.

Sing with us, Jesus Christ is Ris'n Today, Hymn #207.
But you don't need a Hymnal!

Organ Postlude - stanza 1 of "Jesus Christ is Ris'n Today" (Hymnal 1982, #207)

"Hallelujah Chorus" from Messiah G. F. Handel

Easter Day
12 April 2020

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