

C Lutheran Church – International

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Office of the Archbishop

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Easter, 2021

Dear LC-I Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

“Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!”

What a wonderful, joyous expression of faith in our Savior and in the glory of His mission to a sinful world! But, except at this time of year, how often do we hear this bold acclamation – and the reason for it - in churches and among people? It may be that some are a bit shy about making such a bold declaration.

The true fact is that Jesus Christ is risen, and this is the truth by which we live as Christians! The fact of the Resurrection is the core of our Christian faith and the firm basis of our hope. It is the very essence of God’s amazing grace of salvation through Jesus Christ. We confess that faith and the reality of the Resurrection whenever we worship and profess the Creed as we do each Sunday.

At the break of day, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome were sadly walking to the tomb of Jesus to faithfully anoint His body according to Jewish practice. (Bodies were not embalmed, and the ritual anointing could not be done on the Sabbath.) But how would these three women open the tomb? It had been carefully blocked and sealed with a heavy stone that took the efforts of many men to protect this particular tomb against desecration or looting. After all, those who had denounced Jesus and led Him to His death on the cross feared that His disciples might steal the body and then claim that He had somehow escaped death.

The three women, followers of the Lord, loved Jesus and were both troubled and amazed when they saw that the heavy stone, guarding the entrance to the tomb of Jesus, had already been rolled away. And the body was gone! Had the body of Jesus been stolen?

There, sitting inside of the tomb, was a young man dressed in a white robe. The women certainly wondered: how, and why, was that young man there? Mark’s Gospel narrative calls him a “young man,” not an “angel.” But, in fact, that is probably exactly what he was. In classical Hebrew thought, “angels” are messengers and may be spirits or human beings. The angel in the tomb of Christ declared the good news (the “Gospel”) to the followers of Jesus who came to the tomb. “Christ is risen!” The good news of Jesus’ resurrection was announced boldly to the women. Christ is, in fact, risen!

Now Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome became the messengers of the Lord, the “angels” or “announcers,” telling the amazing Gospel “good news” to the other disciples in Jerusalem and to Peter, the spokesperson for the group.

The story of the Resurrection of Jesus doesn’t end there. As Christians, disciples of Jesus Christ as faithful congregants and as clergy, we are also messengers of the Lord’s Gospel to the whole world. The good news that you tell is that Christ is risen as He promised! You can pin your hopes on His promise and on His saving grace. We testify to the truth and reality of the Resurrection, not only by reciting the Creed, but especially by proclaiming it in our lives in Christ Jesus, our Risen and Living Lord and Savior.

May God bless (+) and keep all of us safe in His care this Easter season and throughout the year!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

++ Robert

Urgent Prayer Requests:

Here are the names of persons for whom I would ask your prayers. Please let me know of others.

- ‡ For Bishop Jeffrey Bischoff, his father, and their family.
- ‡ For the recovery of Deacon Norbert Mayer.
- ‡ For my daughter Julie (Julianne Christine Lull) who has health challenges.
- ‡ For all those suffering from COVID and other diseases of body, mind or spirit; and for those providing ministry to patients and others during this COVID pandemic.
- ‡ For Pastor Nelson Da Costa Filho and the new members of the World Lutheran Parish in Brazil and their struggle with ministry during COVID.
- ‡ For Missionary Dean Prasad and members of the World Lutheran Parish in India and their struggle with ministry during COVID.
- ‡ For Pastor Art Hebbeler and his developing pastoral ministries in Baltimore.
- ‡ For all those who mourn the deaths of family members and friends, that they may know and share the comfort of faith in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ.
- ‡ We pray that the Gospel may be boldly preached throughout the world and that we in the LC-I may serve the Lord to that end.
- ‡ For protection for those who are targeted and forced to suffer prejudice, injustice, injury and death because of the color of their skin, the nationality of their background, their gender or orientation, their faith, or any other excuse for prejudice.
- ‡ For those entrusted with making fair and just laws for all people; and for those who enforce these laws, that they may act with fairness, justice and honesty.
- ‡ For those who protect us and bring peace and justice into our homes, communities and nations.
- ‡ For those known only to God, that we may reach out to them both in prayer and in care through Christ.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of two plus signs followed by the name "Robert" in a cursive script.

The Most Rev. Dr. Robert W. Hotes, Archbishop
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