

Prelude

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction

The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we play in the mystery of Christ's presence, mostly through the glorious Gospel of John. Today we gather with the disciples on the first Easter, and Jesus breathes the Spirit on us. With Thomas we ask for a sign, and Jesus offers us his wounded self in the broken bread. From frightened individuals we are transformed into a community of open doors, peace, forgiveness, and material sharing such that no one among us is in need.

Gathering Hymn: ELW #380 – *“Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!”*

Greeting - *Page 147*

Kyrie – *Page 147*

Canticle of Praise – *Page 149*

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, with joy we celebrate the day of our Lord's resurrection. By the grace of Christ among us, enable us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Acts 4:32-35

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was

sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 133

¹How good and how pleasant it is, when kindred live together in unity!

²**It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar of his robe.**

³It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the hills of Zion. For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life forevermore.

Second Reading: 1 John 1:1-2:2

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. ⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. ^{2:1}My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ²and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” ²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” ²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” ³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer. Amen

In our Gospel Reading, the disciples are in a house with the doors locked “for fear of the Jews.” Early that morning they had heard the news from the

women who had visited the tomb, that the tomb was empty, and the angel (or angels) had told them the good news that Jesus has been raised; He is not dead, but alive!!

If indeed, Jesus was alive, what did these disciples have to fear? Or, if Jesus was dead, as they seemed to believe, what protection would locked doors be? Jesus' enemies had been able to have him arrested, tried, crucified and sealed in a tomb.

The disciples didn't have any of this clearly sorted out. In spite of their doubts and fears, they still gathered together in the name of their Lord. To their wonder and amazement, Jesus fulfilled his promise, "where 2 or 3 gather in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20).

Thomas was not with the other disciples. A number of scholars, including Martin Luther, have taught that Thomas earned and deserves the reputation as "Doubting Thomas." They believe that it was no accident that Thomas wasn't with the other disciples on the evening that Jesus rose from the grave.

And the reason was not that Thomas was busy with other obligations. Thomas chose not to be there. The most likely reason was that Thomas did not believe the women who reported that they Jesus had been raised from the grave.

But, according to Mark's and Luke's accounts of the resurrection, the other disciples didn't believe the women either. That was not the only reason Thomas wasn't there.

Thomas had seen Jesus arrested, beaten, and crucified. In his mind, it was over. Jesus, their leader was dead. Jesus had raised Lazarus, and a few others from the dead. If He couldn't save Himself, then who could raise Him?

Be that as it may, the other disciples were together in the room, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus "came and stood among them", saying "Peace be with you." After they had a few moments to recover from the shock of seeing Jesus, He added, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Then He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Jesus came to them where they were, in their fears and doubts, in a locked room. That can give us hope in this time of Covid-19 and whatever feelings, doubts and fears we may be experiencing. Jesus knows where we are, what we are experiencing, and is with us and among us.

Jesus gave the disciples a task. It isn't spelled out in our Reading, but at the end of Matthew's Gospel their calling is to "go out and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you." Jesus gave them the Holy Spirit who would teach them, empower them and enable them to carry out that calling.

If Thomas was not with the disciples because he believed that Jesus was dead, and there was no point in meeting and worshipping together, then the disciples realized that to begin the task that Jesus gave them, they needed to start with Thomas.

Thomas was one of them. If they couldn't convince Thomas that Jesus had indeed been raised from the grave and had appeared to them, how could they hope to make disciples of people of other nations?

So they started with Thomas. His response is, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." The disciples didn't convince Thomas that Jesus was alive, but they did manage to get him to join them when they met a week later.

Once again, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." But then he gently scolded Thomas for his lack of faith, "See my hands; touch my side. Do not doubt but believe."

Thomas realized his mistake, let go of his doubts and came to real faith by proclaiming, "My Lord and my God!"

Thomas didn't accept the testimony of the women, or of the other disciples; He needed to actually see Jesus before He believed. Jesus did not bless Thomas, but He did bless those who come to faith without seeing Jesus. Every one of us here today has received that blessing. And that is good.

At the same time, we all have the same call that the disciples had: to make disciples of all nations, baptized them and teach them. Each of us needs to

take a serious look at how we are doing at testifying to the people around us that Jesus is alive.

Have we at least been able to bring our family and some friends to believe that Jesus is alive and gives life to those who believe? When people look at us can they see Jesus in us, and can they see evidence of the life that Jesus gives? Or do we look like everyone else?

These are serious questions and they deserve a serious answer. If we go out there into the world on our own strength and try to convince people that Jesus is alive and gives life, we will fail. No one will see Jesus in us; no one will believe our words.

The Holy Spirit is the One who gives us the words to say, the person we need to speak to, and the time and place, the where and when we speak. He gives power to our words, and He works in the heart of the person we speak to so that those words grow to become faith in Jesus.

We are not alone; Jesus and the Holy Spirit are with us. As we invite and allow Jesus and His Holy Spirit to live and rule in our heart and our life, He forgives our sin, and makes us a new creation, and transforms us to become more and more like Jesus.

As that happens, people will see Jesus in us, and they will see the new life that Jesus gives, and they will see us becoming a new creation, a new person. Some will want to experience that new life for themselves, and will want to become a new creation too. You and the Holy Spirit will be able to tell them and teach them what they need to know.

This isn't just your call, it's mine too. It takes all of us, not just a few. We are never too old. God can use us whoever we are and wherever we are. All that He needs is our willingness to follow and obey Him and allow Him to use us. Amen

Hymn of the Day: ELW #384 - *"That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright"*

Apostles' Creed – Page 105

Prayers of Intercession

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

You shower your church with grace, O God. Unite the whole church on earth, so that with one heart it testifies to the resurrection of Jesus Christ with power and love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You proclaim the blessing of life forevermore. Like dew upon the mountains, refresh your creation. Restore waters, cleanse the air, and provide revitalizing moisture to parched land. Give your whole creation the promise of new life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You direct the nations, O God. Guide all in authority, that they shepherd their peoples in the ways of your love. Defeat in us our impulse to war. Bestow the peace of Christ upon those in authority and breathe upon them the Holy Spirit. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You place within the heart of the church a spirit of sharing. Give us the power of your generous Spirit, that we provide for the needs of others. Announce your peace to those who are lonely, hurting, suffering, or afraid. Bring healing and restoration to those who are sick; especially, Florence, Jason, Richard, Heather, Sheila, Vince, Albert, Addrienne, Robert, Dorian. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You give us fellowship with one another in this faith community. Shine the light of the risen Christ in our life together, so that we live in love for one another and our joy may be complete. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You share the gift of eternal life. In thanksgiving and remembrance, we recall the lives and gifts of those who now live in endless joy. Unite us with them in resurrection hope. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION

Music As Table Is Prepared

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING – Page 152

“Lamb of God”

Music During the Distribution

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN: *ELW #389 – “Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing”*

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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News and Announcements:

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Richard Hubert, Heather Miller, Sheila Purdy, Vince Rabishaw, Albert Reiche, Addrienne Schroeder, Robert Schoof, Dorian Verch.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings a week later.

COVID VACCINE

Have you made your appointment to have your covid vaccine? If not we are willing to help. Just call Susan Dupuis. 343-369-2057.... Jan Scheidt 519-752-9826 or 613-631-0658 ...Ellen Vandersleen... 613-732-7649, and we will help.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmations classes will be cancelled until at least May. Please keep checking Facebook or our website for further details – or contact Pastor Leena or the church office.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082.

HELP FOR ONE OF ZION'S FAMILIES

It is with a caring and prayerful heart that the Social Ministry Committee is appealing to Zion's church family and friends to assist one of our young families.

Jason and Karen Godin, with their children Haley and Lucas are active members here at Zion. Jason is the son-in-law of Cheryl Sack and brother-in-law of Blaine Sack. Jason works as a Commissionaire Barrack Warden at Garrison Petawawa as well as a volunteer firefighter for Petawawa.

Jason recently received a Glioblastoma brain cancer diagnosis - the same type of cancer that Gord Downie battled. Jason will be needing radiation and chemotherapy treatment for this aggressive, incurable type of cancer. With the long road ahead; they could use some assistance as Jason's work benefits will not be enough to cover the many expenses that will be incurred in the foreseeable future. Therefore, we are asking for your help to soften the financial stress. Let us show them our love and support.

You can help with your contribution of cash, cheque or e- transfer.

- Make the cheque payable to Zion Lutheran Church, noting 'Karen and Jason Godin' on the envelope or the memo line. You can drop off the cheque at the church office or mail it to:
Zion Lutheran Church,

454 Miller Street,
Pembroke, ON K8A 5Z4.

****Please note that we will not be able to issue donation receipts for this appeal due to what the CRA refers to as “private benevolence”. The CRA does not permit a charitable donation receipt under these circumstances.**

- Use your online banking to send an e-transfer to:
zionoffice@nrtco.net. Passwords are not required as auto deposit is set up. Please indicate that it is for Karen and Jason in the message box.

We pray for God’s healing touch.

Thank You and blessings to each of you for your generosity!

Today’s Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church’s Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Jim Goos

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Debbie Wegner

Projectionist: Diane Hammel

Recorder: Ellen Vandersleen

Sound Board Operator: Murray Sell

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

This Week at Zion – April 12 - 18

Monday 10am Horticultural Mtg.

Tuesday 7pm Council Mtg.

7p.m. Narcotics Anonymous

Wednesday 10:30am Mid Week Service (cancelled)

1pm Staff Mtg.

Sunday 10am Easter 3 Worship Service with Holy Communion (cancelled for in-person worship)