

Easter SONRise Service

Sunday April 17th, 2022

Prelude: “They Crucified My Lord”

Opening Monologues:

Thomas:

It is early morning – not quite dawn yet. The sun has not yet risen. It is still dark. I am Thomas. I’m lying here with my arms crossed like I usually do. I don’t know why that’s my physical stance, even when I am asleep. ‘Always the skeptic,’ they tell me. Always standing at the back, observing and analyzing. I could see this whole thing coming - over the last months, as we traveled to Jerusalem. There were little signs that things were going to change, that something big was going to happen. Everyone was more tense. We watched our backs - even if we wouldn’t admit it. Jesus was getting more resistance and often the crowd took it out on us disciples. I’m sure there were spies around, and officials and religious bigwigs hiding in the shadows. And even Jesus was talking weird, mumbling things about suffering and betrayals and denials. I just wanted some clarity, some evidence, some open discussion, but who listens to me. And now the whole dream has collapsed and we are left to pick up the pieces.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Peter:

It is early morning – not quite dawn yet. The sun has not yet risen. It is still dark. I am Peter. I can’t sleep. I just keep waiting; waiting for that sound that inevitably comes with the first hint of light. It is a sound that will haunt me for the rest of my days – each and every day. The rooster, the cock crowing – announcing to all that I failed, that I couldn’t keep it together, that I even denied knowing him. I abandoned Jesus. I feel so guilty. Actually it is more than guilt – it is shame. I’m ashamed to show my face to my friends, to the other disciples as we try to make sense out of what makes no sense. I walk around with eyes pointed to the ground. I can’t even make eye contact. Jesus had called me, “Peter the Rock.” Ha! Maybe he should have called me a pebble or something.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

The Beloved Disciple:

It is early morning – not quite dawn yet. The sun has not yet risen. It is still dark. I am the

Beloved Disciple. I still can't believe he is gone. I loved him so much. I don't think I have ever had anyone else give me as much trust and confidence, love and support as Jesus did. He called me "the Beloved Disciple." And now he is gone. Even when he was hanging on the cross, I couldn't believe it was happening, that Jesus would die - until Jesus looked at me, standing beside his own mother, and said to Mary, "Woman, here is your son." And then to me "Here is your mother." Wow! What a calling. I will love and take care of her for the rest of my life! Jesus often talked about his own baptism, when a voice from heaven, said "You are my Son, the Beloved." Now I am part of that family, part of that calling. I am Beloved.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Mary Magdalene:

It is early morning – not quite dawn yet. The sun has not yet risen. It is still dark. I am Mary Magdalene. I couldn't sleep all night. To be truthful, I have been crying off and on since Friday. I just can't get that scene out of my head. My Jesus, suffering and dying on the cross. Jesus – he was so full of grace and forgiveness – you could see it, know it, every time you saw his face; every time he looked you in the eyes and spoke your name. And to see his face slowly lose its colour and then its life. I will never forget that image. It was like I was transfixed. I couldn't move. I think I was the last one to finally leave. All the men had left long before. And now I have to go to the tomb – for him, to be with him. Somehow I must protect him, at least protect his body, bring perfumes, show him honour. I need to be the first one to get there before the sun comes up again!

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Opening Prayer:

O God, you have searched the depths we cannot know, and touched what we cannot bear to name; may we so wait, enclosed in your darkness, that we are ready to encounter the terror of the dawn, with Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Easter Story: John 20: 1 – 10 (The Message)

Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone was moved away from the entrance. She ran at once to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, gasping for breath. "They took the Master from the tomb. We don't know where they've put him."

Peter and the other disciple left immediately for the tomb. They ran, neck and neck. The other disciple got to the tomb first, outrunning Peter. Stooping to look in, he saw the pieces of linen

cloth lying there, but he didn't go in. Simon Peter arrived after him, entered the tomb, observed the linen cloths lying there, and the kerchief used to cover his head not lying with the linen cloths but separate, neatly folded by itself. Then the other disciple, the one who had gotten there first, went into the tomb, took one look at the evidence, and believed. No one yet knew from the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead. The disciples then went back home.

Were you there when he rose up from the dead?

Were you there when he rose up from the dead?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when he rose up from the dead?

Mary and the Gardener: John 20: 11 – 18 (The Message)

But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she knelt to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting there, dressed in white, one at the head, the other at the foot of where Jesus' body had been laid. They said to her, "Woman, why do you weep?" "They took my Master," she said, "and I don't know where they put him." After she said this, she turned away and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn't recognize him. Jesus spoke to her, "Woman, why do you weep? Who are you looking for?" She, thinking that he was the gardener, said, "Sir, if you took him, tell me where you put him so I can care for him." Jesus said, "Mary." Turning to face him, she said in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" meaning "Teacher!" Jesus said, "Don't cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go to my brothers and tell them, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went, telling the news to the disciples: "I saw the Master!" And she told them everything he said to her.

After The Resurrection:

This is the day that God has made!

Rejoice! Rejoice, and be exceeding glad!

This is the day that God has made!

Rejoice! Rejoice! Hallelujah!

Mary Magdalene

Morning has broken. I have seen the Lord! Can you believe it? I almost missed him. It was like I couldn't see straight. First I had come to the tomb and the stone was gone. Panic! The body had been stolen. I must have come too late! I failed him. I ran and told Peter and the Beloved Disciple. My body was shaking. My eyes kept tearing up. I finally broke down outside the tomb. I just wanted to find the body! And then, and then! Who I thought was the gardener, speaking to me, asking questions... It was my name. He spoke my name. "Mary." And I knew! Right in that instant – I knew! It was Jesus. I saw my Lord. He told me not to hold on to him, and now I don't need to. I feel so free. I can let him go because I saw him. I am going to tell everyone I know!

Christ has conquered death at last,

left the tomb that held him fast!
Gone the sorrow, gone the night,
dawns the morning clear and bright!

This is the day that God has made!
Rejoice! Rejoice, and be exceeding glad!
This is the day that God has made!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Hallelujah!

The Beloved Disciple:

Morning has broken. I have seen the Lord! It was Mary Magdalene who woke Peter and I, each drifting on and off before dawn. She was almost in hysterics. We just ran, we didn't know why or what to expect. It was like a foot race – and I had the edge. I got there first...I stopped suddenly at the edge of the tomb, half off balance, not daring to go in, just seeing the linen wrappings scattered on the ground. I somehow knew that if I took another step, if I entered further, my whole life was about to change. My mind flashed ahead to everything that could have happened – but there was something just beyond what my mind could fathom, something bigger and more amazing, and I couldn't quite grasp, it was beyond reach, unless I took that next step. Peter moved first. He always did. And then I took that step and even the cloth from Jesus' head was neatly rolled up. The world had changed. I just knew it. Deep down I knew he was alive. I saw and believed.

Jesus lives who once was dead,
lives forever, as he said!
Risen now our Saviour, King;
songs of gladness let us sing!
This is the day that God has made!
Rejoice! Rejoice, and be exceeding glad!
This is the day that God has made!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Hallelujah!

Peter:

Morning has broken. I have seen the Lord! I have seen him with my own eyes. Yes, these eyes. I am looking and seeing again! I can look you in the eye! It all happened so quickly, so fast! Mary just ran in, talking nonsense, but somehow drawing us, urging us back to the tomb. And it was empty – the linens and cloths just lying there. A part of me knew already then that he was alive, that something new and amazing and world-shattering had just happened. The world would never be the same. And then we saw him at the house – he just appeared, like nothing had happened – “Peace be with you.” “Receive the Holy Spirit.” We are just trying to pick our jaws off the ground and he is already sending us out to the world. I would see him again. I knew he wasn't done with me yet. By the beach. He took me aside and asked three times “Do you love me?” “Of course I do,” I blurted. By the third time I knew that the rooster's crow would never bother me again.

This is the day that God has made!

Rejoice! Rejoice, and be exceeding glad!
This is the day that God has made!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Hallelujah!

Thomas:

Morning has broken. I have seen the Lord! I didn't think I would ever utter those words. Even when the rumours started. The women were crazy in their delusions. The others, also said they saw him, even saw his pierced side and hands. All nonsense, illusions, daydreams – rising out of our collective grief. Let me touch the nail marks and then we'll talk. This went on for a week – a long week where I dared not entertain the possibility even in the far recesses of my mind ... And then he was right in front of me. He just appeared through closed doors. "Peace be with you." And he dared me to put my fingers on his hands and side. No more doubting! I stood there open-mouthed. I didn't even move a finger – his voice was proof enough. All I said, all I could say, was "My Lord and my God."

Easter Proclamation:

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

Blessing and Sending Forth:

**Risen with Christ, may we know the reassurance of God's presence.
Risen with Christ, may we accept the challenge to work in God's way.
Risen with Christ, may we be living proof that God's love will never die.
Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

You are welcome to St. Luke's for a Freewill Offering Breakfast – proceeds to go to Mission and Service. See you at the Easter Morning Communion Service at your church time.

Postlude: "Hallelujah Chorus"