

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay**  
<http://standrewspres-tbay.ca> - Minister: Rev. Joyce Yanishewski  
Easter Sunday - April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Words of Welcome**

Early on the first day of the week,  
the disciples of Jesus went to the tomb  
where he had been buried  
only to find that the stone had been rolled away  
and the tomb was empty.

*Luke 24:1; John 20:1*

Friends, we gather here as Christ's disciples,  
on the first day of the week,  
to celebrate the good news of the gospel:  
Jesus Christ has risen from the dead!

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**Call to Worship**

Rejoice and be glad:  
**This is the day that the Lord has made!**

*Ps. 118:24; Isa. 65:17-18*

Rejoice and be glad:  
**Heaven and earth will never be the same!**

Rejoice and be glad:  
**Christ is risen! Alleluia!**

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**Hymn**

*Jesus Christ is risen today*

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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Jesus Christ is risen today,<br>hallelujah!<br>our triumphant holy day,<br>hallelujah!<br>who did once upon the cross,<br>hallelujah!<br>suffer to redeem our loss,<br>hallelujah!        | 2. Hymns of praise then let us sing<br>hallelujah!<br>unto Christ our heavenly King,<br>hallelujah!<br>who endured the cross and grave,<br>hallelujah!<br>sinners to redeem and save,<br>hallelujah! |
| 3. But the pains which he endured<br>hallelujah!<br>our salvation have procured;<br>hallelujah!<br>now above the sky he's King,<br>hallelujah!<br>where the angels ever sing,<br>hallelujah! | 4. Sing we to our God above,<br>hallelujah!<br>praise eternal as his love;<br>hallelujah!<br>praise him, all ye heavenly host,<br>hallelujah!<br>Father, Son and Holy Ghost,<br>hallelujah!          |

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## Prayer of Adoration and Confession

We praise you, living God, with songs and prayers and listening hearts and lives trying to obey your will.

You have created and are creating, bringing life and hope and love.

You come in Jesus, your Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new.

In a culture where the power of death gets all the headlines your Holy Spirit summons us to be people shaped by your power to work resurrection.

We are not sure we believe as fully as we think we should.

We are not sure we trust as deeply as we think you require.

But we bring who we are and what we have become into your presence, longing to know your grace and your love.

**Forgive what has gone wrong. Repair in us what is broken.**

**Reveal in us what is good and turn us toward it.**

**So may we follow wherever your Spirit may lead.**

**So may we love with the love of Jesus flowing through us.**

**So may we, body, mind and spirit, be children of resurrection,**

**children of hope, children of grace.** ~ posted on Christine Jerrett. <https://christinejerrett.wordpress.com/>

Living God, by your Holy Spirit, open our eyes to see the new light of this day; open our lips to tell of the empty tomb; open our hearts to believe the good news; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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## Assurance of Pardon

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Lord, bring new life where we are worn and tired;  
new love where we have turned hard-hearted;  
forgiveness where we feel hurt and where we have wounded  
and the joy and freedom of your Holy Spirit where  
we are prisoners of ourselves.

To all and to each, on his community and on his friends, where regret is real,  
Jesus pronounces his pardon and grants us the right to begin again.

Thanks be to God!

From *The Worship Sourcebook*, © 2004, CRC Publications.

## Scripture Reading Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. <sup>2</sup>They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup>but when they went in, they did not find the body. <sup>4</sup>While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. <sup>5</sup>The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. <sup>6</sup>Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup>that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and

be crucified, and on the third day rise again.”<sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words,<sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.<sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles.<sup>11</sup> But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.<sup>12</sup> But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

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

## Message

Let's start with what we know. Jesus was crucified. The women, the apostles, and other others saw it. Joseph of Arimathea, asked for the Jesus' body and had him buried in a tomb. Jesus is dead and there is no getting around that. After the Sabbath, women have headed to the tomb with their prepared spices and ointments that will be part of the burial ritual. They are approaching the tomb with gut wrenching grief over the loss of this one man who they had loved, hoped in, saw their future in. But that has all ended with Pilate's verdict that Jesus would be put to death, and that as death on a cross.

The trauma of the past days would have been overwhelming, for the women and for the eleven disciples that were left. Poor Peter, his feelings of betrayal sitting as another layer of grief over the death of Jesus. And that is trauma. Layers of grief, guilt and anger. If you have experienced the death of a loved one you will know that. There are always questions. For me at the death of my mom the guilt stemmed from the fact that my last call with her dropped when my phone went dead and instead of calling her back after I plugged in my phone I went on with things, thinking I would get to it another day. That other day never came, my mom died before I got back to her.

For another, it might be the questions of, "Did we make the right decisions about end-of-life care?" Maybe the trauma is not around death but around the ending of a career, a marriage or difficult relationship with a loved one. Not one of us is spared the trauma of death and dying, it just might be more an ending rather than a death. They come with similar challenges at times.

Then as we watch the news and hear of another opioid overdose, another mass shooting, more bombs dropping on the Ukraine, and coming out of two years of massive shifts in our lived experience due to the pandemic...all of us is experiencing some amount of trauma.

We can relate to the women as they come up to the tomb and find the stone rolled away. Not only that, going inside they did not find the body of Jesus. They are already overwhelmed with grief, guilt, and anger, and now they are perplexed and terrified because Jesus is gone!

How can one comprehend all of this? It is too much to bear. And note that in this telling of the resurrection story all there is to know is that Jesus is gone. He does not come and speak with them or reassure them. Two others men that are dazzling white do, but not Jesus. This is more of a discovery of a missing body than a moment of resurrection. It is the two men who say to the women, "Remember how Jesus told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." (v6).

It was in their remembering, of being reminded, and then given the task of informing the others, that the women are able to get up and do something. They head back to the apostle's, but remember they too are experiencing the trauma of the last days and to hear the women tell their story, well, it must of sounded not just like an idle tale but a tall tale. Think of all the talk of fake news of the last years. This must have been heard as fake news to the max.

And no one is trying to convince anyone of anything, all they keep doing is going back to what they know. What they heard Jesus say.

Last week I spoke about needing to experience the cross. Now we need to experience the resurrection. There is no explaining it. This is not something that can be done with science. God is the creator of science but can work both inside and outside our realm of understanding.

The resurrection is a moment of promise, of hope, and of reality in the midst of trauma. Resurrection, new life, is what can come out of even the most horrible and difficult of circumstances when God is given the power in our lives to take all that we know and experience, both the good and the trauma, and from the death, the grief, the endings, the hurt, and struggle, bring about new life in ways that we cannot even conceive while we are in the midst of the challenges.

How can we know that Jesus is risen, that there is the promise of new life? We can know as the women and the apostles did, going back to the words of Jesus. We too have the whole of scripture that witnesses to the work of God in the lives of people and creation. We have our own lived experiences that we can reflect on and we can share this with each other. Just as Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them went and shared what they knew with the others, we too can share what we know. We don't have to fully understand it or explain it, but we can attest and witness to the life changing, life giving experience of God's resurrection power, even if we don't use those words. We share our story, we share God's story, we share hope, promise, and experience. This takes trauma and makes it triumph. Our grief though present is given hope for new life.

Live into the hope, the promise, the experience of the resurrection.

Be at peace, love and serve the Lord your God knowing that life overcomes death and God is present in the pain and in the celebration, in the dying and in the living. God goes with you and is with you – always. Amen.

### **Prayers of the People**

Lord of life, hear us as we lift to you our hopes and prayers  
for the church and the world.

Let your grace empower us as people of faith  
to better serve you in the common places of our lives,  
and in the people we meet on our faith journeys.

Open our eyes to the living Christ as we pray for and work with the poor,  
the broken-hearted, the sick and the bereaved.

Hear our prayers for those who are close to our hearts.

In your resurrecting power, lift them up and give them renewed strength and hope;  
and give to us all new faith by which to live our days with you.

Then will our lives be living witness to your resurrection,  
made whole by your love and care.

In Christ's Spirit we pray as Jesus taught...

~ posted on **Life in Liturgy**, from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). <https://lifeinliturgy.wordpress.com/>

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

### **Invitation to the offering**

God plants the seeds of grace, peace, love, and justice into our hearts. Every morning, and with the tangible gifts we have as well, we can offer new hope and healing to those around.

As we are people from different churches and places following this service. I encourage each of you to present your offering to God this day to your church community.

If you consider St. Andrew's your church, regardless of where you live, would like to learn more about St. Andrew's, get involved in our ministry and work, or make a donation toward the life and ministry of St. Andrew's Presbyterian, in Thunder Bay visit our website at <http://standrewspres-tbay.ca> for more information.

1. I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,  
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth;  
at Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Refrain*

*Dance, then, wherever you may be; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,  
and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be, and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

2. I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,  
but they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me;  
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;  
they came with me and the dance went on.

*Refrain*

3. I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame:  
the holy people said it was a shame.  
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,  
and they left me there on a cross to die:

*Refrain*

4. I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;  
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back.  
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;  
but I am the dance, and I still go on:

*Refrain*

5. They cut me down and I leap up high;  
I am the life that'll never, never die;  
I'll live in you if you'll live in me:  
I am the Lord of the dance, said he.

*Refrain*

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**Benediction**

Go out into the world as the people of God in this place,  
and may the God who raised Jesus from the dead grant you grace,  
the Son who gave his life for you give you peace,  
and the Spirit who is with you day by day,  
inspire you to greater service both now and forever more. Amen