

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos

Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020

Preparation

I do not know what gorgeous thing the bluebird keeps saying...
I like whatever it is. Sometimes
It seems the only thing in this world without dark thoughts—
The only thing in the world without questions
that can't and probably won't ever be answered—
the only thing content with the morning and, gratefully, says so.

--Mary Oliver, *What Gorgeous Thing*, 2014



Prelude

The Strife Is O'er

[Lisa Shoemaker-Lohmeyer]

Greeting

Easter Proclamation

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels! Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
This is the day when God saved our ancestors and freed the people of Israel from their slavery. This is the day when Christ broke the chains of death and rose triumphant from the grave. Father, how wonderful Your care for us, how boundless Your merciful love. To ransom a slave, You gave away Your Son. O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam, which gained for us so great a Redeemer! The power of this holy time dispels all evil, washes guilt away, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy: most blessed of all days, when heaven is wedded to earth and people are reconciled with God.

Hymn

Connor Koppin, soloist

Jesus Christ is risen today, alleluia
Our triumphant holy day, alleluia
Who did once upon the cross, alleluia
Suffer to redeem our loss, alleluia!
Hymns of praise then let us sing, alleluia
Unto Christ, our heavenly King, alleluia
Who endured the cross and grave, alleluia
Sinners to redeem and save, alleluia!
But the pains which he endured, alleluia
Our salvation have procured, alleluia
Noe above the sky he's King, alleluia
Where the angels ever sing, alleluia!
Sing we to our God above, alleluia
Praise eternal as God's love, alleluia
Praise our God, ye heavenly host, alleluia
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, alleluia!

Prayer of Confession

Let us pray: Loving God, early in the morning, when the world was young, You made life in all its beauty and terror; You gave birth to all we know.

Early in the morning, when the world least expected it, a new born child crying in a cradle announced that You had come among us, that You were one of us.

Early in the morning, surrounded by self-interested religious leaders, anxious statesmen and silent friends, You accepted the penalty for doing good, for being God: You shouldered and suffered the cross.

Early in the morning, a voice in a guarded graveyard and footsteps in the dew proved that You had risen, that You had come back to those who had forgotten, denied, and destroyed You.

Holy God, bring new life where we are worn and tired; new love where we have turned hard-hearted; forgiveness where we have wounded others; and the joy and freedom of Your Holy Spirit where we are the prisoners of our selves.

(silent prayers)

To all and to each, where regret is real, God pronounces pardon and grants us the grace to begin again. Forgiveness, mercy, grace, love, and new, eternal life are the fruits of the Spirit – the Spirit of Christ Jesus. **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

Children’s Lesson based on Matthew 26:1-10

Scripture Lesson Psalm 8

Sermon “*From the Empty Tomb*” Rev. Dr. Rob Carlson

Musical Interlude *Thine Is the Glory* [Handel]

Offering Dedication of One Great Hour of Sharing

Prayers of the People

The Lord’s Prayer “...*forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors...*”

Benediction

Because the tomb is empty, our lives can be full.
So live for Christ. Be graceful in spirit; faithful in all you do;
And let your words be full of hope. For Christ is risen!
Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen!

Postlude *Hallelujah Chorus* [Handel]