



Risen Savior Lutheran Church

14700 Leavenworth Rd., Basehor, KS 66007 913-724-2900

They told themselves they'd return. Jesus deserved better. In the midst of hopes and dreams dashed in bloody sweat, the horrific happenings, and **It is finished**, the women consoled themselves with thoughts of Sunday. The Sabbath is over. Sunrise, they went to the tomb. Loaded down with burial spices, they went for closure, to display the highest honor a Jew could do for another in giving Him a proper burial. Broken hearts and sorrows, no doubt like us in the face of death, wondered why? Why didn't Jesus fight His betrayal? Why didn't He defend Himself in the trial? Why didn't He plead for Himself, for His life? Why was He declared innocent 5x and still died?

When they got to the grave. **They were frightened, bowed their faces to the ground, the men said, Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, on the third day rise. Remember how he told you.**

In shock they realized Jesus had kept every promise He made. In place of their terror of death came the greater terror of life –of sins forgiven, of death overcome, of liars, adulterers, murderers, thieves - given everlasting life! Wretched people like them, like you.

How would they explain it? What did this mean for the future? Isn't that why we are here today? We don't know what to expect of life, of graves, of a future death cannot touch. We cannot explain Easter. Trust in what our eyes can't see, our hands can't touch, our minds can't fathom. We are as fearful as those women who came to that grave so long ago. Faced with an undeniable, historical fact. What will we do?

Easter changes everything for them, for you. The cross of death now but a tree of life. The grave that once said "the end" now becomes "the beginning." A life you live now of joy -that nothing in this life can take away. Our loved ones who die in Christ are not lost; we will throw our arms around them again. **Remember how he told you.**

Christ lives –for guilty sinners, shameful people with pasts and

secrets, wounded people with no hope of healing; sorrowful people who long for consolation. He is risen for people who carry in their bodies disease and every illness and uncertain future. He sets free the immoral, the evil, the addict, the guilty from their sins. You. Your sins. **Remember how he told you.**

There's a most unusual cemetery in the world. People buried in unmarked graves. Only one, the first child in NY City who died of AIDS, rests in an isolated plot. All others in long trenches, with cheap, pine coffins.

This 131 acres, Hart Island, in the harbor of NY. Cradled on this island, the remains of a largely unremembered people. Over 1 million buried there, 1/3 of them babies. Some unclaimed soldiers of the civil war. Others died alone with no family. Some, dying in poverty, so impoverished, no grave that family could visit. Inmates from Rikers Island still bury the dead. Hart Island, a heart-breaking plot of ground. Death literally inches beneath every step you take. As such, Hart Is may very well be the most special place on earth to God.

The Lord has a special place in His heart for those whom the world forgets. For the lowly, the unimportant, insignificant to the world. Jesus intimately acquainted with every person. Can tell you exactly who is buried where, when they died, even the moment they were conceived. What they endure, exactly how many tears they shed in their life. Knows their stories of joy, of loneliness, of abuse, of hearts broken by cancer, divorce, or inescapable poverty. His children buried there.

On the day of when our Lord faced death, these children were on the heart and mind of Jesus. It was worth it: every moment of His passion. It was all worth it. So also for you, His dear child.

He gave a reality to Hart Island, even our cemeteries, that cemetery, what is hidden from the eyes of man. Beneath the veil of death and loss, there, the power of an indestructible life in Him, as His.

The Easter Lord walks among the graves of Hart Island, our graves; not as a grieving parent, but a victorious Lord. The feet once spiked to a cross traverse graves in which lie the bodies of His own. Our cemeteries holds their bones, but Christ holds their souls. In Him they are more alive now than they ever were on earth.

Hart Island, a special place to the Lord who never forgets His own. He never forgets you. He knows it all. Every tear He counts. Every scar He kisses. Every wound He heals. He needs no gravestone to know where

your remains will be, for you will remain ever in His arms, even as your body sleeps in the tomb, awaiting resurrection.

And what's more, He feeds you His very resurrected body and blood. Jesus Himself says, **Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.**

He does all things for your good, every day, to have you, now, and to spend eternity with you; How could ever you die dear child, He has already died for you. **O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?** Jesus lives. So do you, so will you.

Your Lord lives that you will never die. Your Lord lives there is no such thing as.. the end. Bask in the beautiful reality of this day. His glory, His life given you. You have nothing to fear. You are His. **Remember how he told you.** You are safe, now, forever, in the heart of Easter's Lord. He is risen.