

Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020
Bay Pines Lutheran Church
John 14:19

Welcome – He is risen! He is risen indeed!

Hymn – Choir “Christ the Lord is Risen Today”

The Invocation – In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Easter Reading – Revelation 19:11-16

This is the last picture of Jesus that we have in the last book of the Bible.

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

(Note – The Bible study for Easter is based on these words.)

Hymn – This is the Feast of Victory or other selection

The Confession

“I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”

Hymn – Choir “This is the Day”

Sermon – John 14:19 “Because I live, you also will live”

He is risen! He is risen indeed! We need words of certainty and truth now more than ever in uncertain times. We need strength, power, and authority as our whole world is gripped in a devastating epidemic of corona virus. Look no further than the life giving, eternal promise of our risen Savior.

Because I live, you also will live!

People have wondered if this might be their last Easter. For some the virus has already brought their eternity and that reality. Dr. James Goodrich, the neurosurgeon, who pioneered separating conjoined twins who shared brain matter was a victim of the disease. Dr Li Wenliang, the Chinese doctor who sounded the alarm on Covid-19 passed on Feb. 7th. Alan Merrill, who co-wrote “I love Rock N Roll” died of the illness. The list goes on. As of last Wednesday the death toll in America was 12,000 and 82,000 world wide. Those numbers are predicted to increase over the next two critical weeks.

We are in uncharted territory. The attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 lasted a few hours. The 911 terrorist attack in America on Sept. 11, 2001 consumed one day. The virus pandemic has been around for most of 2020 and at this point has not yet plateaued in America. Are we at risk going to the store for groceries and medication? Will our money run out? What about jobs? How long will school be virtual? What about stress? Already mental health hot lines have shown an increase of 88%. Will medical people, police, fire, and first responders contract the virus to the point where basic services cannot be met? Do we have enough masks, ventilators, hospital beds, tests, and medicines to treat people that are infected. Fear of the unknown and fear of the future fills many. Are we in the end times? Are we on the verge of worldwide destruction?

The Lord provides the certainty in uncertain times. Now more than ever the Easter truth needs to be told and needs to be believed. Because I live, you also will live! Our hero is not dead but alive having defeated death. The empty tomb of Jesus proves His words about death are true. “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though they die.” (John 11:25). The Bible proclaims, “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.” (I Cor. 15:20). “The last enemy to be destroyed is death.” (I Cor. 15:26). Jesus’ empty tomb makes it clear that He is more powerful than death. This is the Easter message we want to resonate in our hearts by faith. The grave of Jesus is empty and so it will be with ours.

To counter the spread of disease, all America and Florida as well are under a “Stay at home, save lives” mandate. It is an effort to limit the spread of the unseen virus and an effort to limit the number of deaths. Christians should be in the forefront of following guidelines and doing what we can to protect lives. But we do know that death will come to all of us. Stay with Jesus, save lives eternally. We will close our eyes in death, just as Jesus did, and fall asleep only to rise glorious. By the power of God we will put off our mortal, perishable bodies and rise with immortal and imperishable glorious perfect disease free bodies. Victory is the Lord’s. Because I live, you also will live.

Hydroxychloroquine is a malaria drug that is being offered to counter the effects of Covid – 19. It has not been approved by the Federal Drug Administration because of

possible side effects and that may take years, but people are dying today. It is being made available none the less to possibly help save lives. Today we offer to you a living risen Savior to counter the eternal effects of sin and disobedience. The Good Friday “test” of death has been approved by the Heavenly Father 2000 years ago and the sacrifice was declared finished. The effect of that one life, one death, one resurrection is eternal life and that promise is from our God who had authority to proclaim on the first Easter morning, has authority to proclaim on this Easter morning, April 12, 2020, and will have the authority to proclaim on the day of judgment.

Those who refuse to honor Him on earth will be judged and suffer the virus of sin forever. Those who believe Jesus lives, believe forgiveness has been won, and believe they are saved by grace will rise from death and join the hosts of heaven, all the believers who have gone before, children of grace who entered heaven during the pandemic to praise our gracious Lord.

At the moment of our death, fear will be gone. The ugliness of this world will be gone. The guilt and sin from the past are already gone. The hopelessness and wondering will be gone. Heaven will explode into view. We will see the King of Kings and Lord of Lords for the first time face to face. There will be no more tears, death, mourning, crying, pain, or corona. The old order of things will have passed.

He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives and I shall conquer death.
He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to his name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!
(CW 152 vs. 7,8) Because I live, you also will live. Amen.

Hymn – I know that my Redeemer lives!

The Easter Prayer – Dear Risen Savior, You rose victorious on the first Easter morning. The grave could not hold you. Your death was not the end. The same will be true of us. The grave will not hold us forever. Death is not our end. Receive our souls immediately upon death. Raise our bodies glorious and immortal on the day of judgment and join us again with the soul. Your resurrection proves it all can be done. Strengthen our faith that it is so. Bring faith to those who do not know You. Help them find the peace and faith You have given to us.

We pray for the virus to end. Be with all the people who are putting their health on the line to attend to the needs of others. Keep them safe. Help all of us as far as it is possible to stay safe at home and save lives. Give us calm and the firm knowledge that You are there and protecting us. Make this Easter a memorable one for all the right

reasons. Now more than ever help us cling to Your resurrection as the one great certainty in an uncertain world.

We pray Your Prayer – The Lord ‘s Prayer

Hymn – Easter hymn

The Benediction - “The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with His favor and give you peace. Amen.

Hymn - “Hallelujah Chorus”

Announcements

Services, Bible Classes, and meetings continue to be canceled unless otherwise noted (virtual meetings).

Feeding God’s People food will be picked up on Easter afternoon at 3:00 pm.

Visit us on the Bay Pines Lutheran Church Facebook or website at www.baypineslutheranchurch for services, Bible studies, and announcements.

We will send or deliver printed material to those unable to access electronic communication.

We will be present to visit with you, encourage you, or receive your contributions one half hour before each normally scheduled service on the steps outside of church.

Watch for a letter by mail regarding the potential calling of a pastor from the graduating class of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in May.

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