

Easter Sunday, C, 2007

Sunrise

April 8, 2007

Luke 24: 1-12

Title: Why Do You Seek The Living Among the Dead?

Grace and peace to you from the one who was, who is and who is to come,  
The Alpha and Omega, the Bright Morning Star, the First Born of the Dead,  
Jesus, whom God raised to life.

Would you have been out there in 26 degree weather. This week we joked a  
bit about the Sunrise Service in sub-freezing weather. Instead of the robust  
Alleluia! Christ is Risen! How do you say that with chattering teeth..

But what we miss by not being in the Memorial Garden is not  
just the

Cold weather but the impact of proclaiming resurrection.

To stand at the grave sites of loved ones, at the very place

Where we know the sting of death and hear this strange

Story of life—that God raised Jesus. So please go out there

Rub your hands along a name.

Mark those names with a cross.

Say out there....resurrection

Say out there....new life

Say out there....closed worlds are broken open.

Say out there....old perceptions of what is possible

Are shattered

Say out there....the worst isn't the last thing about

The world. It's the next to last!!

To borrow from the great Yogi Berra "The future just ain't what it used to  
be."

When Luke describes the human encounter with the empty tomb

Of Jesus such words as perplexed, terrified, idle tale, amazed

Are offered. Resurrection isn't the known.

When you come to the tomb of one you've loved doing all you can do

To put spices on the dead body and someone says to you

Why do you seek the living among the dead?

You just might be perplexed, terrified!  
After all, do we come to expect death.

Another teenager's young life snuffed out on a Raleigh  
highway  
Inspire of countless warnings, pleadings, brow beatings,  
A young life is wasted.

We enter a war to bring an end to terror and those we seek  
To liberate consider us the terror.  
Churches whose mission it is to bear good news in the world  
Insulate them from that world looking more like a club  
Than a missional community  
We come to expect a cemetery having grown used to  
The power of death.

It's that power which divides us, incites us, causes us to hoard,  
To hold grudges, to give in to measuring life by how much  
Instead of by our baptism into the new life giver Jesus!

Perplexed before the empty tomb? You bet.  
Believe it's an idle tale? Unhook! How many times have we heard testimony  
to the call to new life in Christ and we are exhausted by some other power.

It's been said that the most frequently used words in the church  
Are—we have already tried that! Words that don't sound too  
Easterfied! Words that sound less than gospeled!  
Words that betray a closed tomb, not an open future.

Let us take hope that whenever we are captured by the tomb even those first  
witnesses to Jesus' resurrection considered the news an idle tale. BUT they  
were grabbed by the dawn of new life. ...the darkness lifted and they  
Became Eastered in Christ. They remembered the story of God promised—  
Crucified and risen. The message of resurrection needs to be shared.  
The two men reminded the women of the promised  
resurrection.

How often it is the powerful reminder of who  
God is that gives us hope and propels us onward.  
The person who rises up and says I believe  
God will see us through such voices become

For us testimony to the resurrection.

Those two are unnamed in the tomb...we are to see ourselves  
As bearers of new life, give our witness to the hand of God  
Working resurrection among us.

Nevertheless, God raised Jesus from the dead.  
Therefore, let us come to the God of new life with daring hope for  
Healings we have yet to receive, believing in them,  
While the world says not possible

To dare in Jesus' name imagine  
Healings in Iraq  
Trustfulness between conservatives and liberals,  
Caring between those who have so little and those who have too  
Much,  
Transformations, healings, reconciliations and the defeat of anger,  
Hate and hurt,  
Past our burdens of fear and brokenness

For God stalks the earth with new life.  
This is the day of resurrection.  
Perplexed. Terrified. An Idle Tale. Amazed.

Alleluia. God raised Jesus from the dead.  
Why do you seek the living among the dead?