

Easter – 2021

Acts 10: 3-4a, 37-43 – Colossians 3: 1-4 – Mark 16: 1-7

Perhaps more than at any other time in any of our lives can we have a very deep appreciation of what the feast of Easter celebrates than this year. Last year we were not even able to come together here in the church on this day. Gatherings of any sort were restricted, limited or even did not happen as they had in the past. Even this year there are still limitations and modifications in place.

But we know that we look forward with hope, with great anticipation and expectation. To when we can gather together freely, when masks on our faces will be rolled back and removed, like the stone from the tomb. What we anticipate is the restoration, once again, of daily living as we knew it. What we look forward to is the restoration and the hope that Easter celebrates.

It is so much easier this year, I believe, to envision the joy of the followers of Jesus when they experienced his presence with them on the evening of the Resurrection. They had witnessed him being betrayed, condemned and executed. What next could they expect? It made sense that they locked the doors where they were out of fear. Then, into their midst he came. He was alive. He was restored. He was not a spirit or a ghost. He was not an illusion. He was a real person who could be touched, who would eat. He had overcome the frightful experience of death. He was alive and wished them "Peace."

The restoration we look forward to when this pandemic is contained and we can and we can return to the world that we had known, at least in some fashion, is limited in comparison to what was achieved by the Resurrection. It was a restoration of life itself. It was a genuine reconciliation between God and mankind. It was a removal of anything and anyone that could cause us to fear, to be afraid. This is what makes "Peace" not just a greeting, but a reality achieved by the Resurrection.

Our experience of the pandemic has been painful, both individually and throughout the world. But we are confident that it can be overcome and defeated, also individually and throughout the world. It is this confidence in these circumstances that teaches us so effectively why we, as Christians, as believers in the Resurrection we celebrate today, are people of hope, of optimism and of peace as we proclaim "Alleluia" over and over again: praise to our good and gracious God.