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March 31, 2024

**Resurrection Sunday**

“Waiting for the Feast Lenten Series: Terror and Amazement”

Mark 16:1-8

**Call to Worship**

**One:** We gather in the presence of God’s love to celebrate the best love story ever told.

**All:** **The Holy Story of the Risen Christ!**

**One:** A story of the Risen Christ who came as a sacrificial lamb to heal a hurting world.

**All:** **The Divine sign of God’s love and grace.**

**One:** The story of three women who rose early to care for Jesus’ body in the tomb.

**All:** **An act to honor God’s loving presence sent to be among us.**

**One:** These women arrived and saw an empty tomb; they were shocked and afraid.

**All:** **They remembered the symbol of human shame of the old rugged cross.**

**One:** But the story did not end with the crucified Jesus. An Angel of God appeared in the empty tomb, and their terror transformed into amazement.

**All:** **God’s love had once again been revealed.**

**One:** The journey of the three women continued; they were asked to go out and spread the Good News of God’s love, peace, and justice found in the Risen Christ!

**All:** **Today, we receive this Good News; Christ is Risen. He is Risen as He said!**

**Invocation**

**Resurrecting God,** **Strengthen in us the will to go out, sharing your Good News of God’s redeeming love. Guide us in telling the story of your endless love through our words and deeds. Remind us of your presence. Fill our hearts with your ways of love that bring about peace and justice for all. With your loving embrace, protect us in the face of terror and hateful actions. Bring us your hope found in the excitement of eternal life and saving love exemplified in Jesus, the Risen Christ!** **Amen.**

**Prayer for Transformation and New Life**

**Redeeming God, We recognize that your love for all creation is great and unmovable. All that we need on earth has been provided, and yet we struggle to share a portion of our blessings so that all might have enough. You have created an earth vast with land and sea. And yet, we embrace a narrative of scarcity. Believing that somehow there is not enough for everyone to be cared for. But the data proves otherwise. We know there is an overwhelming abundance of resources on the earth you created. Help us to choose a narrative of abundance over scarcity. Give us the strength to help make this world a better place by embracing your agape love of equality for all creation. Let your ancient story of love be our new, innovative, and transformative story of love. The kind of love that transforms hearts, O God, and leads us towards this new way of living. May this new life speak to the kind of prosperity that overflows with your love of peace and justice for all people, everywhere!**

**Words of Grace**

**God of Grace and Glory, We are humbled by your faithfulness and love. Even if our fears spark terror and doubt, you never leave us. There is no other love greater than yours. You call upon all of creation to spread the Good News of your love and glorious light. Reminding us that your love is sweeter than the honey in the honeycomb. Comforting us even in the bitterness of life as we embrace the loving assurance of forgiveness found in Jesus Christ, whose grace and mercy bless us still.**

**Invitation to Generosity (Call to Offering)**

**One:** Loving God, the abundance of your generosity is exemplified in the dawning of the sun.

**All:** **Thank you for the joy and hope of new mercies found in the morning sun.**

**One:** Even in moments when we are showered by the rain, remind us that your love never fails.

**All:** **Rain down your abundant love and redeeming grace upon us.**

**One:** Let us give our offerings with generosity and joy to the One who has faithfully and generously given to us love, grace, and mercy.

**Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

**Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God who has created a world of abundance with all that we need. May we remain thankful for your generosity, O God, as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved creation.**

**Benediction**

Loving and Gracious God, We are grateful for your Good News of loving abundance for all creation. Now, let us go out like the three women who experienced an empty tomb. Going out with Christ’s light shining deeply in our hearts. Living aloud the words of the classic hymn, “This little of mine. I’m gonna let it shine. Everywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine. All through the night, I’m gonna let it shine. Won’t let anyone blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine. Even when terror and doubt appear, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine! Go in Peace & Love. Let the people of God say, **Amen.**

**Hymn Suggestions**

To God Be the Glory

Blessed Assurance

Because He Lives

*The Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey*