

Celebrating Easter in All its Grand Diversity

“Alleluia, Christ is risen!”

Today we gather to celebrate life overcoming death. We also revel in the variety of expectancy with which the resurrection of Christ is embraced among our mixtures of needs and hopes.

Let us rejoice with those, who upon finding the Temple curtain torn, experience Christ as our Revealer who tore the veil between eternity and this temporal world, and makes it possible to transcend the separation between God and us.

Elizabeth Browning wrote, “Earth’s crammed with heaven / And every common bush afire with God / But only he who sees, takes off his shoes.” Let us celebrate those who run barefoot with Christ.

Let us take delight with those, who upon finding the tomb empty, experience Christ as our Liberator who breaks our chains, calling us into the struggle against hostile powers. Allan Boesak of South Africa stated, “God will ask, ‘Where are your wounds?’ And we will say, ‘We have no wounds.’ And God will say, ‘Was nothing worth fighting for?’” Let us celebrate those who are renewed in their commitment to things worth fighting for.

Let us cheer with those, who upon finding renewed life, experience Christ as our Model who shows us the path to wholeness. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “What lies behind us, and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us.” Let us celebrate those discovering that what lies within is infinitely treasured by God.

Let us share gladness with those, who upon discovering the unconditional love of God, experience Christ as our Savior, who redeems us from sin and justifies us through faith. We recall the mantra of our own United Church of Christ, “No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” Let us celebrate those who having been lost, are now found.

Let us appreciate the faith of those who are in situations of suffering that cannot be changed, but can only be endured. Their faith recognizes Christ as the Suffering Servant who walks through life with us. This faith reminds us that God is Emmanuel who stretches out upon the cross of the world. Sandy Eastman, a member of Hillcrest UCC, Montrose, Colorado writes, “I know sometimes my life feels frantic and I feel like I’m at my wit’s end, but I also know that is where God lives.” Let us celebrate that we are not alone during the bitter-sweet moments of our lives.

Easter has a grand diversity among us which we revel in as it meets our numerous needs and enkindles our countless hopes.