

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
Easter 2
April 16, 2023
Reverend Michael Fleming

Fr. Michael: As we gather this new day, waiting to hear Jesus say to us “Peace be with you”, we acknowledge that the places we call home and our sacred space lie on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people.

People: **May we share the gifts of shalom and reconciled living with one another on this good and godly land.**

Fr. Michael: Lord, the eyes of all look to you in hope, and you give them what they need. You open your hand and you satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing. We too turn to you again, longing to be filled – to eat of the Bread of Life, to drink from your life-giving streams, to taste your goodness and to live. May the time we spend together in your presence nourish our hearts and minds; may it strengthen our relationship with you, and renew our commitment to live in this world as your faithful disciples and apostles. For you alone are God, the Source and Sustainer of all life. In Jesus name we pray.

All: **Amen** (Christine Longhurst re:Worship 2022)

Fr. Michael: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **and also with you.**

Fr. Michael: We have been called and gathered in the Resurrection Light and so we pray Almighty God,

People: **to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen**

Fr. Michael: Alive and dancing in the Spirit of new life, we say, Glory to God in the highest

People: **and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

All: **Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we who have not seen, have faith and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. Amen**

Fr. Michael: Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we who have not seen, have faith and receive the fullness of Christ's

blessings, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

Fr. Michael: Almighty and eternal God, who, for the firmer foundation of our faith allowed your holy apostle Thomas to doubt the resurrection of your Son until Word and sign convinced him; grant to us who have not seen, that we may believe and so confess Jesus as our Lord and Saviour; who is alive and reigns with you and the Spirit, ever one God in time and space.

All: **Amen** (Church of England 2008)

Reader: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2: 14, 22-32) Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd, "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know - this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.' This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses."

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Move among us Spirit, and gather us together with you. Take our many selves – our lives, our loves, our hopes, our ideas, our questions, our speech, our silence – and unite us as your people. Give us the gifts of perception and understanding, so that even as we dream your dreams and see your visions, we may be able to witness to your presence in our common life.

All: **Amen** (The Reverend Mary Nelson Abbott from The United Church of Christ Worship Ways archive)

Reader: Our psalm for this day of new light and life is Psalm 16

Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you; I have said to the Lord, "You are my Lord, my good above all other." All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, upon those who are noble among the people.

All: **God will not abandon me to the grove.**

Reader: But those who run after other gods shall have their troubles multiplied.

Their libations of blood I will not offer, nor take the names of their gods upon my lips.

All: **God will not abandon me to the grove.**

Reader: O Lord, you are my portion and my cup; it is you who uphold my lot.

My boundaries enclose a pleasant land; indeed, I have a goodly heritage.

All: **God will not abandon me to the grove.**

Reader: I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; my heart teaches me, night after night. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not fall.

All: **God will not abandon me to the grave.**

Reader: My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices; my body also shall rest in hope. For you will not abandon me to the grave, nor let your holy one see the Pit.

All: **God will not abandon me to the grave.** Reader: You will show me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

All: **God will not abandon me to the grave.**

Reader: A reading from the First Letter of Peter (1 Peter 1:3-9)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith - being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Praise be to you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For your great mercy in giving us birth into a new life and a new hope by raising Jesus from the dead; for an inheritance that can never spoil or fade, kept for us in heaven; for the protection of your power which is ours through faith until salvation comes at the end of time; praise be to you, our God and Father. Father, to you be all praise and glory and honour through your Son Jesus.

All: **Amen.**

Fr. Michael: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the Blessed St. John (St. John 20: 19-31)

People: **Glory be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

This is the very Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Homily

Quite a whirlwind they were riding, wasn't it?

Who knew how things would unfold when they gathered in a room in the heart of Jerusalem, in the heart of their religious world at the moment of Passover? Who knew how things would unfold as He took bread and wine and imbued them with a sacredness unknown before that moment and then ordered them to engage in the most easy and at the same time most difficult ministry of all – loving others and as importantly, loving themselves? Who knew how things would unfold when He said, "Come, follow me" and they climbed the Mount of Olives to enter His hideaway place in the Holy City, the garden called Gethsemane as the sun began to descend over the dome of the great Temple? Who knew how things would unfold as he left them to guard things and he wept over the life and death decision of being a faithful child of the Creating One and would be arrested for his courageous foolishness? Who knew how things would unfold as He was led before all the power of Rome and the Temple and stood condemned as the sacrificial lamb and the scape-goat in the Hall of Judgment as Pilatus succumbed to the viciousness of the scream, "Crucify him crucify him"? Who knew how things would unfold as He was raised to the morning sun and left to cry, "Elio, Elio, lama sabbachthani, My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" while his faithful friends refused to stand with him, leaving the legacy of truth-telling to three women, a young man and a secret follower from the Sanhedrin? Who knew how things would unfold as they carried His still body to a virgin tomb and lay Him on a cold stone slab of preparation, vowing to return after Shabbos to properly mourn his death and sit Sheva for Him with His mother and family?

Who knew how things would unfold as they were rudely awakened on the third morning after His arrest, by what they interpreted as the hysteria of Mary crying, "He is risen... I have seen Him; I have spoken with Him; I have been sent to you by Him to tell you that He lives and not to be afraid any more"? Who knew how things would unfold when her song of joy and hope and love was crushed - crushed by the indifference, then the silence and last the spittle of anger raised against her by her so-called brothers of faith and who refused to admit defeat or

wrong in the telling and who simply shook her head in disbelief when they believed only after the MAN Peter went, saw and was conquered by an open grave and an empty tomb, as if to say that God spoke only to the sons of Abraham and not the daughters of Sarah?

Who knew what would unfold as they sat in the heart of unknowing and asked one another, “ Now, what are we to do?”

Two stood, approached Peter and whispered “Farewell” in his ear and turning to The Magdalene, embraced her and wept, “We want to believe but...” and lifted the wooden guardian beam from the mouth of the door and disappeared into the growing shadows of the day.

They were not the first to go, nor would they be the last as time crept like snails on the beach at the Sea of Galilee. One had left before them, on the day of the disaster, when word arrived that the dream had been nailed to a tree. “I’m outa here”, Thomas said. “You know where I’ll be If you want to find me” and with that, he was gone ; gone into the centre of the old city where he found solace and comfort in the arms of his earthly family.

And now, Cleopas was leaving them and those who stayed tsk-tsked and “well I never-ed” against him and Tom. Mary could be forgiven for wives were supposed to follow wherever their husbands went so she was blameless, but these men...these men who once shared bread and drank too much wine with them, who laughed and wept in the desert places, who danced the Hora at the wedding in Cana, who ate multiplied bread and fish on Galilee shore – these men - these deserters - could hang for all they mattered now. They were as dead to them as was Jesus.

Now Cleopas and Mary his wife headed away from the city, walking slowly as they too headed home – home to a place called Emmaus which in Hebrew was known as a place of hot springs to which many from the city travelled the 18 miles to partake of the healing waters. Mary and Cleopas sought a different kind of healing – not that of the body or the mind which might be calmed by the warm currents of the springs – but a healing of the spirit, a binding of the wounds they felt – wounds of abandonment by the One who promised them the world and the moon and the stars, who filled their heads and their hearts with so much hope that they were fairly bustin’ with anticipation. This was the anguish they felt as they trudged their weary way, praying that, once home in the bosom of their past, they might rebuild the lives they had suspended when the Stranger had spoken on the side of that hill so long ago and dared to call them, THEM! Blessed ones.

Thomas and Cleopas and Mary shared the same bottom line if not the same detail story – encountering the Risen One on the road away...Thomas came back after the fellowship had decided that his presence was too precious to just let go and emissaries went to him, begging him to return so they might be healed and would be able to love again; the two Emmaus-bound found their healing and a return to love in the breaking of bread over a scarred tabletop in a wayside tavern on the road home. They too returned to the broken

community because they needed to embrace others who shared their painful and painfilled pilgrimage through the death of Jesus. In the homecoming, the anger and judgment they threw at each other left like smoke in the wind, the wind of the miracle of resurrection the bitterness and hurting they felt towards one another with replaced with a calm, a peacefulness which they had not felt since that Passover Seder when he said to them “Shalom, Peace” and they knew in their hearts that He meant it.

For me, this time of uncertainty and feeling of abandonment is something I have known and experienced in my faith journey home. Like the prodigal son who hoped against hope that he would be forgiven and loved again in spite of his rejection of his family and his faith, I have felt the loneliness and the fear of not knowing what was to come next around the corner – would it be a stranger who invites me to break bread and share wine in a renewed love affair or one who would snort loudly as he passed me by, indifferent to me and my struggle. We will all have these moments of leaving and homecoming again and again as we struggle with our faith and our faithfulness. What gives me hope, and I hope gives hope to you is that even when we walk away from Jesus as did the rich young man in another story told about Him, Jesus will never ever leave us to our own devices and fate but will always be present, quietly holding our hand and leaning with us into God’s future. Alleluia !

Fr. Michael: Filled with new hope, new faith by the resurrection of Jesus, we affirm that “I believe in God,

All: the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Reader: Loving God, you are our Sustainer and Creator. When you open your hands, you satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living being. And so we look to you whenever we are in need, trusting in your love and in your abundant mercy. As you once fed the hungry crowds with five loaves and two small fishes, we ask that you once again fill those who are empty today. Pour out your Spirit on all who hunger and thirst. We pray especially for those who are physically hungry or hurting, those who are suffering from a lack of food or water or shelter, those who are suffering from malnutrition or starvation and those who watch helplessly as loved ones die.

People: **Lord, in your mercy open your hands and pour out your Spirit, so they may be filled.**

Reader: Lord, we remember those of this world who seek love and companionship, those whose lives are filled not with joy but with sorrow; those who long for even a touch of human compassion. We pray for those who seek the lost and the lonely in your name, especially today we pray for Shane, our Bishop; Anne, our Metropolitan; Linda, our Primate; as well as The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, Sacred Circle, the ministry of reconciliation and

National Indigenous Bishop, Sidney Black and Good Shepherd, Barrhaven and the Reverend Margo Whittaker. In our own family here at Holy Trinity, we pray that we may be servants of all and care for those who are wounded, especially Myra, Louise, Marjorie, Richard and Deb L., Howard, Irene, Beth, Roy, Zachariah, Sarah, Jeanette, and Cheryl. We pray for those caught in the grips of depression or overwhelmed by grief.

People: **Lord in your mercy open your hands and pour out your Spirit so they may be filled.**

Reader: We pray for those who are spiritually empty; for those who are troubled but do not know where to turn; those who long for purpose or meaning, but do not know where to look for help and guidance; for those who need you but do not as yet know you.

People: **Lord in your mercy open your hands and pour out your Spirit so they may be filled.**

Reader: God, we praise you and we thank you for all the abundant gifts you have shared with us. Pour out your Spirit on us as well; fill us with your compassion and love, so that we might freely, willingly and joyfully share some of our abundance with those who are in dire need. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, who came so that all humanity might come to know the abundant life that comes from you.

All: **Amen.** (The Reverend Christine Longhurst re:Worship)

Fr. Michael: From the depth of our hearts and from the silent place which lies within your heart and our hearts we pray,

People: **When we keep our faults and failures locked away, we think we have no need to confess. But God comes, comes into our hearts when we least expect so that we can be filled with forgiveness, with hope, with peace. God of empty tombs and empty people: when we hesitate to speak of your hope, forgive us and give us voices. When we find it difficult to love others, forgive us and give us new compassion. When we want to stand with the high and mighty, forgive us and put us next to the poor and the oppressed. When we stay locked behind our own fears and doubts, forgive us and send us out to share your grace. When we cannot or will not believe your Word of new life and new hope, forgive us and fill us with your joy.**

Fr. Michael: Christ comes into every shadowed and sheltered corner of our lives with the light of Easter. Christ comes into the locked rooms of our faults and gifts us with grace and hope. Christ comes to fill us with peace so that we may proclaim his good news of mercy and forgiveness. This we declare in the shalom of God, Father Son and Spirit this day and always.

All: **Amen** (Thom Shuman from Lectionary Liturgies)

Fr. Michael: And the peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you**

WE SHARE THE SHALOM/PEACE OF GOD WITH ONE ANOTHER

Fr. Michael: On my own, what I have to give doesn't amount to much in the light of all that you have given to me and in the face of so much need. Put together as a congregation, what we offer here in love becomes more, not simply added together but somehow multiplied in its

usefulness. We ask you to bless our gifts of time, talent and treasure and with the addition of your blessing, just as it was with the loaves and fishes, so too will there be enough and all and then some to spare.

All: **Amen** (from The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand)

Fr. Michael: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Fr. Michael: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Fr. Michael: It is indeed right to thank you and praise you, holy and gracious God, creator of all things, ruler of heaven and earth, sustainer of life, for you are the source of all goodness, rich in mercy and abounding in love; you are faithful to your people in every generation, and your word endures for ever. Therefore with angels and archangels, with the fellowship of saints and the company of heaven, we glorify your holy name, evermore praising you and singing,

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Fr. Michael: We praise you, merciful Father, not as we ought, but as we are able, because in your tender love you gave the world your only Son, in order that the world might be saved through him. He made you known by taking the form of a servant, healing the sick, liberating the oppressed, reaching out to the lost. Betrayed, reviled, and nailed to the cross, he confronted the power of sin and disarmed it for ever. In his offering of himself, he became the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Redeemed by Christ, we have been adopted as your children; by your pardon you have made us worthy to praise you. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus, at supper with his friends, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, gave it to them, and said, "Take and eat: this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." In obedience to him and with grateful hearts we approach your holy table, remembering our Saviour's sacrifice, and rejoicing in his victory. Confident in his sovereign purpose, we declare our faith.

All: **Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Fr. Michael: Send your Holy Spirit on us that as we receive this bread and this cup we may partake of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving. May we be renewed in his risen life, filled with love, and strengthened in our will to serve others; and make of our lives, we pray, a pure and holy sacrifice, acceptable to you, knitting us together as one in your Son Jesus Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, now and forever.

All: **Amen.**

Fr. Michael: Lord, we died with you on the cross;

People: **now we are raised to new life.**

Fr. Michael: We were buried in your tomb;

People: **now we share in your resurrection.**

All: **Live in us so that we may live in you.**

Fr. Michael: The gifts of God for all the children of our Loving God

People: **Thanks Be To God**

WE SHARE THE GIFTS OF EUCHARIST AND LIFE TOGETHER

Fr. Michael: Father, we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands the bread of life. Strengthen our faith so that we may grow in love for you and for each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Fr. Michael: Lord, we find ourselves in the locked room of ourselves just as the disciples hid behind closed doors. We too are afraid, but perhaps not for the same reasons. But we also need the breathe of the Holy Spirit to take away our fears so that we can come out from behind these locked doors. Lord, we are like Thomas with all our questions and our doubts and we sometimes do need to see in order to believe; we need your presence in order to have faith. Lord, just as Thomas boldly declared that you are his Lord and his God, we boldly claim his vision for our own. Lord, we thank you for all the blessings you have given us and may the doors of our church be open to all and that we create a sign which reads, "Doubters WELCOME".

Amen

All: **Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Fr. Michael: Go now, sent by the One who was sent by God. Walk in the Light; testify to the resurrection of Jesus; forgive the sins of all and live at peace and in shalom with one another. And may God bless you with life forever; may Jesus breathe his Spirit and peace within you; and may the Holy Spirit lead you into the life and light of our Creator God.

Alleluia!

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services.

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