



**CHRIST
CENTRAL
CHURCH**



GOOD MORNING!

Good morning church. Good morning church. If we were worshiping together this morning, our service would have started with this simple responsive reading: “Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!” Even though we can’t say those words together this morning, they’re still true and they’re still worth celebrating.

What story are you living in this morning? Is it a story of pain (from the COVID-19 virus and economic catastrophe) or the Easter story? Actually, the answer is both. As Christians we don’t privilege spiritual realities so much that we act like physical realities don’t matter. This morning, two things are simultaneously true: first, Jesus has risen from the dead and that changes everything. Second, our country (and our world) is hurting.

This year we celebrate Easter as we lament. That’s a strange thing to say. It’s a strange thing to feel. Most of us have never had to lament and celebrate Easter before.

THEN I SAW A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH...AND I HEARD A LOUD VOICE FROM THE THRONE SAYING, ‘BEHOLD, THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD IS WITH MAN. HE WILL DWELL WITH THEM, AND THEY WILL BE HIS PEOPLE, AND GOD HIMSELF WILL BE WITH THEM AS THEIR GOD. HE WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES, AND DEATH SHALL BE NO MORE, NEITHER SHALL THERE BE MOURNING, NOR CRYING, NOR PAIN ANYMORE, FOR THE FORMER THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY.’ (REVELATION 21:1-4)

Today, don’t just celebrate Jesus’ resurrection, practice it. Pull the power of the resurrection into the pain of this pandemic. Process real difficulty with the promise that Jesus’ resurrection guarantees: a new heaven and a new earth is coming in which there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain (Revelation 21:1-4).



CALL TO WORSHIP

Near the beginning of every Christ Central worship service, there is a Call to Worship. The Call to Worship isn't a mini sermon or just a random use of words to get people excited. It's a reminder that God has invited us to worship Him.

Use this Call to Worship prayer to ask God to help you worship Him:

Father, remind us of Your character. You are all knowing, all powerful, without beginning, and without end. You control and rule, and yet, You are mindful of us as Your children. Today, keep our focus on Jesus. Help us rejoice in His birth, reflect on His cross, and celebrate His resurrection. Use the truth of His life and death to make us say and feel, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Holy Spirit, help us to want that. Help us to get to a place where our hearts are so full that they overflow and we say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

Read **Psalm 103** aloud and remember the grace of God.

***1** Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! **2** Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, **3** who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, **4** who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, **5** who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. **6** The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. **7** He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. **8** The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. **9** He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. **10** He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor*

*repay us according to our iniquities. **11** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; **12** as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. **13** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. **14** For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. **15** As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; **16** for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. **17** But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, **18** to those who keep his covenant and*

remember to do his commandments. **19** The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. **20** Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! **21** Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! **22** Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!



HISTORIC CONFESSION

Christians throughout history have written short statements that summarize the gospel and basic Christian beliefs in just a few sentences. One of these statements written sometime in the 4th century is called the Apostles Creed. Read this creed aloud and remember the good news of our faith.

*I believe in God the Father
Almighty maker of Heaven and Earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord;
He was conceived by 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;
One holy church;
The communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body;
And the life everlasting. Amen.*



PRAYER

We believe in the power of prayer because we believe in the power of God. God in His wisdom has called His people to pray and when we pray in humility and expectation, God moves. Therefore, spend time praying, using these focuses as a guide for your prayers:

- 1) Thank God for the good news of Jesus' resurrection.
 - Thank you for freely and gladly sending Jesus to die on the cross for us.
 - Thank you for the forgiveness and the victory and the power that we have in Him.
 - Open our eyes even more to the good news of the gospel.

- 2) Pray for our city in this time of crisis.
 - Pray for those who are sick and those whose jobs are impacted by COVID-19.
 - Ask God to quickly and miraculously stop the spread of this virus.
 - Pray for healthcare workers and emergency personnel. Ask God to give them safety, energy, and protection.

- 3) Pray for spiritual good coming out of this virus.
 - Ask God to awaken the Church and to make us who He's called us to be.
 - Pray fear and anxiety would draw people to God.
 - Pray that this crisis would lead to revival in our community (and country).



SERMON AND DISCUSSION

Read John 11:1-44

¹ Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴ But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." ¹¹ After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." ¹² The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." ¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶ So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

¹⁷ Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰ So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” **29** And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. **30** Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. **31** When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. **32** Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” **33** When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. **34** And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” **35** Jesus wept. **36** So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” **37** But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. **39** Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.” **40** Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” **41** So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. **42** I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.” **43** When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” **44** The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

- 1) How is the difficulty of this season affecting your spiritual, emotional, and physical health?
- 2) What does this passage teach us about Jesus?
- 3) What do we learn in this passage about how to deal with pain?
- 4) What can we learn from the way Jesus handled pain—in this story and on the cross?
- 5) Why is the resurrection of Jesus good news?
- 6) How should the reality of Jesus’ resurrection inform our perspective on pain?
- 7) How should the promise of our own future resurrection inform our present struggle with pain?
- 8) How should the reality of Jesus’ resurrection and the hope of our own resurrection move us to action and bring hope where we live today?



B E N E D I C T I O N

End by reading aloud this benediction from **Hebrews 13:20-21**:

***20** Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great - shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, **21** equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*



STAY CONNECTED

This certainly is a unique moment in our world. But Jesus is still building His church and He is going to remain faithful to us in the midst of the uncertainty. This we know: that He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6). So, for now, here's a couple of things you can do to stay connected:

- 1) If you're not already, please subscribe to our weekly email so that you can receive updates and information from Christ Central Church. If you'd like to be added to this list, email [Scott](#) or [Chris](#).
- 2) Follow us on Facebook ([@christcentralokc](#)), Instagram ([christcentralokc](#)), or visit our website ([christcentralokc.com](#)). We will do our best to post at these places to keep you informed of changes and happenings.
- 3) Practice hospitality. Now is a time to demonstrate the hospitality of God to those around us. Here are a couple of ways you can do this:
 - Check in on your neighbors—run errands for them if they can't get out.
 - Reach out to members of your Missional Community to see how you can meet needs and pray for one another.
- 4) Continue to give. You can give online at [christcentralokc.com](#). Physical giving can be sent to:

Christ Central Church
2715 NW 50th St.
Oklahoma City, OK. 73112

**If you have any needs or begin to feel sick—please do not hesitate to call Scott at 405-229-9053 or Chris at 580-309-0883. We are committed to serving you, no matter what.*

We will keep you posted about plans for future Sunday gatherings. Thank you for your patience and understanding and let's continue to make much of Jesus!