

The Vigil of the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord  
St. Matthew 28:1-7  
April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

He Is Risen from the Dead

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, we have followed our Lord through His suffering and death this week. We have processed with Him to His crucifixion and death. He suffered and died on the tree of the holy cross to atone for the sins of the whole world, so that all those who believe on Him might have forgiveness, life and salvation. He was crucified, dead, and buried. Joseph of Arimathea had gone to Pontius Pilate and asked for the body of our + Lord Jesus after His death. He, and Nicodemus who had first come to Him at night, prepared His body for burial with a mixture of myrrh (one of the gifts given to Him by the Magi after His birth) and aloes, about a hundred pounds. They wrapped the body of our Lord + Jesus in strips of linen (just like He was wrapped by His mother Mary in swaddling strips of cloth at His birth). He was placed in a new tomb in a garden that was near to where He had suffered and died. His body was placed in the new tomb in which no one yet had been laid, and a large stone was placed over the tomb.

Witnessing these events were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Joses, Salome, and other women. They saw the place where our Lord + Jesus was buried. They saw the new tomb, where no one else had been laid. They saw the stone rolled in front of the tomb. They bore witness to the burial of their dead Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ; the One Whom they had hoped was the Messiah come to redeem His people, Israel. Before the Sabbath on Friday night, they went and bought spices and fragrant oils with which they hoped they might use to anoint the body of the Lord + Jesus after the Sabbath.

The Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew writes in his Gospel that “after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.” The procession that began with our Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and which led to His betrayal, arrest, trial, sufferings, crucifixion and death brought us to His tomb after His crucifixion on Good Friday. Our procession brought us to the tomb where our Lord + Jesus was laid, in which on the Sabbath He rested from all His labors. Now on the first day of the week, while it is still dark before the dawn, as the sun was just coming up, at the end of the evening after the Sabbath, our procession follows Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to our Lord’s tomb.

What they see there is unbelievable. There had been a great earthquake, just like at our Lord’s death when the veil in the temple was torn in two, and the graves of those who believed were opened, and who appeared openly to all in Jerusalem after our Lord’s resurrection. Here the earthquake was

the result of an angel of the Lord descending from Heaven and rolling back the stone from the door of the tomb. There the women saw that angel sitting on the stone, and his countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow, just like our Lord + Jesus had appeared at His transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah had come to discuss His upcoming death and resurrection. The guards who the chief priests and scribes had placed there in hopes of preventing any spread of “rumors” about a resurrection were shaken with fear and became as dead men.

This is the scene that the women were greeted with when they came to our Lord’s tomb. Nothing was as they had expected it to be. Then the angel of the Lord proclaimed the good news with which we also rejoice on this night when we wait—we hold Vigil—for our Lord’s resurrection morning. The angel preached that there was no need to be afraid, for the Lord + Jesus Whom they were seeking, Who had been crucified, was no longer there in the grave. The Lord + Jesus had risen from the dead. The Lord and Savior of the two Marys was no longer dead. He has risen from the dead. The Lord + Jesus showed once and for all time that He has conquered death. Just had He had previously done with Lazarus just prior to His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, our Lord shows His power over death and the grave.

Death cannot contain our Lord. Death cannot contain anyone who trusts in the Lord + Jesus and His works and merits. Death has no power over us any longer. Death is defeated. Death is conquered. Our Lord + Jesus has defeated death and the grave by His death and the grave. There is now no need to fear death any longer, for our Lord has opened the graves of all those who cling to Him in faith. Our Lord + Jesus has risen from the dead. He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns in Heaven for all eternity.

On Holy Monday and Tuesday, we had heard our Lord proclaim that now was the hour for the Son of Man to be glorified. The whole world would be drawn to Him. The whole Christian Church on Earth rejoices this night, for we are drawn to Him because He has shown that He has the victory over death and the grave. We have forgiveness of all our sins, and we have eternal life with Him. The darkness that covered the whole earth at His crucifixion, and the darkness in which the two Marys came to the tomb where they expected to find the dead body of the Lord + Jesus, is now dispelled. For the Light of the world, our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, has dispelled all darkness with His marvelous light. He has caused the dawn to shine upon the world. He has caused the sun to arise.

Now has we sit in the darkness of this night—in the darkness of this world—we hold our lighted candles that dispel the darkness of this night. Indeed, these candles represent the light that is in this world that dispels the darkness of this sinful and evil world. This night the Church shines with the radiance of her Lord and Savior; with the radiance of the Light of the Christ. For we stand in the darkness of this world as a beacon of light to all those who are shaken with fear over their sin and looming death. We stand at the foot of the cross of our Lord and preach that our Lord atoned for the sins of all mankind with His death. We stand at the door of the opened tomb and preach that the Lord + Jesus has conquered sin and death, and opened the graves of all those who believe on Him. We, the Church, stand with the angel of the Lord and preach to this lost world, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek + Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”

My dear friends, let us go quickly into all the world with this great good news of our Lord, and preach the Word of God in its truth and purity, and administer the Sacraments according to our Lord’s institution. For by these means the Holy Ghost creates and sustains faith in those who hear and believe. These means are the light in the world that dispels the darkness, and brings light and hope to all those who sit in darkness and in the fear of death. Let us continue to bring this good news—let us continue our procession out into this world with the Gospel—of our Lord’s redemption to all those who would hear and believe. For all those who believe will receive the crown of eternal life, and they will have a countenance like lightning, and their clothes will become as white as snow, as they, and we, are given

new and glorious bodies to dwell with our Lord forever in Heaven. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory! I will extol Thee, O Lord, and I will praise Thy Name forever and ever. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*