

Crucifixion & Resurrection

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Please enjoy the service and have a good day.

Good morning. That was pretty good. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

[2 : 05] Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Oh, Lord, we pray that this service of worship to you will be a blessing, that we may experience your joy in your presence as we praise your holy name.

Amen. Amen. I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together. We have a story to tell to the nations. We have a story to tell to the nations that shall turn their hearts to the right.

A story of truth and mercy, a story of peace and light, a story of peace and light.

[3 : 33] For the darkness shall turn to the dawning, and the dawning to new day bright. And Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth, the kingdom of love and light.

We've a message to give to the nations that the Lord who reigneth above has sent us his Son to save us And show us that God is love, and show us that God is love.

For the darkness shall turn to the dawning, and the dawning to new day bright. And Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth, the kingdom of love and light.

We've a Savior to show to the nations who the path of sorrow has tried.

That all of the world's great peoples might come to the truth of God. Might come to the truth of God.

[4 : 58] For the darkness shall turn to the dawning, and the dawning to new day bright.

And Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth, the kingdom of love and light.

Let's join together in professing our faith as contained in the Old and New Testaments. Do you believe in God the Father?

Do you believe in Jesus Christ? I believe in Jesus Christ, the only Son of our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under the conscience of the Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He ascended to the dead. On the third day he rose again, he ascended into heaven, deceived at the right hand of the Father, and with long hand to judge the living in the dead.

[6 : 02] Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? 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. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Please be seated. And if you're looking for a seat, there's plenty up front here. Good morning.

My name is Erin, and I'm a member at PCUMC. You've probably heard me or seen me around. This Wednesday, April 25th, is World Malaria Day. Most, if not all of you, know that malaria kills hundreds of millions of people each year.

What you probably don't know is that 90% of the people who die from malaria are under the age of 5. According to the statistics, by the time I'm done speaking, 6 children will have died from malaria.

It's a horrible disease, but the worst part is that it's fully treatable. Most of the deaths that occur from malaria don't need to happen. But even worse than that, the typical treatment costs \$3.

[7 : 06] \$3. Please. I'd like to ask each and every one of you to say a prayer for the kids who are living in today's conditions that can't afford the \$3. The United Methodist Church supports the eradication of malaria through its imagined no malaria fund.

They distribute bed nets for prevention and test kits around the world, and they provide funds for treatment where they can. As some of you know, I was fortunate enough to go to Ghana, Africa over the Easter break for the second time to teach at Azizakbe Elementary School, a rural school on an island with no water and no electricity.

By God's will, my relationships with the children at the school and other local community members were rekindled while I was there. And, of course, it was an amazing experience. I and many of my co-travelers were looking forward to seeing one particular little boy who we had met in 2017.

His name was Lawe. He was four years old. He was too young to be in school, but he was always hanging around the schoolyard anyway. He was a bold little kid who always enjoyed showing off for everyone, especially for the camera.

He loved to dance, and he loved being the center of attention. You can only imagine our shock and sadness when we found out Lawe had died. He contracted a fever and died of malaria. His mother could not afford the \$10 boat ride to get him to the next island's clinic.

[8 : 27] This is the story of the Azizakbe Island, but there are many other villages all around the world just like his. Hello. Good morning. How are you?

Thank you. I'm here today as a part of Lawe's legacy to do what I can do to help spread the word that malaria is real and that it kills people every day. And at least one of those people was my friend.

It doesn't need to happen. I ask God and you, if it's in your hearts, to please help me and the United Methodist Church to save the children just like Lawe and to save my new Ghanaian friends.

Thank you. Thank you, Erin. And there is an envelope in your bulletin, so if you're so moved by the Holy Spirit, we do ask you to give to the No More Malaria Fund.

We have a couple of clipboards being passed around. The one is for the 30-hour famine. That is where kids will fast for 30 hours and raise awareness for hunger around the world and poverty and different issues with that.

[9 : 32] And then they feast at the end, so they need food for that. And then there's also one for the prayer vigil coming up, so please take a moment to do that. I highly recommend you to participate in the prayer vigil. It is a very moving experience, and it does draw you closer to God in powerful ways.

You know, there's just so much to be thankful for. The sun is shining, and we are so blessed. And I'd love to hear from you today what you are feeling this day as you walk in with gratitude in your hearts to God.

What are you thankful for? Yeah, Carol. Carol. Her grandnephew, who had brain surgery for a tumor, had successful surgery, and he's doing well.

So thank you for that, and praise God. Yeah. Spring. It's finally here. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. They told us it was coming, you know.

What else? Oh, come on. The Menahem. Yeah. Yeah. Sandy.

[10 : 49] Sandy had a bone marrow transplant, and it's starting to produce its own blood now, which is a huge praise. So Sandy's doing well.

That's wonderful. Yeah. God is so good, and I pray that as we come forward to give our gifts, tithes, and offerings, that we'll do it with a thankful heart.

What are you thankful for, Karen? I was thankful for that. Mm-hmm. I was thankful for that. Yes.

So new birth and lambs and chickens and all sorts of things. You know, we see God's movement everywhere. So as we return our gifts, tithes, and offerings, be thankful and be grateful for God's goodness.

Oh, amen.

[11 : 51] River attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll.

Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, Let this blessed assurance control, That Christ has regarded my helpless estate, And has shed His own blood for my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought, My sin not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more.

[14 : 11] Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul.

And Lord, haste the day, when the faith shall be slight, The clouds be rolled back as a scroll, The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend, Even so, it is well with my soul.

It is well, it is well, it is well with my soul. With my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.

And Lord, haste the day, when the Lord shall be alive, And the Lord shall be alive, And the Lord shall be alive, And the Lord shall be alive, And the Lord shall be alive, And the Lord shall be alive, Lord, you are so good, and we are so grateful.

[16 : 25] We give back to you a portion, a reflection of the heart, A reflection of our commitment and dedication to you. And may these gifts be blessed by you, For the transformation of the world.

For it's in your name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. We do have some prayer concerns to lift up to you today From our church family.

We continue to pray for Sandy. It's a long road, but we're thankful that she's doing well. Please also pray for Irene Tate. She had her hip surgery finally.

Yay! But, you know, that's a long road of recovery. So please pray for Irene. Also, pray for Dave Johnson. He has unfortunately returned to Roswell.

And pray for Victoria Fuller. This is the daughter of Scott and Karen Janes. And she is having a really difficult time with her pregnancy And not doing well. So please pray for her as well.

- [17 : 25] And that whole family and her husband and all. Do we have any other prayer concerns to lift up? Yeah, Tom. Hospital again with convulsive heart failure.
- But she is on the mens. So continue to pray for Jan Gertz. Yeah. Judy. Judy, Gary, and John.
- Our country. That we may return to the Lord. Absolutely. Yeah. Traveling mercies for Mark.
- Anyone else? Okay. Let's turn to our God. Lord. Gracious and loving Lord, we come to you this day.
- Rejoicing in your goodness. Praising your name. And trusting in you for all things. Lord, we pray that if there be any doubt, any fear in our hearts, that you will bind it up and cast it out.
- [18 : 28] That you will fill our hearts with your light. Give us your hope and your peace and your presence. We pray for those in our hearts, Lord.
- People who need healing in their bodies. Lord, we pray that your hand will be upon them. And they will receive your healing in their bodies. We pray for wholeness and wellness.
- Be with those who are in caregiving positions. People caring for them, for doctors and nurses. Give them your discernment. Give them your wisdom. Give them your strength.
- Lord, we pray for people who are going through struggles physically. That you will lift them up. That discouragement will not take hold.
- Lord, we pray for those who are in mourning. Who have heavy hearts. That they may receive your peace and your comfort. That they will be surrounded by a community of people.
- [19 : 29] Who will love them and care for them. Lord, we pray for those who are struggling in every area of their lives. With financial difficulties.
- With marriage struggles. With families. With mental illness. Anxiety. Depression. Lord, we place them all in your hands. And we pray that you will come and dwell in the people.
- Give healing to the people. Give healing to the people. Open up all of our hearts. All of our minds. All of our ears. That we may receive you in a powerful way. To be transformed in your likeness.
- That the fullness of your power will be received by us. And if anything, be blocking it. Lord, we pray that you'll cast it out. May the darkness subside. Lord, we do pray for our country.
- That this country will see your light and turn to you. And be with our leaders and give them your wisdom and your direction. Lord, we pray for our church.
- [20 : 35] That this church may be a beacon of light in this community and in the world. That you will lead us in a bold way to proclaim your name. Bind us together in your community.
- Praising you at all times. For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Now let's hear from the word of the Lord. Good morning.
- Today's scripture reading is taken from the book of 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 3-7 and 23-27.
- Good morning. Good morning. Today's scripture reading is taken from the book of 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 3-7 and 23-27.
- For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance. That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. That he was buried.
- [21 : 50] That he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures. And that he appeared to Cephas and then to the twelve. After that he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time.

Because somehow wrapped up in the death of Christ on the cross was a plan of God. In Mark chapter 10, Jesus talks about it before his crucifixion. He says, we're going to Jerusalem.

And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles. We'll mock him, spit on him, flog him, and kill him.

It's going to happen. I'm going to die. I'm going to the cross. Wow. That's tough language to even hear, nonetheless, to live. And it says that he died.

In verse 4, it says, he was buried. He's not just dead. It's not a pretend dead. He's dead, dead, and not coming back dead. In the ground, buried. Dead.

[27 : 49] Jesus went to the place of the dead. Sometimes in the creed, in some churches, they say he descended into hell. Anybody ever hear it that way?

And people say, what does that mean? What's that all about? We can look in the Bible and in 1 Peter chapter 3 and chapter 4, it talks about the faith being preached to those who are now dead.

So some people think that Jesus actually went down into hell and preached to those who were in hell. But the scripture doesn't really say that. It says that he was dead.

That he went to the place of the dead. He descended into Hades. Hades was the Greek term for the people who were dead. Some went to a good place.

Some went to a bad place. He died. In fact, that part of the creed wasn't even in the creed until about 4 or 5 or 600 years after the church made the creed.

[28 : 49] It's kind of interesting in and of itself. But all it really says is that he was dead. And he was dead. I had a friend who went to Africa and he said over there they have a term for dead. Which means somebody who's almost dead.

You know, like in a coma or something. They could come back. And then there's people that are dead dead. Those are people that, you know, they actually, their hearts stopped and they're not living.

But maybe if you put the paddles on them, you could bring them back. You know what I'm talking about? But then there's people that are dead dead and not coming back dead. And they've got a term for that too. Jesus was dead dead and not coming back dead.

Because of us. Because of our sin. Because of what we did wrong. Because of who we were in Isaiah. Chapter 53. Written before Jesus.

Surely he took our pain and bore our suffering. Yet we considered him punished by God. Stricken by him. Afflicted. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was on him.

[29 : 50] He was crushed. Because of what we did wrong. Bad enough to be crushed for what we do wrong ourselves. But for somebody else to be crushed for us.

What does it mean that Jesus died? What does it mean if Jesus is God that God died? How can that even be? How do we get our minds to wrap around that? Well he died to who he was.

He died to who he was. He was perfect. No problems. No problems. I mean everything went right.

Like you see in the HGTV shows. No problems. No worries. No concerns. Everything is perfect. The people in North Carolina. They have no problems. Right? That's where everybody moves there.

Right? Everything is perfect there. You know what I'm talking about. Not like Buffalo. Right? God had absolutely perfect everything.

[30 : 46] No problems. No pain. No worry. No troubles. Nothing wrong. None of that stuff. God had nothing but perfect. And then he took ours.

And Peter it says to us. He himself bore our sins. In his body on the cross. So that we might die to sins. And live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

He loved us so much. And wanted us so much to be healed. And made perfect. That he took all that pain. All that brokenness we carry. All that disappointment. All that hurt.

All that evil. All that's broken about us. He took it all. And absorbed it. And somehow because he's God. He could make us perfect without destroying himself.

You know. It's a really weird job being a pastor. There's a lot of good things about it. But one of the things that's a struggle is. Everybody tells me everything wrong in their lives.

[31 : 49] I mean all day long. Person after person after person after person after person. Often times when I go home. Just like anybody else. My wife will ask me. So how was your day?

And I'll tell you. I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to go back through all that stuff. I'm like an emotional shock absorber for the world. You know. Tell me your troubles and I'll smile anyways.

I'm not complaining. I'm not trying to say oh poor me. Don't hear that. I mean that's just a really tiny little thing that I do. God does it for everybody all the time.

To the deepest and darkest point. I only get little bits of it. God gets it all. Paul says this is the most essential.

The number one thing of Christianity. What's most important is Christ died. For our sins. We like to think the resurrection is the number one thing.

[32 : 47] Easter is number one. But the truth is you can't have Easter without Good Friday. You see. So we have to go through the cross. And life can feel a lot like Good Friday. Can't it?

Amen. It can feel sometimes like we're broken. And it's hard. And we're afraid. There's a lot of anger out there in the world right now. People fighting.

The world is getting scary. You know the world countries are electing dictators. They're voting for kings. That's what they're doing. Look at it around the world. They're electing kings and emperors.

Why? Because they're afraid. They want a strong man. They want somebody who will take the reins of power and keep them safe. Because this world is getting scary. Too many changes.

Too much brokenness. And it's hard when you've got to live in brokenness. I've told some of you this story before. But you know I only have my stories. So you've got to hear them once in a while again and again.

[33 : 43] And my mother and father were like that perfect couple. You know? He was a young man returning from the war in World War II.

She was a young teeny bopper who caught his eye. And if you see pictures of them, they're like movie stars. They had two kids, a boy and a girl. Life was good.

And they went out dancing and she was probably all of about 26. And it was the last night that she ever could dance with her two legs again.

The next morning she woke up and she couldn't move. She was paralyzed from here down. My father had to carry her everywhere she went. It's something called polio. We don't deal with it. It's something called polio.

It's something called polio. It was devastating back then. If you can imagine a young family with two little children at home. And all of a sudden she can't do anything.

[34 : 41] He's carrying her around. He has to go to work to pay the bills. They had to send my brother to one grandparent and my sister to another one. While she tried to figure out how to rearrange her life and start over, she ended up with one leg totally paralyzed.

So she could never walk like you and I do. She couldn't pick up her babies and go across the room. She couldn't chase out into the road if one of them got in the street. She'd never get there fast enough.

Do you follow? It's devastating when things like this happen to a family. When you feel that kind of like disappointment. You know, my father was a hero to me in that he never complained.

Not once did I ever hear him. Ever. Ever. Back in that day, if he would have walked away from her, everybody would have understood. He not only did walk away, he never complained.

That's love, by the way. You go through the brokenness with someone. But that doesn't mean we like the brokenness or we embrace the brokenness. We don't like the brokenness.

[35 : 50] It hurts. It's hard. It's destructive. And so Paul is facing these people that are saying there's no resurrection. Why even bother? There's no point to it.

They would quote even from the Bible. Isaiah. In chapter 22, it says, The Lord, the Almighty, called on you that day to weep and wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth.

But see, nobody cares. There's joy and revelry. Slaughtering of cattle, killing of sheep, eating of meat, drinking of wine. Let's eat and drink, you say, for tomorrow we die. Who cares? This is all just made up nonsense and none of it matters.

Just enjoy your life as much as you can because pretty soon you're going to be worm food. Ouch. In verse 22, it says to us, For as in Adam, all die.

As in Adam, just like Adam, because of sin, we all die. The wages of sin is death. And not only do we die, we've messed up the whole world with it.

[36 : 54] Everything in creation is broken because of our sin. Because of what we did. Again, Isaiah talks about this. He says to us, The earth dries up and withers.

The world languishes and withers. The heavens languish with the earth. The earth is defiled by its people. They have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse consumes the earth.

And its people must bear their guilt. You all know what broke Buffalo? You know what broke all these corporations?

Very simple. It was the people involved in these corporations. Every one of them. From the people that owned it to the people who worked in it. Everybody said, Give me more.

Give me more. Give me more. Give me more. Give me more. Give me more. Give me more. Everybody had to have a little more. Some of them had to have a lot more. Until eventually there was nothing left. And they just shattered.

[37 : 56] All the people who owned them, they didn't care. They had their money. They were already gone. The people who worked in them, who had such great jobs, now had no jobs. Everybody had to have a little bit more, a little bit more.

Until it destroyed the whole thing. And we ended up with nothing. They had forgotten community. They didn't care about the people. Nobody cared about anything but themselves.

James, in the first chapter, says to us, Each person is tempted when they're dragged wide by their own evil desire. And enticed. Then after desire is conceived, it gives birth to sin.

And sin, when it's fully grown, gives birth to death. You broke it. You broke this world. I broke this world. Our sin destroyed everything.

It's all your fault. Have I gotten you depressed enough yet? In Adam, it says, all die.

[38 : 55] But it also says, in Christ, all will be made alive. In fact, in verse 20, Paul says, Indeed, Christ has been raised from the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep.

There is good news. He is risen. He is risen indeed. He is risen indeed.

And we know that because we're Easter people. Saturday night congregation had trouble with this. They don't come to Easter. I never thought about it. They don't know how to say he's risen indeed because they've not done that.

We're Easter people. We know that it didn't end with Jesus dead, dead, and buried. It says, on the third day, he rose again.

He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. That's why God had to make everything with his left hand because Jesus is sitting on his right hand. You see, God's left handed.

[40 : 01] Oh, that's about as bad as it gets, isn't it? Christ rose from the grave.

The first fruits. He's the one who's raised from the dead. And everyone will be raised on judgment day to stand before God. And where was Jesus on Holy Saturday?

What did he say to the thief on the cross? Today you will be with me in paradise. See, in the place of the dead, Hades, there was a bad place which we call hell.

But there was also the good place which we call paradise. And that's where Jesus was. That's where Jesus was. It says so right in the Bible. Today you will be with me in paradise.

That's where Jesus was. And that's where Jesus wants us all to go. So we go to the resting place of paradise. You see in a couple different verses here, they talk about falling asleep.

[41 : 04] In verse 6 and again in verse 20, they talk about falling asleep. That's what that RIP means on the tombstones. Rest in peace. Because while we await that judgment day, we rest in paradise.

We rest. From all that we've done, we get a long nap. Which I like naps. I don't know about any of you. They're pretty cool. What happens in that is another sermon story.

But the point is that God gives the victory in the resurrection. It says in verse 26 that the last thing, the last enemy that he overcomes is death.

Because life is God's currency. Life is what God lives in. Life is what God intends for all of us. Because God has not forgotten you.

Even if your life feels broken. Even if you live in western New York. Even if you feel like life is ripping you apart. God hasn't forgotten you at all.

[42 : 12] Why should I feel discouraged? Why should the shadows come? Why should my heart be lonely? And long for heaven and home.

With Jesus. When Jesus is my portion. Yeah, I've got cheat notes up there. I'm not doing it very well. My constant friend is he. You know this song?

His eye is on the sparrow. And I know he's watching me. God hasn't forgotten us.

God is still the God of the resurrection. God is still the one who rose from the grave. He is risen. You'll get there.

It just takes a little while. Got to remember Easter. That was a couple weeks ago. I know. I know. It's a long way back. The truth is Jesus overcame sin. Jesus overcame death.

[43 : 12] It says that he even overcame all the powers and authorities that we think are so powerful in this world. All the things we think matter Jesus just wipes away. And that was God's plan from the beginning.

There was a battle in World War II called the Battle of the Bulge. It was an interesting battle because what happened was the Germans threw all the resources they had towards the Allied troops.

And a strange thing happened. They started pushing back the Allied forces. Now the Germans had no delusion that they could win the war. They had already discerned that the war was over and there was no way they could find victory.

But they figured if they could push the Allied troops enough that the Allied troops might just be willing to settle for an armistice instead of total defeat.

So they took everything they had and made one last push. And it was not a small push. And there were soldiers from our country that were dying in the battlefield.

[44 : 19] It hurt our forces. People lost so much. And it would not have surprised anyone if in the face of those panzer tanks if our troops would have run.

But they didn't. They fought. They knew that they had won the war. And all they had to do was take this one last battle.

Do you understand we've already won the war? Do you understand God has already declared victory? Do you understand that Satan has been cast out of heaven and no longer has a place of authority or power?

Do you understand the war is over? Do you understand the war is over? Do you understand the war? But these battles we face, these struggles, these little problems and difficulties that we run into, and I know they don't seem small to us, but they're that battle that tests us to see if we'll be there for the final victory.

God is calling us to hold on, to be strong. Easter is the victory. It says that he died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day.

[45 : 35] Easter is the victory. Easter is the victory that reminds us that we are Christians, the follower of the one who will win the war.

Amen? Amen. And victory is in our grasp, just like Buffalo. Who would guess? Move over Boston and New York City because Buffalo now has the hottest construction market in the region, adding more construction jobs than any other major city in the Northeast.

7 Eyewitness News reporter Sierra Johnson tonight explains how Western New York is once again seizing the possible. The construction boom in the Queen City can be seen just about everywhere.

From the growth and development on the waterfront to the medical corridor in the city's Fruit Belt District. And according to the latest employment figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the spike in development means a spike in Buffalo construction jobs.

What? Buffalo is the hottest construction market in the Northeast? What? What? They can't be talking about our Buffalo.

[46 : 56] That's not possible. We know it's just a devastated... Have you been downtown lately? How many of you have gone downtown? I'm going to tell you it doesn't look like our city.

I walk around down there and I go, What? What is this place? Where did that building come from? Every time I go there, there's a new building somewhere. And that waterfront is pretty cool. You sit with the shark girl, right?

You don't get your picture taken. Pretty sweet. Buffalo is back. Isn't that cool? Wait long enough and anything turns around.

But you have to have hope. You've got to be willing to go through the struggles and get to the other side. And there is hope. And the power of hope is amazing. It's spring.

Amen? It's spring. Hallelujah! I know. You were starting to wonder if we were going to have the never-ending winter. You knew. You knew. Tell me you didn't know.

[47 : 52] You knew. Deep down. You knew. You knew it was going to come, right? We know spring will come. I mean, it may have been put off for a little while. It might have been bugging us. We'd walk out and go, What? This is crazy.

But we knew. Spring would come. Because we've seen it. Year after year. How many of you ever remember a time when spring didn't come? It always comes.

A new day dawns. If there is a crucifixion, there is a resurrection. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.

And so what's our job? Well, it's fascinating because it says right in here. They were all witnesses. In fact, Paul says, I need to pass this message on to you. This is the truth.

I need to share. I need to tell it to James. It says there were hundreds of people. Not a few people. We tend to think that maybe ten people saw Jesus. It says like five, six hundred people at a time would see him.

[48 : 52] Lots of people saw Jesus. They knew that faith. They knew that power. And God calls us to be the same witnesses to his power and his strength.

I refuse to be a witness to anger and arguments and fights and negative thought and going around and attacking each other. I refuse to participate in the conversations of the enemy.

It is our job to be emissaries of hope. Amen? Amen. Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise, when songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies, I draw the closer to him.

From care he sets me free. His eye is on the sparrow. And I know he's watching me.

I sing because I'm happy. I sing because I'm free. His eye is on the sparrow.

[50 : 01] And I know you can't sing in the key. I'm singing. We are witnesses. God will be raised from the dead.

Spring has come. Sometimes, when I'm listening to all the troubles, I wonder, how does it turn out that I have a personality that can do that?

And I was thinking about it the other day, and I said, you know, I know where it came from. Because every day, I watch my mother get up and exercise that broken leg.

Every day, she'd exercise a leg that didn't work. Every day, she'd get up and she'd make meals and she'd make happiness for everyone around her. My mother never was the kind of person to complain.

She was always smiling. She lit up the world around her. She was joy walking on four legs. I'm going to tell you how much of a joy she was.

[51 : 03] She was 82 years old. She had a boyfriend in North Carolina and a boyfriend in Buffalo. And she had another one who proposed to her. And she said no. And he moved back to New England. What kind of lady in a wheelchair has got three guys chasing after her?

Hello? Hello? Somebody that just exudes joy. And that's where I think it came to me. It doesn't matter how broken your life looks.

We've got to be people who find a way to live into the hope of the resurrection. Amen? So 1 Corinthians 15 ends this way. It says, listen, I will tell you a mystery.

We will not all sleep, but we'll all be changed. In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

For the perishable must clothe itself with imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. And when the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that it is written will come true.

[52 : 04] Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin. The power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, He gives us the victory.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our victory. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

All this pain, I wonder if I'll ever find my way. I wonder if my life could really change at all.

All this earth, could all that is lost ever be found? Could a God have come up from this ground at all?

[53 : 33] You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of us.

All around, hope is ringing up from this old ground. Out of chaos, life is being bound in you.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of us.

[54 : 50] You're made zero. You make me new. You make me new You are making me new You make me new You are making me new You make me new You are making me new You make beautiful things

You make beautiful things Out of the dust You make beautiful things You make beautiful things Out of us Does it be your name A land that is plentiful With all the streams of abundant snow Blessed be your name Blessed be your name When I'm found in the desert plain So I walk through the wilderness Blessed be your name

And the blessing you pour out I'll turn back to praise When the darkness closes in, Lord Still I will say Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your glorious name Blessed be your name When the sun's shining down on me The world's all as it should be Blessed be your name Blessed be your name Blessed be your name When the Lord marked with suffering Though there is pain in the offering Blessed be your glory Blessed be our glory Blessed be your glory

When the darkness closes in, Lord Yes, here we go Between the Joel And the sh■■ influence Thank you.

Thank you.

[59 : 07] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. who forgives us all our sins if we just ask. And so as we prepare for the table of grace, I ask you to participate if you are so moved in a prayer of confession to become right once again with God.

Let us pray. Lord, I am a sinner. Lord, I am a sinner. I need your grace. I need your grace. Fill me with your light. Fill me with your love.

Fill me with your love. Help me to walk in victory. Help me to walk in victory. In your joy. In your peace. That I may reflect you.

[60 : 27] In your name we pray. Amen. I hear the good news. Christ died for us while we were still sinners. And this proves God's love for you and for me.

So in the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen.

And now as a forgiven body of Christ, I invite you to share the peace of the Holy Spirit with one another. Thank you, for the wonderful honor. Thank you, Lord.

Yeah, God. Peace, room for you. Good morning, peace. Good morning. Good morning, John. Oh, sorry. Good morning. Good morning. Is that right? Good morning to the Lord? Thank you.

Thank you.

[62 : 13] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Christ invites us to his table to remember the peace that his death, resurrection, and sending of the Holy Spirit has allowed for us to partake in.

As we believe in him, as we trust in him, God wants to be with us in all things. Amen? Come to the table this morning. Meet with Jesus.

You will know him in a new way, a way you've never known him before if you come expecting. Come expecting that you will receive all God has for you this day.

[64 : 35] Everyone is welcome if you love God. Repent of your sin and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ. You are welcome to come. You don't ever have to have come before.

If it's your first time, you're welcome to come and receive what Jesus has for you. The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey, and set before us the way of life.

And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

[65 : 45] 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.

Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

By your great mercy, we have been born anew. To a living hope through the resurrection of your son from the dead. To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread and he gave thanks to you. He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples. He said, take and eat. This is my body, which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. When the supper was over, he took the cup and gave you thanks and praise. He gave it to his disciples saying, drink from this all of you.

[66 : 56] This is the cup of my blood. The blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin. Do this as often as you drink it. In remembrance of me.

And so in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. And on these gifts of bread and wine, make them be for us the body and blood of Christ.

That we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood. By your spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world.

Until Christ comes in final victory. And we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit and your holy church. All honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

[68 : 06] Amen. Shall we pray together with the confidence of children of God the prayer Jesus taught us? Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Amen. Will those who are serving please come forward. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[69 : 21] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

You're welcome to come and light a candle as your prayer. Come and join us. Thank you.

Thank you.

[72 : 26] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[75 : 46] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Oh, hey.

Thank you. And talks with me along my stairway He lives, he lives, salvation to impart You ask me how I know he lives He lives within my heart In all the world around me I see his loving care And though my heart grows weary I never will despair I know that he is leading through all the stormy blast The day of his appearing will come at last He lives, he lives, Christ Jesus lives today He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way

[78 : 18] He lives, he lives, salvation to impart You ask me how I know he lives He lives within my heart If Buffalo, New York can come back If the wasteland of western New York Can be revived into the Mecca of the United States of America Imagine what God can do with you You are not living in destruction You are not condemned to darkness You do not have to accept the brokenness We are on the victorious side We will go to glory, amen?

Christ is risen He is risen indeed Live in that Love in that Go out and share the joy and the hope That God puts in our hearts And be an ambassador For the God of hope The God of spring The God of resurrection The God of life Go in his peace Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen