

**Easter Sunrise Service: April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

Theme: "Where is God?"

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

Where is Jesus? This question is posed by Mary three times in our Gospel Lesson. She asks the disciples, the angels, and a man who she supposes to be the gardener, but quickly learns that it is Jesus.

This question has not gone away. In our world today, many ask the same question. Where is Jesus? In a world that is stricken with war and bloodshed, in places where tyranny, un-rule, unrest, torturing, uprising and violence feed the instrument of terror, where is Jesus?

In countries that treat people lower than animals, in countries where many people have no help, no food, and seem to have no hope; countries plagued with disease and pain, where is Jesus? In cities where crime, poverty, homelessness and darkness reside, where is Jesus? In homes that are torn by anger, violence, abuse and neglect; where is Jesus? In our own bodies, bodies filled with disease, despair, darkness, anxiety, pain, sadness, and hurt, where is Jesus?

In words that give life, words that spoke all creation into existence from nothing, the same word spoke these words from the Cross on Calvary's Hill, "It is finished." With these words Jesus declared the punishment for sin and darkness, death and hell, to be paid for. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. That word was the light of men. Jesus, the Word, came into our darkness, took on our darkness and died. But that light could not be overcome by the darkness. On a Hill Far Away, stood an old, rugged Cross, this we heard a few days ago; that Light has been raised from the dead. "Now all the vault of Heaven resounds, in praise of love that still abounds; 'Christ has triumphed! He is living!' Sing Choirs of angels, loud and clear! Repeat their song of glory here; 'Christ has triumphed!'"<sup>1</sup> There is Jesus.

In word spoken today, word spoken over water, joined with water, bringing a child into God's family, a holy washing bringing a child into the body of Christ, carrying with it the very reality of sin over death and hell for that very child; there is Jesus.

In spoken words of comfort, peace, and forgiveness, words that speak the very proclamation, "you are forgiven of all of your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit;" there is Jesus.

In words lived, words not just spoken but actions taken in love that shine as light in a darkened world, actions reaching out to all and every one in need in any way, actions from the greatest to the least lived out as members of the body of Christ, there is Jesus.

In words that are joined with bread and wine, words that are placed in our mouths, words in our bellies, words that give forgiveness, life, salvation, and strength, words that are not just words, but our food, the food of the sheep, words that carry us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven, words that are the resurrection and the life, in words that cannot be taken away from us, there is Jesus.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.

Now may that peace of God, that light that scatters the darkness, that living word, be and remain with you now and forever, amen.

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<sup>1</sup> LSB 465:1