



PresbyNews

First Presbyterian Church, Richmond, IN

Please enjoy these clips from Pastor LydiaGrace's Easter Sermon, "I have seen the Lord" on John 20:1-18

Do we envy Mary Magdalene on Easter morning? Do we think: "Wouldn't it be nice to be able to say, with Mary's certainty, "I have seen the Lord!" Of course it would be amazing! But, we must remember, we weren't even supposed to know who "the Lord" is. That's why they put him to death. They wanted to put an end to the Lord's message. They wanted to end all rumors that Jesus Christ was the Messiah. They wanted to risk no retaliation from the Romans. The religious leaders in Jerusalem had decided: Jesus was too powerful. His standard of love was too radical. He taught to love your neighbor as yourself. Love your enemy. Love the outcast. Love "the least of these" as if they were God in disguise. All these rejected sinners now knew they were beloved, and they were following Jesus. They were wanting to crown him King. They wanted to turn everything upside-down, destabilize the fragile balance of power, and act on the blessing of holy imagination. With Christ as King, the oppressed could imagine "a world where the weak are protected and none go hungry or poor; a world where the riches of creation are shared, and everyone can enjoy them; a world where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect; a world where peace is built with justice and justice is guided by love." (Justice Prayer of the United Church of Christ) It was dangerous! This message was supposed to die with the messenger on the day humans crucified the Son of God who came to save the world. We were never supposed to know who "The Lord" is.

But, because of the resurrection, the message was not been buried in the tomb.

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We may not be able to hold onto to Jesus the way the disciples did on that first Easter day. But, thanks be to God, we have heard the message Jesus taught, we have heard the witness of Jesus' disciples, and, through the faithfulness of generation upon generation of the church of Jesus Christ, we have inherited the hope of the resurrection. Hope has never died.

We also must remember, after the resurrection, Christ commissions the church, the believers, to *be* the Body of Christ in the world. Teresa of Avila writes: "Christ has no body but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes with which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good."

So, I may not have been by the tomb that morning, but I have experienced the love of Christ through the hands and feet of Christ's followers. In this way, I can say: "I have seen the Lord."

I have seen the Lord...in you.

Have you, too, seen the Lord? In many ways, I know you have. Together, we are the Body of Christ in the world. This is no longer just Mary's story; this is our story.

We have seen the Lord. Hallelujah! Amen

Want to read the full sermon?

Email Pastor LydiaGrace at lydiagrace.espiritu@gmail.com and she will send you all four pages ☐





Birthdays and Anniversaries

**Happy Birthday and/or Anniversary
To all those celebrating in April!**



Here & There



DONATIONS – when making donations to outside organizations, Food Pantry, Genesis, Hope House, etc. *please make checks payable or send cash directly to that organization (not to the church).*

Please let us know! If you, or anyone you know, are in the hospital, grieving, or need our prayers, please call the office, 765.966.2234. This church family **cares for you and yours!**

Youth Sunday - join us as three young people from our congregation join the church on April 21, 2024 .

Book Club

April 15—6:30 PM

“The Giver of Stars”

by JoJo Moyes

May 13—6:30 PM

“Eternal” by Lisa Scottoline

(contact Kathy Stephen to receive discussion questions)

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