

The Parish VISITOR



"Be Transformed...By the renewing of your minds." - Romans 12:2 - NIV

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton St., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298
The REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY, Pastor

cpchollywood.org

APRIL
2024

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your pastor writes

By REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY



Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to all our *Parish Visitor* readers. The following is the message I gave on Resurrection Sunday. I pray it will bless you.

The Empty Tomb, Luke 24:1-12, originally given on March 31, 2024 at CPC

Introduction: Once again let us say, "He is Risen!"

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a foundational belief of the Christian faith. It is the event that sets Christianity apart from all other religions. It is what gives us hope for eternal life with God.

Continued next page

Welcome



JOIN US AT
CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF HOLLYWOOD

In addition to the in-person worship, we continue to stream the service on Zoom for those unable to attend in-person.

The invitation for joining the service can be found at the events page on our website at cpchollywood.org.

You can send in your prayer requests PRIOR to the service via email to sbaroldy@gmail.com or text at 323-202-5078.

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood is an intentional, healing community; proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness of life offered in JESUS CHRIST.

“But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they [meaning Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna] went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.” Luke 24:1-3: (ESV)



Speaking of life, did you see all the beautiful flowers in the garden? I love Spring because Spring always reminds us that resurrection is built into the fabric of creation. Every Spring there is an explosion of colorful blooms. Their amazing fragrance fills the air. And, this explosion of blooms reminds us of the explosion of life that resurrection brings.

Resurrection means no matter how drab, or gray our life seems, the life we have in Jesus is always ready to explode with new colors, new fragrances, and new adventures. Amen!

Today, we will explore Luke 24:1-12, which tells the story of the empty tomb and its significance for our lives. The title of this morning’s message is “The Empty Tomb.”

The Empty Tomb: Fear and Confusion. Let’s begin by re-reading verses 1-3. They read, *“But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they [meaning Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna] went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.”* Luke 24:1-3: (ESV)

The passage begins with the two Mary’s, and Joanna, who had accompanied Jesus during his ministry. They are bringing spices to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body for burial.

To understand the context, here, remember, they, and all the disciples, were shattered by Jesus’ crucifixion and death. Jesus had tried to prepare them. In the gospel of John, chapter 13, Jesus told his disciples he was going away, and they could not follow. Jesus told his disciples one of them would betray him. Jesus told Peter that Peter would deny him. Yet, the disciples couldn’t wrap their heads around what Jesus was telling them.

Jesus knew they were struggling. So, in John 14:1, Jesus gave them a word which would help when the time came. Jesus said, *“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.”* John 14:1 (ESV)

In the original language, the first part of the verse could be translated “never let your hearts be troubled.” How? Jesus says “believe.” “Believe” here means believe and continue believing.

Jesus is saying, “if you hold onto me, if you hold onto your faith in me, then, whatever is happening, your hearts will not be troubled because you know I am always with you.”

So, even though Jesus told them what was going to happen, the disciples were grief stricken over Jesus’ crucifixion and death. They were in deep mourning over the loss of their beloved Savior.



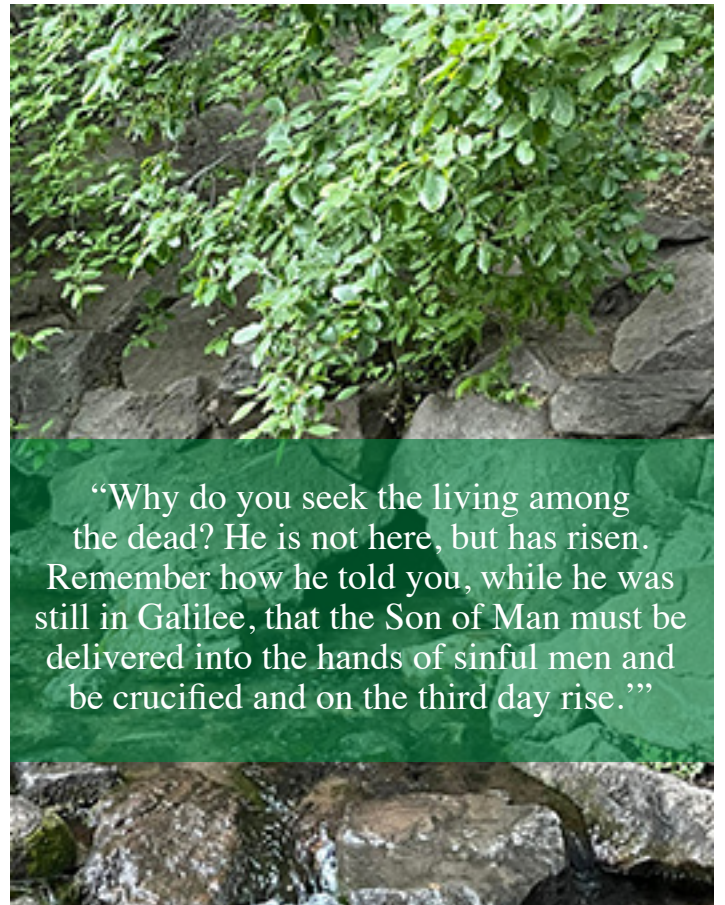
about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise. And they remembered his words.' " Luke 24:4-8, ESV.

So, what was God's response to the women as they faced the empty tomb? What was God's response to the women's fear and confusion? God sent two angels to remind them of Jesus' words.

Here these words again in verses 5-6, "*Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.*"

These words, spoken by angels, must have been a shocking revelation to the women. It was now clear that Jesus' body was not stolen, as some had claimed, but he had indeed risen from the dead, just as he had promised.

Continued next page



Now, these women had seen Jesus' body placed in the tomb and witnessed the sealing of the tomb with a giant stone. And yet, when these women got to the tomb to prepare Jesus' body for burial, they found the stone rolled away and the body of the Lord Jesus missing.

Now, how do you think the women felt when they saw the empty tomb? I imagine, initially, they felt amazement because they didn't know how they would gain access to Jesus' body in a tomb sealed with a gigantic stone. Yet, when they arrived, the stone was rolled away. Amazing!

Then, I imagine their amazement turned to fear, and confusion, and sadness, because Jesus' body was not there. I imagine them thinking, "What happened to our Lord Jesus' body? Will we not even have the opportunity to show our love by anointing his body for burial?"

How often do we feel like these women felt? We are excited about certain expectations in our lives. Yet, then, those expectations never come to pass. Or, an unexpected tragedy occurs. And, instead of excitement, we feel fear and confusion and sadness.

When that happens, remember Jesus' words in John 14:1. Jesus says "continue believing in me. Continue to hold on to your faith in me because things may turn out better than you could ever imagine."

Little did the disciples know the story was about to take a dramatic turn, and everything they thought they knew would be changed forever. Likewise, little do we know how Jesus will meet us in our circumstances, and in our tragedies, if we will continue to believe in him.

The Empty Tomb: God's Response: Now let's continue with verses 4-8. They read, "*While they were perplexed*

Jesus' resurrection changes everything.
Jesus' resurrection proves he is the
SON OF GOD. Jesus' resurrection
proves God has the power to overcome
all obstacles in our lives, even death.
Jesus' resurrection shows
GOD ALWAYS FULFILLS THE
PROMISES IN HIS WORD.

What was God's response to their fear and confusion? The angels reminded the women of Jesus' words and Jesus' promises. Jesus had told his disciples he would die and then rise on the third day. And that is exactly what happened.

Jesus' resurrection changes everything. Jesus' resurrection proves he is the Son of God. Jesus' resurrection proves God has the power to overcome all obstacles in our lives, even death. Jesus' resurrection shows God always fulfills the promises in his word. Yet, sometimes we need to be reminded.

God probably won't send us angels to remind us. God doesn't need to send us angels because the Holy Spirit will remind us of God's promises as we read God's word. And, God will send brothers and sisters in Christ to remind us of his promises.

Isn't that what we do in Memorial services? We remind each other of God's promises of eternal life with our Lord Jesus in heaven for those who follow Christ.

The empty tomb reminds us that God responds to us in difficult circumstances and tragedies. The empty tomb reminds us that nothing is impossible with God. And the empty tomb reminds us that the power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that resides in us as believers.

So, when we find ourselves in an empty tomb situation, continue to believe in Jesus, and be on the watch for God's response. This is our hope. Amen!

The Empty Tomb: Our response: Now, let's finish with verses 9-12. They read, *"and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe*

them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened." Luke 24:9-12 ESV

The point of these final verses is this. The empty tomb demands a response.

And, first, we see the response of the women. What did they do? The women, filled with joy and excitement, ran back, they didn't walk, they ran back, to tell the other disciples what they had seen and heard. They could not contain this life-changing news and had to share it with everyone.

The fact that these women were the first witnesses of the empty tomb, and the angels message, is significant in the historical and cultural context. In that time, women were not always considered reliable witnesses.

Yet, God chose these women to be the first to share the news. This further emphasizes the transformative power of the resurrection. The resurrection breaks down societal barriers and empowers all believers.

Now, what was the response of the men? The men, the apostles, did not believe them. Does that sound familiar ladies?

The men thought the women were spreading gossip. And they probably tried to "mansplain" why this news of Jesus' resurrection was not possible.

And isn't that what we often hear today. We share the good news of Jesus' resurrection and people don't believe it. Even today, they call it a myth or a fairy tale. And remember, these are the apostles! So, don't be surprised that when you tell somebody the good news about Jesus and the resurrection they don't believe right away.

Yet, some will respond. Some will investigate the good news for themselves. And that is what Peter did. Peter, who

Greetings from The Reverend Allison Becker

FEB. 19, 2024 - SCOTLAND

(Allison was an intern here at CPC. We continue to pray for her and her ministry in Scotland.)

Beloved Christ Presbyterian Church – South Holywood,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! May your joy at receiving such greetings exceed even mine in writing them!

I thank God daily for you – your love and steadfast witness. The mantle of ministry (by the Holy Spirit) has been received and borne throughout the earth through many ministers and missionaries – because of your ministry. GOD honors you because you love Him and point to Him in all things.

I have spoken of you near and far as Christ has sent me – with thanksgiving to GOD. You are truly treasured in GOD's sight.

I know that the recent passing of beloved church members – now in glory with Jesus – has been and is a season of grief and loss. May Christ Himself who binds up the brokenhearted – comfort you with His presence, tenderness, reappearance, and peace.

My prayers remain always with you- may you know the strength, provision, sustaining grace, and abiding hope that is in and through Christ Jesus – by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In prayer for you, I have seen this image:

I have seen garments like royal robes (holy mantles), preserved and on royal display in the hall of heaven. These are the mantles previously worn by the faithful – who are now in glory with Jesus. Fear not – for as the mantles of ancestry was passed from Elijah to Elisha – and a double portion of glory- so Christ Himself will see and admin these mantles (and more besides) to the next generation of those called in and through Christ. Glory!!!! Take heart – for greater glory is indeed ahead and you all shall behold it. First in Christ – trust in His Holy Spirit. GOD o smear – may your vision of the future witness be clear, joyful, hopeful – behold Christ is near you in your midst- in full glory!

Peace be yours in Christ Jesus,
The Reverend Allison Becker

your pastor writes ...Continued from Page 4

had denied Jesus at Jesus' trial, ran to the tomb. He saw the burial clothes carefully folded and by themselves on the shelf where the body had been.

If someone had stolen the body, they wouldn't have taken this care. Peter saw the empty tomb for himself and he believed. And Peter went home marveling at what had happened.

The empty tomb is a reminder that we are loved and valued by God. It is also a call to share the message of salvation with others who may be lost and in need of hope. We have been given the key to eternal life, and it is our responsibility to share it with those around us.

When we share, some will believe. Some will scoff and call the good news a myth or fairy tale. Some will take the time to investigate for themselves, and eventually believe. Yet, none of these responses are possible until someone shares the good news with them.

Now, one final thought about empty tombs. Every person is an empty tomb until they come to faith in Jesus and are filled with the Holy Spirit. Without Jesus, we are all dead

people walking. Eternal death is the destiny of all who don't follow Jesus.

Yet, in Christ, death is not the final word. In Christ, we go to be with Jesus when we die. And we receive our eternal, resurrection bodies, when Jesus returns.

How do we come to faith in Jesus Christ? We tell God we are sorry for all the wrong things we have done. We repent of these wrongdoings. And we ask the Lord Jesus to come into our hearts and be Lord and Savior of our lives.

Let's pray. Please join me in this prayer if you have never accepted Jesus as Savior. 'Father, forgive me for all the wrong things I have done. I repent of these things and turn away from them. I believe Jesus died on the Cross, in my place, for my sins, and then rose again on the third day. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. And I ask the Holy Spirit to fill me with resurrection power. Amen!

See you next month,
Pastor Steve



LET US PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER:

Praise and gratitude for the birth of **Evelyn Noelle Holybee**, March 24, 2024. Evelyn is Pastor Steve’s and Simone’s second granddaughter and first born to Nicole and Matt. Baby, mother and dad are doing well.

Our church family is in grief and mourning. We have laid to rest **Joan Janeczek** May 18, 1924 – November 27, 2023, **Sueko Arakawa** June 6, 1935 – December 8, 2023, **Brian Albriton** June 1951 – December 30, 2023 and **Carol Ng** December 24, 1947 – January 25, 2024. **Barbara Kashiwagi** went to be with the Lord on March 11, 2024. (Memorial to be determined.)

Susan Rosal: Health, financial provision, job security.

Stella Kenner: Healing from cancer. Strength and endurance for the medical process.

Alice Pourrat (Pastor Steve’s granddaughter): Please keep praying for healing from Ulcerative Colitis. She is now handling the regular injections very well.

Alison Puzio (Young Life Hollywood Director whose ministry we support): Release from multiple autoimmune conditions. As the school year comes to a close for direction for the new season. And for the Young Life summer camps that include Junior High students, High School students, and St. Anne’s foster moms.

Matty Miranda, Administrative assistant to the area director of Young Life Hollywood: Matty’s position is a two- year commitment/contract. It comes to an end at the end of July. Pray for Matty to have discernment of ministry, employment and continued growth in his relationship with the Lord Jesus and His people.

Janet Nozaki is currently at Grant Serenity Board and Care in Arcadia. She needs prayer for renewed

strength of body and mind. Her spirit is strong in the Lord.

Philip Nozaki, Janet’s son is dealing with cancer. Please pray for healing and restoration.

Hazel Mcelfresh: continues to join us on Zoom every Sunday. Pray for her health, release from back pain, and for the new community she is in.

Barbara Kashiwagi: Thanksgiving for Barbara’s life. We miss her.

The Zebley family have returned home to North Carolina. They have been deeply wounded and need spiritual and mental and relational healing.

Morsan McSweeney: Full healing and new strength in all the areas of relationships, self, parents, daughter and grandchildren. Not just Morsan’s but for all involved.

WE ALWAYS REMEMBER ALL THOSE WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN CARE FACILITIES:

Yuri Sangen, Kimi Fujitani, Karen Koranye, Frank Morimoto, Janet Nozaki, Jean Sakai, Irene Mayeda caring for her mother Harumi.

LET US PRAY FOR ALL CPC SAINTS

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11:

⁹“I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹being filled with the fruit of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of GOD.”

(Simone April 6, 2024)

HOW CAN WE *pray* FOR YOU?



If you have prayer requests, you can send them via email or text PRIOR to our service each Sunday.

My email is sbaroldy@gmail.com.

You can text me at
323-202-5078.

FINANCIAL REPORT

FEB & MARCH 2024



	<u>FEB. 2024</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Receipts	\$ 9,746	\$ 21,713
Disbursements	\$ 12,435	\$ 25,730
Increase (Deficit)	(\$ 2,689)	(\$ 4,017)

	<u>MARCH 2024</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Receipts	\$ 17,811	\$ 39,514
Disbursements	\$ 20,567	\$ 46,297
Increase (Deficit)	(\$ 2,755)	(\$ 6,772)

Gifts & Offering



We are grateful for your continued generosity in supporting our ministry.

Please consider sending a gift or donation to:

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004**

The Lord's Prayer

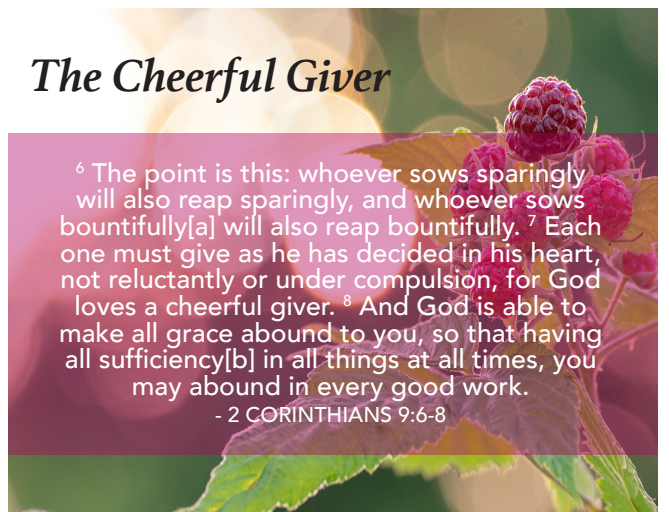
Our Father,
Who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy Will be done,
On earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom and
the Power and the Glory forever.

Amen

The Cheerful Giver

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully[a] will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency[b] in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-8



CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOLLYWOOD



**SUNDAYS at 11:00 A.M.
IN-PERSON OR ON ZOOM**

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/384758031?pwd=ZnEySjBjL1VkUmhiTWRCREdmZVhJZz09>

Meeting ID: 384 758 031
Password: 351955
One tap mobile
+16699006833,,384758031# US (San Jose)
+13462487799,,384758031# US (Houston)

"Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood is an intentional healing community; proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness of life offered by Jesus Christ."

DATED MATERIAL

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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