

Sermon Starter – Transformed by Resurrection Life

Jeremiah 31:1-6; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 28:1-10

Easter morning begins in the grief of the tomb. In the very places of utter brokenness, God meets us in the risen Christ. It is in our times of deepest need, knowing that we cannot help ourselves, that God brings life and love that cannot be destroyed. All the Lenten glimpses of God's restoring power swell to full strength. Death is conquered! Sin is forgiven! Peace abounds! Love flows! We are alive!

Matthew's telling of Easter morning involves all creation! The earth itself quakes with the news that Christ is risen. This is a celebration of cosmic proportions. We scarcely can take it in! We contemplate this most astonishing news: resurrection. It shatters all our normal ways of thinking and invites a new way of living, beyond what we always thought possible. Now, by God's grace, and with God's limitless resources, we can dream farther, live abundantly, and love expansively.

One option for worship planning: Deliver the sermon in the first half of the Easter service, beginning with the grief of the tomb, and our deepest needs, being transformed by God's gift of resurrection life. Then, the second half of the service can be the congregation's response with many expressions of celebration and joy: singing, dancing, playing instruments, and praying with joy and thanksgiving. May this be a day permeated with genuine joy.

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