

He Is Risen

Luke 24:6 (NIV)

He is not here; He has risen!

Luke 24:6 (The Message)

Why are you looking for the Living One in a cemetery? He is not here, but raised up. Remember how he told you when you were still back in Galilee that he had to be handed over to sinners, be killed on a cross, and in three days rise up?

Frequently during the past Christmas season, my gaze was drawn to the ornament on the top of our Christmas tree – an angel. Not any angel! This one dates to the 1950s. She has frizzy blonde hair and a white gauzy robe and wings. She is surrounded with multicolored, blinking lights. I realize that popular culture generally depicts angels as charming, whimsical, feminine cherubs. However, of all the interpretations of angels that I have ever seen, the one on my tree may be the tackiest and least representative of angels as they are described in scripture.

One day my blinking angel inspired me to think about angels in the Bible. As I thought about angels, it seemed that the topic of angels also occurred frequently in sermons, Bible studies, and in my reading. The character of angels in scripture is quite different from what we see in pop culture. Throughout the Bible, angels are often used by God. Many times they are used to provide protection or make profound announcements. They appear as powerful beings that inspire awe!

Each Sunday as I worship, I am blessed to see a much more accurate depiction of an angel. High above the altar in the Pitman United Methodist Church is the amazing stained glass “Resurrection Window.” Here we see an angel who is powerful and imposing. As this angel stands next to the empty tomb, He announces the life-changing message, “He is not here, He is risen!”

Praise God, this angel brings the message of Easter, the message of hope – *He is risen!*

Heavenly Father, we come to you with thankful hearts. We thank you that you sent your Son to die for our sins. We thank you that the grave could not hold Him. We thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

*Marsha Hahn
Pitman United Methodist Church*

Easter Eggs

An ancient Egyptian story of creation relates how the earth was hatched from an egg. Every spring the ancient Egyptians celebrated the world's birthday by exchanging eggs. The Jews also use eggs in their celebration of the Passover.

But to the early Christians, the egg reminded them of the resurrection of Christ, and Easter eggs were colored red to remind them of his blood shed on the cross. Russian Christians give beautifully decorated eggs as gifts to their friends with the joyous greeting, "He is risen!" to which the friends reply, "He is risen indeed!"

The Empty Cross

One of the most cherished symbols of the Protestant church is the Easter cross — an EMPTY cross, for we worship the risen Christ who has conquered death and the evil of the world. For many, the center beam of the cross stands for man's reach upward toward God, while the crossarms remind them of the outreaching concern the Christian feels for all men.

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!
Where O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once He died, our souls to save, Alleluia!
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Him rise, Alleluia!
Christ hath opened Paradise, Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like Him, like Him we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788



*And the peace of God, which transcends
all understanding, will guard your hearts
and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:7 (NIV)

Daily Devotions for Lent 2016

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Trinity United Methodist Church
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