### Trinity Te Deum

The official newsletter for Trinity Lutheran Church 1207 West 45 Street Austin, Texas 78756 Interim Pastor Brock Abbott – (512) 453-3835 Church Sunday School and Bible Study 9:15 AM – Divine Service 10:30 AM April, 1 2024 Volume 26 Issue 2

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#### "Christ Is Risen ..."

And what is our response? "... He is risen, indeed!" This expression, which has been around in the church for a long time, could simply be a conflation of Luke 24:6, where the angel says, "He is not here, but has risen," and Luke 24:34, when the disciples on the road to Emmaus say to the eleven, "The Lord has risen indeed ..." How long have Christians been using this greeting and response as we use it today? We really don't know. In an article titled "Why Do We Say 'He Is Risen Indeed' at Easter?" G. Connor Salter writes: "We're not entirely sure when Christians first began saying the paschal greeting. One of the earliest records we have of Christians saying 'he is risen' or 'Christ is risen' appears in the Paschal Sermon (or Paschal Homily) of John Chrysostom. John Chrysostom was the archbishop of Constantinople from 397-405 AD ...;

I read the quotation from Chrysostom. He does say that "Christ is risen" five times. However, I am not convinced that he popularized the saying. Nevertheless, what did strike me was a part of the quote from his Paschal Homily that I would like to share with you as we consider the Easter season. Here it is:

Let no one weep for his iniquities, for pardon has shown forth from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free. He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it. By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive. He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh. And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Hell, said he, was embittered, when it encountered Thee in the lower regions. It was embittered, for it

was embittered, for it was fettered in chains. It took a body, and met God face to face. It took earth and encountered Heaven. It took that which was seen and fell upon the unseen. O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life reigns. Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave. For Christ, being risen from the dead, is become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

Comforting words that capture Holy Week, Easter morning, Christ's descent into hell, and our bodily resurrection from the dead on the last day! The resurrection of Jesus Christ and the empty grave makes it certain that what Jesus did on the cross is true for us! Our iniquities have been pardoned! The weeping over sin and death is turned to peace! Hell has no hold on us because it had no hold on Jesus! His victory over the grave guarantees our victory! Sin, death, and the devil are overthrown! All is not lost! We will rise unto everlasting life ... All because Christ is Risen! This isn't a fantasy! We have eye-witness testimony! The Four Gospels bear witness, and the apostle Paul writes in 1 Cor. 15:3-8,

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared

to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

He Is Risen Indeed! Hallelujah!

Your Servant,

Pastor Brock Abbott

https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/why-do-we-say-he-is-risen-indeed-at-easter.html

# A Poem by Edward Shillito (1872-1948):

If we have never sought, we seek Thee now; Thine eyes burn through the dark, our only stars; We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow, We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.

The heavens frighten us; they are too calm; In all the universe we have no place. Our wounds are hurting us; where is the balm? Lord Jesus, by Thy Scars, we claim Thy grace.

If, when the doors are shut, Thou drawest near, Only reveal those hands, that side of Thine; We know to-day what wounds are, have no fear, Show us Thy Scars, we know the countersign.

The other gods were strong; but Thou wast weak; They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne; But to our wounds only God's wounds can speak, And not a god has wounds, but Thou alone.

https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/jesus-of-scars/

#### What Is It About the Body?!

(Some of the ideas for the following article came from a sermon I read, written by an unknown author from the Lutheran church in Canada. This does not mean that I endorse everything in the sermon, but I thought I should give credit, where credit is due. Thus, I added the link below. I thought that during the Easter season, it is a most appropriate topic as we live in a culture that sees the body as nothing more than a tool for immoral pleasure.)

#### What Is It About the Body?!

Soviet Dictator, Vladimir Lenin, died on January 21, 1924. Out of respect for their fallen leader, Russian citizens display his preserved body in the Red Square in Moscow to this very day. Even a century after his death, the corpse of this historic Soviet leader remains so lifelike that it's often said to scare small children. All the internal organs have been removed and the body is re-embalmed regularly and watched over by a team of dedicated specialists - as it has been since the day Lenin died. The estimated annual cost of preserving the body is around \$200,000, and as older scientists retire, there are fewer and less young people willing to take their place.

What Is It About the body?! Physical life is certainly a precious gift from our gracious God – a great gift we value, care for, and defend. And what could be more personal than our bodies? But what should we make over the fact that so many cultures over so many centuries have been interested in preserving the body to such extremes as those for Vladimir Lenin?

On the opposite spectrum, what should we make over some of the Greeks and others to this day who believe that there is nothing more important than being released from the prison of the body? I am reminded of the time when Paul spoke at the Areopagus in Acts ch.17 (22-34). He said to those present: "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to

all by raising him from the dead." And it is recorded, "... when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, 'We will hear you again about this." Again, what is it about the body?!

And then there's the average, everyday person and how they view the body. Because of our sinful flesh it's easy to echo the language of the unbelieving world: "It's my life. It's my body. I'll do what I want. I have a right!" Interestingly, the Christians in the congregation of Corinth had a similar view. They said: "All things are lawful for me." "What about the body?" they asked. And their answer? "Well, it's not your soul, so do whatever you want with your body." But not so!

The apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body." In other words, when we use our bodies correctly, in Christ, it is a revelation of the one who made us. Although we have fallen into sin and have earned the wages of death - for "dust we are and to dust we shall return" - we belong to God. Not only has he created our bodies, but he has redeemed our bodies together with the soul that we may be raised from the dead. This we see at the cross and empty tomb. And our resurrected bodies will have a special purpose in heaven for which we do not fully know, for Paul also says, for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power (1 Cor. 6:13-14)." The Lord created body and soul. The Lord has saved our bodies and souls through Jesus' sufferings and death. And now that we have the forgiveness of sins, our perspective should be different. We are the body of Christ. Therefore, our bodies are not to be violated.

St. Paul says, "The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body ... God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power ... your bodies are members of Christ." This special relationship with the Lord is to be valued. Again, we are members of Christ - members of his body. We are the church. In the Baptism of Jesus, which empowers our Baptisms, we know that our body and soul has been baptized into Christ. This makes us connected to him in a

way that we cannot fully understand but believe. Our bodies have participation with Jesus. In holy communion, we receive Christ's body and blood into our bodies. And, as Paul then puts it: "he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him." You and I are that body - the body of Jesus our Savior - arms and legs, hands, and feet.

And so, what is it about the body?! In the day of our death there is no need to frantically preserve it as with Vladimir Lenin. Nor do we view the body in such a way that it is nothing but a prison house. And in this life, we are not free to use our bodies for sexual immorality, for we are the bride of Jesus who is our forever husband. Paul wrote to Christian people who thought they could live in sexual sin and still maintain a living faith in Jesus. You cannot have it both ways. Even more disturbing, sexual sin is unique, for it is a sin against your own body which God has made and redeemed and has reserved for eternity.

Paul writes: "I will not be enslaved by anything." Indeed, there are many things that are matters of Christian freedom, but there are things that we are obviously not at liberty to do, for these things are in opposition to our identity as children of God in Christ. A holy name has been given to us in our baptisms. We are owned by Jesus. Sexual sins are not supposed to have dominion over us. Sin shall not be our master, for we are not under law, but under grace (Rom. 6:14). In other words, the undeserved kindness of Christ in the forgiveness of sins is what has dominion over us and governs the days of our lives.

Moreover, as St. Paul goes on to say, our individual choices that we make in and with our bodies touch the life of the church. When we commit sexual immorality, it erodes and tears down our faith in God. Mistreating our bodies in that way separates us from one another, shattering the unity of the church, the body of Christ. What is it about the body?! God punishes sexual sins that are against the body. Paul would encourage us to "Repent." And as Joseph did, we are to "Flee from sexual immorality."

As you can see, God cares deeply about the lives we live in the body. To be sure, he is concerned

about our souls too – forgiving us, promising us eternal life, but he also treasures our bodies. The body, after all, was his idea in the first place, and he has most emphatically promised that he will raise it from the dead.

Consider what we have celebrated at Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Jesus came into our world in a human body – formed in Mary's virgin womb and born in Bethlehem as the flesh-and-blood Child of Mary ... born with a body like ours to make us the children of God. He manifests his body to the world and further demonstrated that he is the Son of God our Savior. Why did he come in the flesh? To redeem us in our bodies. With the perfect, sinless life Jesus lived in the body, he buys us back from the guilt and consequences of our sins. At what price? With the agony of his soul and the sufferings and death of his very body, pouring out his lifeblood when he was nailed to the cross and struck with a spear. You and I are so incredibly precious to God. He cares about us in both body and soul. And so, as St. Paul says: "(Since) you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body."

Even more - our bodies are also "a temple of the Holy Spirit," as Paul writes. And how? Well, the Holy Trinity took you and me into his care when we were baptized. Water applied to souls and our bodies together with his powerful divine Word was the Holy Spirit's entrance into our hearts. Yes, God is with us. And where? In our bodies. That's the Holy Spirit's temple, that is, his dwelling. Think about it. You have an important guest staying with you wherever you go - in your body.

As I have already said, this body is so important to God that He promises to raise it to life forever. Just as Jesus bodily rose from the dead, so we will be raised from death to live in both body and soul forever, as Paul says: "God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power." Today we are thus reminded of how God has given us life in the body as a holy, precious, sacred gift: our body and life has been created by God the Father, redeemed by the blood of God the Son, and the Holy Spirit dwells in us as his temple. And what, therefore, shall we say to all this? The apostle answers: "So glorify God in your body."

https://www.lutheranchurchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2024/01/Epiphany-Sermon\_-Second-Sunday-After-Epiphany\_January-14-2023\_Year-B-Epistle2.pdf
https://allthatsinteresting.com/vladimir-lenin-body

#### A Word from Luther: Overcoming Temptation

(Below is a quote from a devotional book I would highly recommend for your personal use if you enjoy Luther. I find the quotes to be very good and thought provoking. Consider it a representative sample of the kind of material you will find throughout.)

#### A Word from Luther: Overcoming Temptation

Jesus said to him "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him." (Matthew 4:10)

There is a twofold armor with which the devil is slain and which he fears: 1) to listen unceasingly to the Word of God, to instruct oneself in it, and to be comforted and strengthened by it; 2) then, when temptation and struggle come upon us, to lift up our hearts to that same Word and cry to God, invoking Him for help. Thus, one of the two things is always present, continuing as an eternal conversation between God and the soul. Either God speaks to us and we are still, listening to God, or He listens to us as we speak to Him, praying for what we need.

Whatever way it may be, the devil cannot endure it, and he cannot hold his own against it. Therefore, Christians must be armed with both, so that their hearts may be everlastingly turned toward God, keeping His Word and with unceasing sighs eternally praying, "Our Father ..." This perseverance Christians will be taught by temptation and calamity with which they are constantly oppressed by the devil, the world, and the flesh, so that they must ever keep their heads up, watching for the assault of the enemy who neither sleeps for a moment nor takes his ease. *Sermons from the year 1539. WA 47:758* 

Luther, Martin. Day by Day We Magnify Thee:
Daily Readings for the Entire Year.
Augsburg Books and Epworth Press, 2008, page 126.

## The Truth and Beauty of Jesus' Resurrection

The following article was published at https://www.1517.org/articles/the-truth-and-beauty-of-jesus-resurrection, and was written by Samuel P. Schuldheisz who is Pastor at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Milton, WA. He and his wife, Natasha, have two children, Zoe, and Jonah. His reading, research, and writing interests focus on The Inklings, Imaginative Apologetics, and the intersection of theology and literature.

When reading the article, try not to get hung up on the quote by J.R.R. Tolkien. "Eucatastrophe" is a new word coined by J.R.R. Tolkien from the Greek ευ- "good" and καταστροφή, "sudden turn." Thus, it is a good, sudden turn. According to https://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Eucatastrophe, "a eucatastrophe is a massive turn in fortune from a seemingly unconquerable situation to an unforeseen victory, usually brought by grace rather than heroic effort. Such a turn is catastrophic in the sense of its breadth and surprise and positive in that a great evil or misfortune is averted." He is basically saying that the incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection have all the characteristics of a fairy tale that has entered real human history. I enjoyed the article and pass it along to you.

## The Truth and Beauty of Jesus' Resurrection

It is good to remember that this true story is also beautiful.

Above the altar at St. Peter and Paul Church in Weimar, Germany, stands the famous Weimar Altarpiece. Begun by Lucas Cranach the Elder around 1552, and completed by his son, Lucas Cranach the Younger in 1555, this painting is a visual sermon on the doctrine of justification. It

is a work of profound Christian theology, and stunning Christ-centered artistry. It is cruciform creativity. It is didactic *and* delightful. It is a witness, and a work of art. It portrays the truth of Jesus' crucifixion and does so beautifully.

The gospel writers are doing something similar in their accounts of Jesus' resurrection, albeit greater than even the greatest works of art. After all, the gospels are divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit, and at the same time, a delight to hear and read again and again.

As Christians we are accustomed to teaching, learning, and hearing the account of Jesus' death and resurrection in historical terms. And well we should. Jesus does. Paul does. So do the other apostles. Jesus' resurrection is historical, verifiable, and veracious. The central event of the Christian faith – Jesus' death and resurrection - is fact, not fiction. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection did not happen in Never-never Land, or a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, but in the days of Caesar Augustus and Herod. In real human history. Jesus is crucified under Pontius Pilate. The Christian faith, and its central teaching of Jesus' death and resurrection is thoroughly historical. As Christians, we are called to declare and defend this good news, by always being prepared to give a ready defense for anyone who asks about the reason for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15).

And, as we approach Easter, as we spend time hearing and reading the accounts of Jesus' resurrection in all four gospels, it is good to remember that this true story, is also beautiful. It is beautiful, in part, precisely because it is true; and in its truthfulness, its beauty is not lost. One of the joys of reading all four gospel accounts individually, is that we are able to behold the true story beautifully told from each of the points of view of the gospel writers. Slow down and spend time observing the unique prose, dialogue, and language each gospel writer uses in recounting Jesus' resurrection. Watch for allusions and references to the Old Testament, to previous events within each gospel. Notice the gospel writers' thematic emphases, arrangement of the life and ministry of Jesus, and how they each

move the story along, and tell the same story from a different viewpoint, much like various artists will draw different aspects of the same apple set on the table in front of them. In the gospels we receive four historical accounts of Jesus' resurrection which are both didactic and delightful. They are witnesses and works of art. They present both historical fact and meaningful satisfaction. Jesus' resurrection is both true *and* beautiful.

In The Resurrection of the Son of God, N.T. Wright observes that, "Luke 24 is a small masterpiece, designed as the closing scene for a large scale work of art."(1) Luke's artistry as a historian and physician comes through in his attention to detail, his precise language. Consider, for example, how Luke points out the Sabbath day rest in the final verse of chapter 23, leading us to the first day of the week in chapter 24:1. Jesus, too, rested on the Sabbath day. He rested in the tomb from all His labors on the cross. And in doing so, He hallowed the Sabbath day again, and fulfilled it all at the same time. Jesus' rest in the tomb gives you eternal Sabbath rest. Jesus remembers the Sabbath day and kept it holy for you. Or, notice the contrast around the word "find" in 24:2-3. They (the women) found the stone rolled away. But they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. Luke also cleverly waits until 24:10 to tell his hearers who these first visitors to Jesus' empty tomb were; it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and some of the other women.

Think back to the Weimar Altarpiece. Another feature of the painting is that it is a triptych, comprised of three panels. The right and left panels portray the people of Weimar facing inward towards the center panel; their hands folded and eyes focused on the painting at the heart of the triptych, the crucified Christ. Cranach's point is clear. The focal point of the altarpiece, at the center of the church's confession, faith, and witness, indeed, at the very center of the Scriptures is this true and beautiful good news: Jesus crucified for you. Cranach even paints himself in the picture with the blood of Christ streaming forth onto his own head. Truth and beauty.

In chapter 24, Luke paints a triptych of words. Think of verses 1-12, like the left panel of a triptych painting. In verses 1-12, he records the women visiting Jesus' tomb, finding it empty, and the angel's mysterious, yet marvelous words, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here; he is risen." We also hear how the women were perplexed, how Peter marveled, and how the angel reminded the women to remember Jesus' words, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."

In verses 36-49, Luke paints the right panel of his resurrection triptych. He recounts Jesus' postresurrection appearance to his disciples. Jesus answers their doubts and fears by showing them the wounds in His hands and feet. Jesus eats with them, a sign both of His physical resurrection and His desire for table fellowship with and for sinners. Jesus also teaches them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms." Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

Jesus' words reveal both divine truth and sacred beauty. Every book, chapter, verse points to Jesus crucified and risen. Every prophet, apostle, and psalmist tell a part of this true and beautiful story Jesus fulfills in His death and resurrection. Every genre, from the historical narrative of Genesis of Moses to the apocalyptic symbolism of John in Revelation paints God's word with two brushes, the true and the beautiful.

And then, in Luke 24, at the center of Luke's resurrection masterpiece, notice how he carefully crafts verses 13-35. While two of Jesus' disciples are walking the road to Emmaus, Jesus joins them along their journey, only He keeps them from recognizing Him. The Emmaus disciples recount the events of Holy Week and how some of the women had reported that Jesus' tomb was

empty. Jesus gently rebukes them and at the same time comforts and patiently teaches them. "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

The center of this central scene in Luke 24 comes next. The disciples invite Jesus to stay with them, for it was toward evening and the day was far spent. St. Luke paints the climactic and central scene of chapter 24 while Jesus is at the table with His disciples surrounded by a meal, fellowship, and Jesus' word. "Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight."

Later, as the disciples returned to Jerusalem, Luke records the true and beautiful words of comfort for His disciples, "How He was known to them in the breaking of the bread."

Luke's artistry is awesome to behold. Where do His disciples then, and now, find the crucified and risen Lord? In His word where He speaks and gives life, and at the table where He is known in the breaking of the bread. It is truly beautiful, and is a beautiful truth.

This is what makes the account of Jesus' resurrection in Luke such a delight to read. Luke tells the true story of the Gospel and the good news of Jesus' resurrection as a glorious, gracious surprise. Not only is it true. It is beautiful. A gracious, unexpected, never-saw-it-coming surprise.

This is what J.R.R. Tolkien called the Eucatastrophe, a good catastrophe, or a sudden turn of events that no one expected or saw coming and yet fills you with wonder and joy.

"The Gospels contain a fairy-story, or a story of a larger kind which embraces all the essence of fairy-stories. They contain many marvels—peculiarly artistic, beautiful, and moving: "mythical" in their perfect, self-contained

significance; and among the marvels is the greatest and most complete conceivable Eucatastrophe. But this story has entered History and the primary world; the desire and aspiration of sub-creation has been raised to the fulfillment of Creation. The Birth of Christ is the Eucatastrophe of Man's history. The Resurrection is the Eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation. This story begins and ends in joy. It has pre-eminently the "inner consistency of reality." There is no tale ever told that men would rather find was true, and none which so many skeptical men have accepted as true on its own merits. For the Art of it has the supremely convincing tone of Primary Art, that is, of Creation. To reject it leads either to sadness or to wrath."(2)

As Easter approaches, take some time to read the gospel accounts of Holy Week. Dig into the unique details each gospel writer focuses on. Read aloud their Spirit-crafted, creative, and powerful words. Read the story and don't skip over what you think you've already heard before. Slow down. Take your time. Soak in the words. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest this good news. And while you do so, ponder the gracious, grand miracle of Jesus' resurrection. Rejoice in the truthfulness and veracity of Jesus' resurrection, and behold the beauty of this true and greatest of all stories, Jesus crucified and risen for you.

(1) N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003, p. 647. (2) J.R.R. Tolkien. On Fairy Stories. <a href="https://coolcalvary.files.wordpress.com/2018/10/onfairy-stories1.pdf">https://coolcalvary.files.wordpress.com/2018/10/onfairy-stories1.pdf</a>

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### Deadline for all articles is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the odd months.

All articles must be approved by Interim Pastor Brock Abbott. Articles with no author are written by him.

### APRIL 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
	1	2	3	4	5	6					
7 PASTOR KEISTMAN HOLY COMMUNION	8	9	10	11	12	13					
PASTOR BROCK HOLY COMMUNION	15	16	17	18	19	20					
VICAR KILLION	22	23	24	25	26	27					
PASTOR KEISTMAN HOLY COMMUNION	29	30									

#### **MAY 2024**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY				
			1	2	3	4				
5 PASTOR BROCK HOLY COMMUNION CONFIRMATION SUNDAY	6	7	8	9	10	11				
12 VICAR KILLION	13	14	15	16	17	18				
PASTOR KEISTMAN HOLY COMMUNION ASCENSION DINNER 12:00 PM	20	21	22	23	24	25				
PASTOR KEISTMAN HOLY COMMUNION	27	28	29	30	31					