

Easter – The Day of Resurrection, April 9, 2023

Christ is Risen

He is Risen Indeed

I have brought in a few things to show you this Resurrection morning.

Here is something very, very small...can you see what it is? Yes, it is a seed, an apple seed! Very small, very Brown. Now, here is something else. It is a bunch of grapes. Is there any connection between these grapes and this seed? Yes! These grapes grew on a vine, which came from a seed exactly like this.

Can you believe that these grapes came from this seed?

Amazing, isn't it? But we believe it, don't we?

Now here is something else...it is a pretend one, but what does it look like to you?

Yes! It's a cocoon (caterpillar). Now...what is this? Yes, it is a butterfly. Is there any connection between these two? Yes! This butterfly came out of a cocoon like this....can you believe that this came out of this? Amazing isn't it? Who would have thought that this butterfly could be formed inside this cocoon?

Now here is something...what is this? Yes...an egg! And what is this? Yes! It is a chick! Did any of you get a chick like this in your Easter basket? Well what is the connection between this egg and this chick? Yes! The chick is a new life, coming out of this egg! Amazing? Hard to believe Yes! Do you believe it happens? Yes!

Cause you can even watch sometimes, can't you, when the chick is ready to hatch, it pecks a hole in the shell.

This morning we are celebrating another amazing new life! It is Jesus' new life we are celebrating this morning. He was put to death on a cross. He had done nothing wrong, but he was very different. He healed many and he talked to people touching their spirits. Some people were afraid of him. They tried to get rid of him because they didn't know what to do with him...he was very, very different. They saw him as a threat.

So he was betrayed by one of his own disciples and tried and condemned to death. Good Friday is the day we remember how he died on a cross. That day, when the light was fading, they took his body down off the cross and laid it in a tomb. It was like a cave, really. It was owned by a good man, Joseph of Arimathea. They put spices on his body to keep it fresh. And then they went away for a day because it was their Sabbath, their resting day.

That tomb was something like the cocoon of the butterfly. It was a dark enclosed space with a big rock across the door. No one could see in, just like no one can see inside the cocoon. Yet, just as there is something happening inside a cocoon even though we can't see it, there was something happening inside that tomb...something very surprising...

very early the next morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene, Jesus' friend, crept to the tomb. She found the heavy stone rolled away and inside Jesus' body

was gone. Something amazing had happened! Jesus was not lying dead in the tomb. He had somehow gotten back up...but in a different way...Just like that beautiful butterfly somehow forms inside the cocoon, just like that chick somehow forms in that egg, just like that apple somehow grows from that little seed, so Jesus somehow changed and came out of his tomb newly alive.

When Jesus appeared to Mary in the garden...she didn't recognize him at first. We don't know exactly why she didn't recognize him. There must have been something different about the risen Jesus. But when he called her by her name, Mary! then she recognized him and she realized that her Lord Jesus was alive, right there with her...

She wanted to stay and hug Jesus...

he said it was not hugging time but to go and tell the others...

the good news...that she had seen the Lord...

Do we understand how the apple grows from such a small seed? No

Do we understand how the chick comes from the egg? No, it's a mystery.

Do we understand how the butterfly comes from the cocoon? No, it's a mystery.

Do we understand how Jesus came out of the tomb? No, it's a mystery.

It's ok to have mysteries

Ever do a jigsaw puzzle? You like them? See this one? 1000 pieces...if we put this together but were missing 2 or 3 pieces, would we still be able to see what the picture is? Yes, pretty well. That's the same with Jesus' being alive even though he died. We can get the main picture, we don't understand it all. It's called a mystery. It's ok not to have all the pieces of the puzzle...God knows that and tells us that later, when we go to be with him, then we will understand how it happened.

What's important is to believe; the apple coming from the seed, the chick coming from the egg, the butterfly coming from the cocoon, but most important, Jesus coming to new life. Let us believe in the mystery. Jesus is alive still. He loves you and me very much and wants to be friends...real friends.