

- I will look for you at the service and also this afternoon. I think you've (indistinct) we don't know, this is a mess, right?

- (indistinct)

- But you and I both agreed with the director the we would share that theme with the instrumentals, we don't know when they are coming or anything. Be here at 6:00, be out by 6:15 outside. All right, let's sing up those words. When do we form up? At 6:30 we come back here? (indistinct) I'm sorry (indistinct) (liturgical music)

- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us confess our sins to all mighty God. Oh, holy God, on this joyous Easter Sunday, it is difficult for us to confess our sin. We give thanks. We rejoice. We are exhilarant, but we pray, oh God, that our rejoicing will not blind us to the needs of the world. That our affirmation of the resurrection will not damn the continuing reality of the crucifixion. So now, oh God, we come before you as a disobedient church, our loyalty to you has been lost in the conflict of human loyalties. Our own self-interest has made us insensitive to your command. Our past is precious to us, and we have allowed it to set limits upon the present and the future. Our worship and service have been feeble. We have not responded in love to you nor to the needs of our neighbor and the campus, break our apathy and our arrogance with the judgment of your love and the assurance of the resurrection faith. Then in mercy heal us, oh, Holy Spirit, causing us as a community to be born and new in Jesus Christ our Lord, amen. Let us continue with our individual personal prayers to God. God shows his love for us and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He himself bore our sins on the cross that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. I declare unto you in the name of Jesus Christ we are forgiven, amen. (liturgical musical)

- Let us hear the word of God. On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees will be refined. And he will destroy on this mountain, the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, "Lo this is our God, "we have waited for him that he might save us. "This is the Lord, "we have waited for him. "Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Let the congregation stand for the reading of the gospel. But on the first day of the week at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared, and they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. But when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed 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? "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, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the 11 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 this to the apostles. Here ends the reading of the lesson. (liturgical music)

- Let us affirm our faith. We are not alone. We live in God's world. We believe in God who has created and is creating, who has come in the true man Jesus, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by his spirit. We trust him. He calls us to be in his church, to celebrate his presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus crucified and risen, our judge and our hope, in life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. The Lord be with you.

- And with your spirit.

- Let us pray. Christ, the lamb of God is sacrificed for us. Now has Christ been raised from the dead, he is risen, as he said. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh God, most high, all praise and thanks be to you this day for the multitude of your loving kindnesses to us and to all of your children. It is neat and right that we should praise you at all times, surely, but especially this day, we sing praises to your name because you have brought eternal life to light through the joyous victory of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Having overcome the sharpness of death, we give thanks that he opened the way of life to us and that because he lives, we live also. Oh merciful father, we commend to you this day all persons who in any way at all are afflicted, relieve those who suffer, restore health and strength to those who are sick. In Christ our Lord, who is truly resurrection in life, let the heavy laden find strength to endure and let those who now are in the valley of the shadow see the light of life eternal. Give to the lonely and the sorrowing the assurance that nothing can ever separate them from your love, which we know in Jesus Christ. We pray for all those dear to us, especially those from whom we are parted and who come clearly to mind this day, those whom we name in our hearts now before you, may they rejoice with us this holy day and rejoice in the hope that we do indeed have an inheritance in your presence that is incorruptible and undefiled and lasts forever. And now, oh God, as we wait upon you in faith and hope, may we know your will and serve you acceptably and lovingly all the days of our life. Help us to love as you love us. In the name of Christ who taught us to pray, praying together, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever, amen. Let me say a word of welcome in the name of Christ to you on this blessed Easter day as you have come to this particular place to rejoice in the good news that Christ is raised. If you worship here regularly, it's good to have you back. If you're visiting, we pray that God's spirit and love will be very present to you not only in the moments when you worship here, but as you leave. Tonight at Seven o'clock, a very special service. The North Carolina Symphony and the Duke Chapel choir will join together in presenting for, "Rejoicing by us All," Mahler's resurrection symphony. You are invited at Seven tonight. It is a distinct privilege for all of us who know and love Jim Clelland to wait now, as he in the name of Christ, brings us the word of God on this glad Easter day. Dr. Clelland.

- The grace of the risen Lord be with us all. Easter is the oldest of the festivals of the Christian Church. Easter has every right to this primacy because it is the historical starting place of our faith. As Saint Paul puts it quite bluntly, if Christ was not raised, then our gospel is null and void and so is your faith. No Easter then no Christian Church, as we know it, or there might have persisted a small association of Jesus followers, perhaps calling themselves the Nazarenes with the "Sermon on the Mount," as their gospel. They however would have been obliterated by the Romans in A.D 70, along with the Sadducees and the Essenes when Jerusalem was destroyed. Moreover, no Easter then no Christmas and no Friday called good. Now, why is such a statement made so emphatically? Without Easter, Good Friday would have been for the followers of Jesus, Bad Friday. The tag end of a fallen carpenter who had become an itinerant preacher and whose life ended as a crucified criminal done to death on the double charge of treason and blasphemy. Such a Friday would be remembered as the triumph of evil. Why should Jesus' birth be celebrated at Christmas if there is no truth in the Easter message. But Easter does three things. First, it vindicates God. Jesus did not of himself rise from the dead, he was raised from the dead by God. That's the key thought in the first sermon preached by Saint Peter. God raised him to life again, because it could not be that death should keep him in its grip. As an old Scotsman put it in his Scots vernacular thinking about Easter, God's the boy. And if you look up the word boy in the Scott's dialect dictionary, it means a smart, clever, capable fellow. Now that's what God is, a smart, clever, capable fellow. It's an interesting, but valid reaction to Easter. Second, Easter placed God's imprimatur, his stamp of approval on Jesus. God endorsed Jesus. No up stack, nothing stands in the way. Peter's way of announcing this in that same first sermon was, "Let all Israel accept as certain "that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, "both Lord and Messiah," two high titles. As the late Henry Sloane Coffin put it, "The indisputable Easter fact "is that Jesus was our more potent factor in Jerusalem "in the weeks and months after his death and calvary "than when he rode into the city amid the crowds "or sat with his disciples in the upper room." And third, the Easter message encourages us today, as Paul discovered and proclaimed, "The spirit of the risen Christ "can take possession of a person. "I live," and then he denies it, "yet not I, "Christ lives in me "and the life I now live in the flesh, "I live by faith in the son of God who loved me "and gave himself for me." Moreover, that fact meant for Paul and for Christians down the centuries that this indwelling spirit of the risen Christ is an earnest, a pledge of continuing life with Jesus in the presence of God hereafter. Now, do we begin to appreciate why Easter is the primary festival in the Christian year, more important than Christmas, than Good Friday. No Easter, no Christianity in anything like the form that it has been transmitted for 19 centuries. But you ask, how can this be? A man raised from the dead. It's hard for us who are oriented by science and encouraged to be, "Objective," to accept Easter. With the various and contradictory accounts of the resurrection amount to anything in a court of law. It's a valid and constantly recurring question. Take for instance, who saw the risen Jesus first? Now you got a choice. Was it Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, Salome, Joanna, Peter, the two men from the mist, or again, what kind of body did the risen Jesus have? It was recognizable, sometimes, but it could appear and disappear. It more than once entered into a room where the disciples had gathered behind locked doors. Jesus' first word to them on those occasions was a very wise one. It was, "Shalom," peace. They were startled, terrified, worried. We let Paul come to our help again, he tells the Corinthians that there is a difference between an earthly body and a spiritual body, adding that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, which says something to the custom of embalming. But it is the same person who once possess the earthly body who will inherit the spiritual body. The Eastern message then is one of assurance. It vindicates God, it validates Jesus, it encourages us. However, you ask me again, what can we accept as a sample valid proof of the resurrection?

There are two facts separated by almost 2000 years and yet intimately related, which make up an answer. The first is, the transformation of the 11 disciples, from the lying, disappointed, puzzled crowds, puzzled cowards of Friday, into the stalwart witnesses for a living spirit of Jesus, who no law court, no jail cell, no hostile mob, no cruel death could alter or subdue. They were Christians, Jesus Christ's men, backed by a group of women who were never again lying or cowardly. And the second proof is like unto it, the living Christian community today in which the spirit of Jesus still lives and acts through its members. Your participation in this service this morning is a witness to the resurrection, which is the key stone of Christian faith and love and hope. For years, almost too many to number, I have searched for a visible symbol of Easter. The crucifix won't do, that's the symbol of the Friday before Easter. The empty cross won't do, it signifies nothing except maybe that it's waiting for the next victim and his name is Legion. And then last November, I came upon a Roman Catholic church, newly built, impressive in its modern architecture. I went inside and knelt, suspended over the altar was a great cross with a curved figure of Jesus. It is a stunning piece of work, but the even more stunning fact is that Jesus is not fastened to the cross. His outstretched arms are above the horizontal bar, that much, and they are beginning to reach upwards. His feet are free from the nails. This is not the Jesus who was taken down from the cross by friendly human hands, this is Jesus, the Christ, being taken up by God, an anticipation of the resurrection. A priest spoke to me. I told him of my excitement and my delight in at long last finding a symbol for Easter. He told me that it was planned, designed and made as a sign of the resurrection. It may be unique in the United States. I wish there were one more. Where? Here. We have a great unseen cross atop the Reredos. It's eight feet high. You never can see it. Perhaps one day it will be floodlit, perhaps. And perhaps they will be given to the chapel, a carved figure of Jesus to accompany that Reredos Cross, like the one in the parish church of St. Margaret Mary in Winter Park, the sign and symbol of the Easter Christ. And now the choir will finish this meditation for me. The anthem begins quietly with the odd recognition of Jesus crucified, crucifixes. It ends in triumph with the blessed affirmation of Jesus resurrected, it resurrects it. It's good to be a fellow worker with such a choir and with such musicians, so let it be. (liturgical music)

- As Jesus ultimately gave his life, so we also got to give at least a portion of our lives, as we give these gifts now, we give ourselves to witness, to serve, to love. Use us, oh God, to fulfill the ministry of Christ's love, to and for all persons, amen. (liturgical music) Now may the God of peace who grew up out again from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, he equipped you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory this day and forever and ever. (liturgical music) (bell ringing) (liturgical music)