



Virtual Easter Sunrise at Willerup Bible Camp

Join us for scripture meditations, watch the sun rise over Lake Ripley, and read Easter testimonies from fellow church members.

We will “visit” three locations at the camp and take time to reflect on portions of Scripture. Please open your Bible and walk along as we journey to the empty cross.



A Moment on the Hilltop

Matthew 20:20-28

Lord, we love our hilltop moments. When we look at what we've accomplished, how far we've come, what we've built, it's hard not to let pride gain a foothold. Like the disciples, we can become too concerned about our status. Help us to remember that even though you were one with God, maker and ruler of all Creation, you came to serve those you had created. In spite of your position of unimaginable power and glory, you chose to submit yourself fully to the will and plan of your Father. We tend to submit only to our own plans and become impatient with your timetable. We rationalize our independent decisions by claiming there are no clear specifics in your Word relating to our modern situations. As things go well, it's remarkably easy for us to begin feeling proud of the fact that we've got things under control. We are quick to give ourselves the credit. Often it is only after we've fallen hard that we realize just how high we had put ourselves.

And yet, Jesus, you sit at our feet, ready to wash away the dust of our selfish wandering. You show us the true expression of the Father's heart. There is nothing we can do to make you love us more, and nothing we can do to make you love us less. No one person is more important than another. Our true value is found in you.

You gave your life in order to open the way for all.
How amazing it is that you still seek us!



A Moment by the Fire

Luke 22:54-62

We may seldom get a challenge like Peter. The stakes may not be as high. And perhaps we can't imagine ourselves in an outright shunning of you, Jesus. But in so many little ways we dilute your presence in our life. So many things are competing for you. We spend hours in the busyness of tasks, in the excitement of a new interest or a hobby, in the obsessive worry of a 24-hour news cycle, or in the mind-numbing distraction of media. Then we find that we don't have enough time to spend with you and your word. No, not outright denial; but a diminishment.

And when the question comes, "Aren't you with Him?", even though our answer is yes, what do our lives show? How many times have we acted in impatient anger, spoken with self-righteous acidity, reacted in a defensive need to be right? How many times have we missed the chance to show the fruit of your spirit in our lives? No, not an outright denial; but a deference to our impulses.

And yet you still reach out to us. You knock at the door of our heart. In spite of our rejection, like Peter, you still offer us an opportunity to be involved in the building of your kingdom.

You gave your life to give us a second chance.
How amazing that you still welcome us!



A Moment at the Water's Edge

Matthew 14:25-33

Lord, you are the ultimate keeper of promises. You have come through for us time and time again. Your love has been amazing and steadfast. But when life gets rough, we allow ourselves to feel abandoned by you. How do we let this happen? Haven't we so clearly seen you working in our lives? How often has time revealed the wisdom of your patient plans? So many examples of your miraculous providence! So many moments of inexplicable assurance and joy!

And yet anxiety and uncertainty still come as easily to us as breathing. With every setback, every health scare, every challenging relationship, with every bit of bad news we often feel as though we're starting from scratch. You find the well of our faith to be needlessly dry. We forget your leading in our lives and lack the courage it takes to dive into the unknown. Rather than moving forward in the power of your promises, we find ourselves sitting on the shore in self-pity.

And yet... great is your faithfulness, boundless is your grace. You don't punish us for our doubt. You don't abandon us in our weakness. Instead, you hold us in our uncertainty. You still desire to enter hearts even though they are filled with fears. You are ready to replenish us as often as we require. We need never go thirsty.

You gave your life so that we don't have to rely on our own meager strength. How amazing that you freely offer us your power and peace!

The Sunrise

Let's move to the empty cross and the promise of a truly new day. As you experience the quiet beauty of the sunrise, reflect on what the power of Easter means in your life. A handful of folks at Willerup have also shared their thoughts on what Easter means to them. As the homily for this service, please take a moment and read their reflections below.

(As you read these, you can play the Sunrise video on our website.)

Easter, what does it mean to me?

Kristen Peppey

The Easter story...hmmm, a flood of memories rushed through my head when I was asked this question.

Memories of being a little girl going to Greendale Baptist Church in my brand-new Easter dress, patent leather shoes, white gloves and bonnet. Memories of how my family's relationship with the Lord grew; family devotions after dinner (which if I'm being honest, I just wanted to be over so I could go back outside and play! And yet we had a neighbor kids that joined my family and they seemed to love it). As years went on, my dad came to call Easter Sunday, "Resurrection Sunday". And so for much of my life and to this day I call it Resurrection Sunday. For He has risen! Over this past week the Lord has laid on my heart the lines of the old hymn:

"What can take away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

May we remember those precious words as we reflect on what the Lord has done for us and have a Happy Resurrection Sunday!

The Boshart Family

Over the past few years, Easter has become synonymous with the arrival of new life on our farm. Chicks arrive in the mail and lambs are born. This makes us think of the connection between Easter and animals. No, not the Easter Bunny or marshmallow Peeps, but the Lamb of God. Jesus was born surrounded by animals in a manger, rode a donkey into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and was ultimately crucified on the cross as the Passover lamb to take away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29).

This time every year provides us an opportunity to examine our lives in a new way. The harsh winter of cold, dark days living under the guilt of sin and judgment is over. We can experience the Spring forgiveness (again and again) made possible by our Lord and Savior's willingness to take our place as a sacrifice. All of creation, from bluebirds to sugar maple trees, are witnessing to His goodness and care for every detail of our lives. We know that the cold can return to our lives, but we hold fast to an Easter hope that the lamb will become the shepherd, leading

us all to springs of living water, where God will wipe away all the tears from our eyes (Rev. 7:17).

Mary Bielefeldt

The resurrection story of Easter is a glorious one. Whenever I read it, I am irresistibly reminded of an earlier resurrection story that also features our Lord Jesus. This one is in the Gospel of John (my favorite Gospel) in Chapter 11. Here we find Jesus traveling with his disciples to Bethany; a dangerous undertaking as only a few days earlier the people of the region had tried to stone him, and the religious authorities were also plotting against him. But Jesus' beloved friend Lazarus had died, and our Lord had a plan to display his glory and power in an astonishing way which would be echoed later at yet another tomb. I can never read this story without a thrill. Can you picture it? - Jesus moved to tears by the grief and loss of his friends Mary and Martha, walking to the tomb and commanding the stone be rolled away. Jesus lifts his face up to heaven, thanking the Father for hearing him, and then calls out those extraordinary words: "Lazarus, come forth!"

What was Jesus thinking when he said those words? Did his mind go forward in time to what he knew awaited him in Jerusalem? In 1 Corinthians 15:26 the Word tells us, "The last enemy to be destroyed is death." And here was proof that Jesus has authority over death - people trembling in fear and joy as they pulled off the graveclothes from Lazarus feet, hands, and face. Within a short time, Easter morning, Jesus' own graveclothes would also drop away. The Savior of the World would defeat death and rise again to save us from our sins.

When Jesus was comforting Martha in her grief and loss over her brother, he told her,

"I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this?"



I do, Lord. I do.
Hosanna in the
Highest!