



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

April 13-19, 2020

Sermon by Rev. Kelley Lane

2nd Sunday of Easter

Sermon Title: "A New Perspective"

<p>Notes from sermon on 4/12:</p>	<p>Things to Pray For This Week:</p>
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Family Focus Questions (before sermon):

What blessings do you receive through believing Christ is risen?

3 Questions for small groups (after sermon):

1. What stories can you share from your past about God's protection and healing?
2. How has believing in Christ saved you from worry, pain, and despair?
3. Why do you believe Christ is risen?

Monday, April 13: Read John 20:19-31

The famed author and motivational speaker Simon Sinek's most famous book and TED Talk is entitled, "Start with Why." When trying to start a movement, spread an idea, or sell a product, Sinek teaches that people want to know *why* you are doing it more than they care *what* it is. Why should they care? Why should they read this? Why should they change their ingrained behaviors and long-held beliefs?

The writer of John's gospel knew the importance of "why." *"But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name."* (verse 31). We have just celebrated the Risen Christ on an Easter Sunday undoubtedly different from any other we have experienced. The extent of our social connection may have been posting on our Facebook page something like "Christ is Risen!" Now, as Christians we are challenged to do something more – tell people why they should care. In a world so plagued with fear and death, we are called to show how believing in Christ gives us a life of joy, hope, and peace. We are called to share our own stories of blessings we have personally received when we have believed, even as we have not directly seen. Let us all spend some time today preparing an answer to the question, "Why do you believe Christ is risen? Why should I?"

Tuesday, April 14: Read John 1:1-5

The writer of John's gospel wants us to read about Christ's life, death, and resurrection so we "may have life in his name." What does that mean, and what's the connection between Jesus and life? Today, we return to the beginning of the entire gospel for answers. Today's scripture describes Jesus as the source of all life, existing from the very beginning and inextinguishable through sickness, pain, or death. By becoming one with this light...by accepting Jesus into our hearts and lives...we, too, become eternal children of God. We can embody light and repel darkness. We can live for eternal joy, not immediate pain. We have hope in abundance. When we become children of Easter, we are connected to the very beginning and the very end, and do not need to fear anything in between. Like light, we cannot keep this to ourselves, for light affects everything around it. Are we showing this light, peace, and hope so people can see why Easter makes such a difference?

Wednesday, April 15: Read Acts 2:14a, 22-32

One of the most powerful ways we can spread the "why" of a message is by turning to our own past and sharing our personal stories. The apostle Peter knew the power of the Jewish people's collective stories, gathered over millennia – stories of God's power and faithfulness. He was able to spread faith in the promises of a life with Christ by linking it to past stories to which his audience would easily relate. How can we do the same? How can we spread faith, hope, and joy in today's uncertain world by telling stories of other uncertain times that God led us through? When we are being asked to step in faith into the unknown, we can recall the proven times faith prevailed. What stories of God's providence, healing, and hope can we share today, both in our own lives and within the stories of scripture?

Thursday, April 16: Read 1 Peter 1:3-9

The earliest Christians rejoiced, praised, glorified and honored Christ in the midst of unimaginable persecution, torture, and death. They found incredible joy and peace in the eternal promises of Christ, not just for the future, but in the moment. When we are able to see the promises of Christ's healing and victory, we can rest in the blessed assurance that everything has been foreseen and the battle has already been won. We can live in excitement for the transformation of the world God is doing right now- in us, for us, and through us. There is no "wasted time" in God's world, and nothing is out of God's control. Where do we see God's healing hand at work today? Where do we see the promises of transformation?

Friday, April 17: Read Psalm 16

"Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows...I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure." (vs. 4a, 8-9). What truer words exist today? When we stay close to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we remain unmoved by the panic, despair, anger, and fear that can be swirling around us. In contrast, when we solely put our faith in market predictions, job outlooks, and 5-year plans, we "multiply our sorrows." Easter has given us the gift of seeing beyond the evening news and the real, but temporary, loss we are experiencing. Let us share to others why the message of Easter is so important, and keep the "why" of Easter at the forefront of our thoughts, words, and actions...for the healing and transformation of our world.

Saturday, April 18: SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: 1 Peter 1:3b-4

"By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you." (NRSV)

Sunday, April 19: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of

Common Confession: *God, you have made known to us the ways of life. Yet, too often, we put other things above you and turn away from the ways of life and toward the ways of death. Forgive us and guide us back into your presence, that we may know the fullness of joy. Amen.*