

# The Lily Pad



“I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.” Solomon 2:1



## CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!

### ***Fifth Avenue Friends and Family. Now what do we do?***

Our Lenten Journey is over. We traveled to the upper room on Maundy Thursday with Jesus and his Disciples. We heard Jesus say those powerful, effective words that are still effective when we hear them on Sunday mornings, “*Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of your*

*sins*” (Matthew 26:28). We traveled to the foot of the cross on Good Friday and heard Jesus utter a lonely cry of abandonment, “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me*” (Mark 15:34)? We heard the words of finality that Jesus spoke with his last breath, “*It is finished!*” (John 19:30), paying in full the price for our Sin that separates us from God. And we traveled to the empty tomb to hear again about the group of women that traveled there early on the first day of the week to find it empty. We heard once more the words of the angels at the empty tomb, “*He is not here, but has risen*” (Luke 24:6). The final, culminating Day of the Resurrection is over.



### ***Now what do we do?***

As Christians celebrate Easter and Christ’s resurrection, Pastors who have discussed this story year after year try to find ways to keep it fresh and relevant for their congregations.

It can be a challenge not just to retell the story while attempting to help people frame it or maybe look at it in a different way. Sometimes, all the Scriptures relating to Easter can be like a prism. You hold them up to the light and you turn it just a bit and you get a whole different view. Whole different kaleidoscopes of colors come through. So, Easter is a good time to try and turn the prism a little bit and see if there’s a different way of looking at things.

When Jesus rose from the dead, pain and misery departed and His suffering, so wrenching and complete, became a thing of the past. At the moment of Christ's resurrection, His focus, and ours, turned to the future.

The miraculous lesson of Easter is that through Jesus' death on the *Cross*, we have been granted a second chance, a divine permission to leave our old lives behind and stand before the pristine, unblemished canvas of a *new day*, with all its potential for joy, making decisions so that we both honor God, bring Him glory, and receive His blessings in return!!

***“Now, get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.’ That’s the message.”*** Matthew 28:7

**EASTER**, the most important celebration in the life of the church. Easter! It points to the center of the Christian faith, and for all who follow Christ; it is our justification for being called Christians. Growing up I loved the Easter egg hunts, chocolate bunnies, and new clothes for that special Easter service.

But my life was totally changed when I was introduced to the fullness of the message of Easter. The hope of Easter is the salvation, shalom, (peace) that is found in Christ that begins anew today! Easter doesn't represent the end. It's about a new beginning. As we journey through Easter together, we can do so with great anticipation. We can come with a sense of wonder in how the love, grace, and forgiveness found in the way of Christ will be unpacked and revealed in our lives in the days and months to come.

***So where do we go once we leave the empty tomb?***

Let us follow the example of Jesus' first Disciples. They went back to their vocations in life and took the witness of the resurrection with them. They lived in the joy of the resurrection of Jesus while carrying out the daily, ordinary labor, and responsibilities given to them.

We are "*every day*" witnesses and participants in the resurrection of Jesus. As repentant Christians, by God's grace we wrap the daily duties and responsibilities of our vocations in the joy, love, peace, and forgiveness of Christ. And, more than likely, others will take notice and God will bless your faithful work by giving you opportunities to "**tell all these things to all the rest**" (Luke-24:9).

*Now, we go forth* from Easter Sunday and the celebration of the empty tomb free as God's forgiven children in Christ. Now we go forth empowered by **God's Spirit** living and active within us to live in the joy of the resurrection as "*every day*" witnesses.

Have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior? If not, Easter is the perfect time to ask Him into your heart and your life. Stop reliving the past, beating yourself up over all the missteps you've made. **THE SLATE HAS BEEN WIPED CLEAN!**

***"So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"*** 2 Corinthians 5:17

***Paint a new life for yourself, bright with the colors of redemption, grace, peace, and renewal. Jesus loves you!***

***CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY, HE IS RISEN INDEED!***

***Pastor Clarissa, Martin, Marissa, Biancha,  
Sophia, Nicolas, Cookie, Hachi, & Sadie***

**I pray you will join us for Maundy Thursday & Good Friday services that lead us to Easter!**