

# Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



## Weekly Sermon Series

### Resurrection and Rejoicing

We just celebrated the hope for the world in the birth of Jesus. Here we are, a short time later, celebrating the hope for the world in his death!

I wonder what it would be like if we skipped Easter and Christmas one year, and instead of focusing on Jesus' life for the three short months in between, we "lived with him" for fifteen months, instead.

What would change for us? How would we worship and live differently if we focused only on Jesus' life during that longer period of time? How would we anticipate the hope for the world in his death if we spent more time meditating on his walk among us?

But we are both Easter and Christmas people. We need constant reminders that Jesus is the hope in this broken world for us. We live our



lives with high expectations, and wilt when adversity confronts us. We are no different than the disciples. They, who walked side by side with Jesus, despaired after the crucifixion.

It was the women who moved first to the normal tasks of tending to the body. And it was the women who did not need very much convincing that Jesus truly did go to his Father. They, too, listened at the feet of Jesus (although in the background). Maybe, rather than analyzing what they heard there, they discussed it with each other. Was it easier for them to believe the resurrection, and recognize it when it happened?

The men, we are told, were in hiding, probably afraid for their lives. They did not understand what had happened; they had been so hopeful! Only Peter investigated the good news after denying him three times, raced to see if all that Jesus told them had truly come to pass.

Peter helped the others rejoice in the resurrection – and understand that it was what they should have been looking for – because they were Easter people, too! There was nothing to fear. They would be with Jesus in eternity, just as he promised.

Rejoice in the knowledge that we are Easter people! We live in the resurrection's promise every day. We don't have to wait for it. We can ask God to roll our stones away, and leave them at the foot of the cross. We can look at the resurrected Jesus to lead us to an open and loving heart. Easter, for me, is a celebration reminding me that my sins have been washed away, and that my role is to love. I will love because Jesus Christ's resurrection was for me.

My Lord, renew me so that you can live in me. Make my life an example of the transforming power of your love. Amen!

-- Week of April 4, 2010