

Pastor Janneke's Page

Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

April 22nd & 23rd, 2017

Easter Forever!

City of God, Easter forever
Golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
River of Life, Saints and archangels,
Sing with creation to God the I AM!
Jesus is risen and we shall arise:
Give God the glory! Alleluia! *LSB 474:5*

Wait—wasn't Easter last Sunday? Isn't it over? As a pastor, I was tempted to think this past week, "I'm sort of glad Easter is *over* ..." (The sentiment is that post-Lent life might slow down a bit.) But what a crazy, unbiblical thought! ***Easter isn't over!*** The first Easter is only the beginning! Our closing hymn reminds us that Easter isn't just a day in history or a day on the calendar. Easter is our future, our hope, and our reason for living! For God's saints in Christ, Easter is FOREVER!

When God the Father raised His Son from the dead, Jesus returned and visited His disciples, showing them His restored, glorified body. He proved that it was really Him – He wasn't just resurrected "spiritually" as some claim. Jesus' real body, nail scars and all, was knitted back together so that He could begin His victory lap over hell, calm the troubled hearts of His friends, and give us a forty-day glimpse of our future, forever raised and restored in body, mind, and spirit, just like Him!

The Apostle Paul writes, "**But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.**" (1 Corinthians 15:20-26)

Christ is the "firstfruits." In other words, He is only the *first* to rise from the dead, the first of *many*, including you! Jesus' resurrection is the firstfruits, guaranteeing the "full harvest" of His saving work at His final coming: the resurrection of every human being their graves! Those who have rejected Christ will, tragically, lose out on His everlasting goodness. However, those who believe and are baptized will enjoy *Easter forever*. So for us, as fellow believers in Jesus, Easter 2017 is just the beginning!

Alleluia! Christ is Risen Indeed!

Pastor Kory Janneke