

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I. Intro Song

There is a song printed in you bulletin under “HOMILY.”

Please take out you bulletin and follow along as the SOLOISTS introduce it:

“Goodness Is Stronger than Evil”

Good-ness is stron-ger than e - vil; love is stron-ger than hate;
light is stron-ger than dark - ness; life is stron-ger than death; vic-t'ry is
ours, vic-t'ry is ours, through God who loves us. Vic-t'ry is
ours, vic - t'ry is ours, through God who loves us.

Text: From *An African Prayer Book*, Desmond Tutu, b. 1931
Music: GOODNESS IS STRONGER, John L. Bell, b. 1949
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Now let's all sing it.

I. Story

A. The sun still wasn't up as the woman scurried from the house and made their way across town.

1. They were taking the spices they had prepared to give Jesus the proper burial they weren't able to give him before the Sabbath.

2. But as they arrived at the tomb they found the stone rolled away from the entrance – and the tomb was empty!

3. Suddenly there were two men in dazzling clothes standing beside them who said, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.”

4. Then they explained it to them: **SONG**

B. And then it all made sense – and they rushed back to tell Peter and the others.

1. But they didn't believe them – just wishful thinking on the part of a bunch of emotional grief stricken women, they thought.

2. So, just to humor them, Peter went to check things out – but when he got there, it was just as the women had said – and Peter began to wonder.

3. As they were gathered back in the Upper Room later that night, they still didn't know what to believe, when suddenly **there was Jesus** in their midst.

4. He said, “Peace, it's me. Here's what I want you to understand”:
SONG

5. And soon that message began to spread – as the Disciples told others – and they told others – and so on and so on.

6. And as they went they faced trials and tribulations – problems and persecutions – but through it all they held on to that message. **SONG**

II. Tutu

A. That message spread down through the ages, down through the centuries, until it came to a young man growing up in South Africa.

1. Though he lived through the very depths of apartheid – he was able to become a **teacher**, and then a **priest**, and a **Bishop**, until eventually he became the **Archbishop** of the Anglican Church in South Africa.

2. **Desmond Tutu** worked not only to see the end of apartheid but more importantly he sought **Truth and Reconciliation** as he worked to bring the country together, rather than let it burst apart at the seams.

3. And as he continued this work, he was buoyed by these words that he wrote in his “African Prayer Book” – **SONG**

III. Today

A. We are beginning to emerge from two years of pandemic – two years of “safer at home” – two years that changed the way we do everything.

1. Through it all we have learned new ways of being together – new ways of being Church.

2. And all along, we held tight to the knowledge that – **SONG**

3. And now we face new challenges – not faced since “The Greatest Generation” as one country thinks that because it is strong, it can enforce its will on its neighbor in a vain attempt to reclaim some notion of its former glory.

4. But this is not the way to live – God calls us to live together in peace, remembering: **SONG**

B. And here at home we too need to do some reconciling with those who society has pushed down so that we can get ahead.

1. We need to remember that we are ALL God’s children – that Jesus died and rose for each and every person.

2. We need to live our lives seeing the face of Jesus in the face of all we meet.

3. Living lives that offer a **hand up** not a shove back;
 - looking for justice in every situation;
 - and living lives that proclaim: **SONG**

C. And now this Easter Message has come to us.

1. How are WE to tell the message of the empty tomb?
2. How are WE called to share God's great gift of LOVE in our lives?
3. How can WE bring the message of love and reconciliation to our broken and hurting world?
4. God's great Easter Message that: **SONG – sung twice**

Conclusion

That is the message of HOPE!

That is the message of LOVE!

That is the message of the EMPTY TOMB that we are called to share.

Take it with you now and
into the future;

Carry it with you wherever
you go

Proclaim it with your life and
love

For that is the TRUE
MESSAGE this and every Easter.

Let Us Pray

SONG



"Resurrection of Christ and Women at the Tomb," fresco, (1440 – 1442), Fra Angelico,

Easter Sunday
April 17, 2022, 9:30 a.m.