



ST. ANDREW'S IN THE PINES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Sermon
Easter Sunday
2016

In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. – “Free at last, free at last, Thank God almighty, we are free at last.” And oh what a freedom it is – a freedom that can scarce be put into words – a freedom we must remind ourselves of over and over. It is so hard to believe, so hard to comprehend, it is hard to describe. On this day we celebrate that there are no bonds, no chains, no powers or possibilities of defeating God’s love, God’s presence, God’s gifts to each of us. He is Risen from the dead, nothing can hold Him back, Jesus Christ is free and so are we!

We are free.

As it says in the book of John – “So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” Free indeed. In the book of Galatians, chapter 5, verse one, Paul writes, “For freedom, Christ has set us free.”

Have you ever tried to imagine that sort of freedom? I invite you to do so today. If you can and are comfortable close your eyes now for a few minutes and allow new images to form in your mind.

Imagine yourself free of all grudges, resentments, anger, hurts. They have all disappeared – they are nowhere – cleaned out of your emotions, out of your mind. Openness. And in that cleaned out space you realize that others have forgiven you. Anyone who has disliked you, ended relationship with you, anyone who has held you in contempt or anger has forgiven you, released you from their unkind emotions. Now there is so much space around you – you stand in a broad place and in that openness you realize that you are loved – you are so loved. It is a love that totally envelopes - you know that loving presence will always be in your corner, always be pulling for you, always have your back, never let you down or desert you. You will never be alone.

That love frees you up to quit trying to prove yourself to anyone. You don’t need to strive, you don’t need to perform and produce in order to be appreciated or accepted. In that love all that you offer is welcomed, taken freely, received as a gift. And as you offer who you are, you know that you no longer need to compete, no longer need to evaluate and judge the others around you – for you all are serving the same master, the same Lord, the one who offers all and is in all.

So, out go fear, anxiety, uncertainty- no more do they hold you captive. For this Lord, this Jesus Christ, this Jesus is risen from the dead. This Jesus has broken the bonds and destroyed the

powers of any other smaller gods – the gods of doubt, violence, greed, glamour and acclaim. The grasp of self-concern, of feeling threatened and protective, the presence of despair and cruelty.

It has all been defeated – once and for all. On this day of celebration of the resurrection, on this day when we cry out for joy that Jesus lives amongst us, we remember again that our God, our Lord Jesus Christ has the victory. For all of eternity, love wins. We are safe, we are free, for Love wins, thank God almighty - love wins.

Alleluia Amen!