

Centre Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
'Son Rise' Service, Easter Morning
Sunday, April 17, 2022
The Rev Dr Scott Couper
"Come and Have Breakfast"
John 21:1-14

The sight of the sea. The sound of a familiar voice. The smell of the charcoal. The taste of the fish. All the senses are there in the story. The disciples must have asked, "It this real?"

Here we are. The sight of this grass. The sound of familiar voices. The smell of the candle. In just a moment, later in the service, the taste of fish. All the senses are here this morning. We can ask as well, "Is this real?"

The thesis of our gospel story is to declare that something was real. And it is life that was real! Life was real! Life was eternal.

The point of our being here this morning is to declare to the world that our lives are real! Life is real! Life is eternal!

On Easter morning, we declare through scripture and through our lives that both Jesus and we are real. And we always will be, forever.

Our Hebrew scripture reading this morning recounts the dramatic story of the Exodus when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. To those of the Ancient Near

East, water was a source of terror. It portended sure death. We read the story of the Exodus this morning because it is a preview to the story of Jesus and the crucifixion.

In Exodus, the people of God were desperate to escape slavery. Their overseers were Egyptian. In Exodus, death was on all sides, figuratively speaking, in the form of water that would crash down and drown (and an army and desert on either end). Yet, the certain death of water on both sides was actually the conduit, the path, to liberation and to life.

In John's gospel, the people of God were desperate to escape colonialization. Their oppressors were the Romans. In John's gospel, death enveloped Jesus on all sides for three days. Yet, the certain death that was Jesus' was actually the conduit, the path, to liberation and to life eternal. In the book of Revelation, chapter one, verse five, John of Patmos greeted his readers with the following words, "Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come [...] and from Jesus Christ, *who is the firstborn from the dead...*".

The story of the Exodus and the story of Jesus both convey a theological reality that death is defeated for the people of God. In fact, not only is death defeated, but it actually has been converted from being *the end* to being *the beginning*. Death, like the Red Sea, is but a conduit to life and life abundant.

So, friends, in just a moment, “come and have breakfast” (John 21:12) with me and Jesus, the one who is dead no more. Amen.