

Resurrection and Service

Comments by Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins during the
White House Easter Prayer Breakfast on April 6, 2010

An empty tomb. Grave cloths only where the body should be.

Amazed women. Skeptical men. But . . .

. . . everybody's running to see.

Christ is risen! Hallelujah!

. . .

Now what?

Nothing like this has ever happened before.

Well, once.

There was – Lazarus.

The thing was, when Lazarus came out of the tomb, Lazarus still had those grave cloths wrapped all around him. Couldn't hardly move for the trappings of death still clinging. The crowd just staring, dumbfounded, till Jesus said . . . "Unbind the man!"

Jesus brought life, but then turned to the people standing round, and said, "You take it from here. Help him out of the tomb."

Jesus' resurrection is our resurrection, too – from the tombs that enclose us. From the trappings of death that enfold us. Jesus calls to us to help each other emerge.

"Unbind those cloths!"

Let's do.

Let's loosen the straps of need binding the potential of our neighbor, shatter the yokes of untreated injury and disease, unfasten the bonds of despair and cynicism and doubt that encircle our own hearts.

Let's release the strangling tie of racist hatred, the paralyzing fear of those not like us, of ways and thoughts that strike us as strange.

Let our service, at Jesus' urging, help unleash the healing power of resurrection hope. That God may bind us together in healing love, in the life-giving truth that we are one human family, created in the image of the one living God – a community of resurrection hope, brought forth by God's Holy Spirit, through our own acts of service as God empowers us.

Christ is risen! We've run to see. Now what!? Is up to us.