



The PINNACLE

Northside Drive

BAPTIST CHURCH

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Easter 2020

Calmly Plotting the Resurrection

James Lamkin



Here's an E.B. White story.

It nourishes my hope, even on this peculiar Easter. And yes, E.B. White wrote *Charlotte's Web* and *The Elements of Style*.

White tells of his wife, Katherine, perched on her canvas chair like a film director, engrossed in her annual ritual of readying the garden. With diagram and clipboard in hand, wearing an oversized raincoat, hour after hour, she plans. The garden plot rests in front of her. Bulbs awaiting internment sit beside her.

"As the years went by and age overtook her," writes White, "there was something comical yet touching in her bedraggled appearance...the small, hunched-over figure, her studied absorption in the implausible notion that there would be yet another spring, oblivious to the ending of her own days, which she knew perfectly well was near at hand, sitting there with her detailed chart under those dark skies in the dying October, ***calmly plotting the resurrection.***"

I love this story. I need this story.

This year, Easter didn't shout like the *Hallelujah Chorus*. It whispered. No jumping jacks to *Widor's Toccata*. Just a quiet walk.

This past Sunday morning, I looked out the window of my study. A rain was on the way. For the first time ever, I would not be in a church house on Easter Sunday. And most of the congregation would be in their pajamas with the *New York Times* at the breakfast table. No full pews. No Easter bonnets. No bulging choir lofts.

Yet, still Easter happened.

My thanks to all who pulled together the NDBC Easter broadcast. Children, adults. Musicians, ministers. Daniel's technical hard work, and the rest of us. The service was light-hearted and joyful, but weighted with gravitas.

Who knows what life will be like on the far side of the pandemic? What will the new normal contain?

We don't know. We can only know and only live today. Only today.

So, on this day, we get out our clipboard. We observe the garden of our lives, and we anticipate Easter coming toward us. We go about our spiritual business, as a faithful congregation... calmly plotting the resurrection.

***Sunday Morning
Worship Scriptures***

April 19

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:1-4a, 22-32

Psalms 16

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

April 26

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalms 116:1-4, 12-19

1 Peter 1:17-23

Luke 24:13-35

May 3

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42-47

Psalms 23

1 Peter 2:19-25

John 10:1-10

May 10

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 7:55-60

Psalms 31:1-5, 15-16

1 Peter 2:2-10

John 14:1-14

May 17

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31

Psalms 66:8-20

1 Peter 3:13-22

John 14:15-21

May 21

Ascension Sunday

Acts 1:1-11

Psalms 47

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:47a-53

**"A Blessing for Those
in Exile"**

By Daniel Headrick



Greetings to each of you! Jenney and I keep saying to each other, "these are such strange days." Strange doesn't quite capture it, but it's close. "Exile" is another word I've used often. Because we are in exile from so many things. We are in exile from our wonderful worship spaces and more importantly: we are in exile from each other.

Thank goodness for that pictorial directory that I can look at and remind myself what folk look like! If you need a copy, let us know. Will Mathews can put it in the mail to you.

Well, I think we are in need of a blessing, don't you?

I've enjoyed reading the lesson that Jesus gives in the Gospel of John. In the twentieth chapter, a great deal of dramatic events in the life of Jesus and the early church occur. Jesus is raised from the dead and he appears to a group of disciples that evening. The disciple Thomas missed out on that first meeting. So he shows up at the same house a week later, on the "Lord's Day" which we call Sunday.

Yes, Thomas shows up...and so does Jesus! Thomas was the one who wouldn't believe unless he could "see" and "touch." He was a very tangible oriented skeptic. When Jesus shows up, however, all of Thomas' big sounding objections fade away. He is left with the highest of faith claims: *My Lord and My God!*

And here is where the blessing comes. Jesus says, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe. (John 20:29).

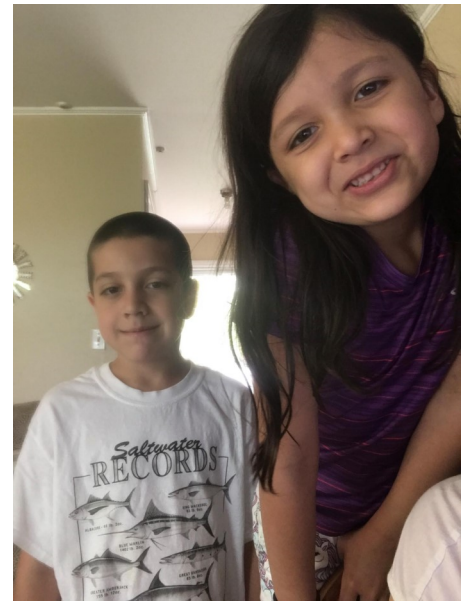
Now, who is that blessing for? I asked that of the Wednesday Bible study group that meets on Zoom. Theresa Manley said, "it is for us." She was right. It is for us. And for every human being who has never seen the physical body of Jesus. Most of us are not so fortunate to get our own "burning bush" moment: an encounter with the physical Easter Jesus. But all of us are invited into Jesus' blessing.

That word in Greek means "deeply happy, deeply fortunate." Blessed. I find it the perfect blessing for our time in exile from each and our worship spaces. We cannot see each other or touch one another. We are like Thomas, hungry for the tangible. And yet, in this time of bodiless existence, we are invited to nonetheless believe. May you partake of the blessing. Know of the joy I'll have when we see one another face to face soon.

Dear NDBC Family,

Your support and care for my mom and me in the months leading to her death sustained us during a long journey. Your cards (with heartfelt notes) and calls have continued to comfort me as I grieve here in my home. You have incarnated God's presence and peace to me in so many ways. I look forward to the time when we can once again worship together. Valerie Hardy

NDBC Families Observing Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday 2020





**WHO DID
ONCE
UPON THE
CROSS,**

Alleluia!



**PRAISE OUR
GOD, YE
HEAVENLY
HOST,**

Alleluia!



**SING WE
TO OUR
GOD
ABOVE,**

Alleluia!



**JESUS
CHRIST IS
RISEN
TODAY,**

Alleluia!



**CREATOR,
SAVIOR,
HOLY
GHOST.**

Alleluia!