



May 4, 2025 – Easter 3 (C)

Reflections on the Resurrection, Week 3

During the Easter season, Sermons That Work is pleased to present reflections from some of the newest bishops of The Episcopal Church on the resurrection of our Lord. Check back each week for a brief exploration of how Jesus Christ's rising from the grave changes everything. To listen to this reflection, scan the QR code on this page and subscribe to the Sermons That Work podcast.

*"Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life."*

- Znamenny Chant, Hymn 816 from Wonder, Love, and Praise

My first recollection of this chant was sitting in the candlelit Easter Vigil at the church my family and I attended when our daughter was young. The vigil was the central liturgy of that congregation. It began at 9 pm, it lasted for three hours, the pews were full to the point of overflowing.

The vigil very often included an adult baptism in the full-immersion font that a parishioner had built for the church. It certainly did that first year that my husband, our daughter and I were there – a dear friend, who had found the congregation at the same time that we did.

We gathered by candlelight around the font as she was baptized, praying for her heart to be open, that she would love others in the power of the Spirit, that she would be a witness to God's love... Then after the baptismal water, the seal, the lights, and those first alleluias, we sang, again and again: *"Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life."*

There was a mystical quality to that liturgy in that place on that day – a beauty in the proclamation of what is and what will be, a hope in witnessing that transformation with my toddler by my side, a joy in sharing that moment with our friend as she made the commitment to a life in Christ.

I felt a palpable confidence in Jesus' resurrection that day; a promise that I have carried with me. The memory of our celebration nurtured my faith through times of challenge and of joy; it nurtures me now in a moment where so much has been dismantled and challenged – a moment where fear, greed, and brokenness are driving decisions both nationally and globally. Even now, more than two decades later, I can close my eyes and see us crowding around the font, amid the candles and a cloud of incense. Even now, each time I smell chrism I remember the abundance of it at that vigil.

In this moment of our common life, so much seems unsteady and fearful and fraught. Through it all, I find myself returning to memories of encounters like these, when God is present and the words of my faith - sometimes chanted, sometimes whispered or held in silence, sometimes prayed among the faithful - those words carry a hope that is greater than I can ask or imagine.

As we gather again to remember Christ's resurrection, we gather again with the saints across centuries who have led and prayed and worshiped through moments of fear. As we celebrate this great mystery, may we remember our promises made in our baptism and commit again and again to the work that we have as disciples of Jesus Christ: to seek justice and peace, to share the Good News, to love others as we have been loved. We can, and we will, with God's help.



The Rt. Rev. Kristin Uffelman White is the tenth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio. A lifelong Episcopalian, Bishop White spent time in worship and in service with congregations in the Dioceses of Alaska, Eastern Oregon, Oregon, Chicago, and Indianapolis prior to her election as bishop in 2023. She and her husband, John, live in Cincinnati.