

MESSAGE NOTES

Awake to Joy

Philippians 1:1–11 (NIV)

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸ God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

NOTES:

Eastertide

Eastertide, in the Church's liturgical calendar, is the fifty-day season from Easter Sunday to Pentecost, when the Church celebrates and lives into the reality that Jesus is risen and God's new creation has begun. It is a time to recognize that the resurrection is not just a past event but the launching of a new world in the midst of the old. We are invited to live as people of that new creation aligning our lives with King Jesus, participating in His ongoing work, and embodying His life in the present. Growth and transformation aren't forced; they are the result of stepping into this new reality, trusting that God is bringing His purposes to completion in and through us.

"...we should be taking steps to celebrate Easter in creative new ways: in art, literature, children's games, poetry, music, dance, festivals, bells, special concerts, anything that comes to mind. This is our greatest festival. Take Christmas away, and in biblical terms you lose two chapters at the front of Matthew and Luke, nothing else. Take Easter away, and you don't have a New Testament; you don't have a Christianity; as Paul says, you are still in your sins..." -N. T. Wright

Philippians

The joy and confidence in the letter to the Philippians only make sense if Jesus is alive.

The Epistle to the Philippians is a pastoral letter in which Paul develops a theology of joy, showing that it flows from participation in Christ's life and remains steadfast, even at its strongest, in the midst of suffering.

Communion

The Eucharist is the ultimate healer....Therapy, self-understanding, loving friends, and disciplined self-effort can take us only so far, and it is not into full healing. Full healing comes from touching and being touched by the sacred. More particularly, as Christians, we believe that this touching involves a touching of the sacred at that place where it has most particularly touched our own wounds, helplessness, weaknesses and sin — that place where God "was made sin for us."

That place is the event of the death and rising of Jesus, and that event is made available to us, to touch and enter into, in receiving the body of Christ in Communion.

We need to bring our wounds to the Eucharist because it is there that the sacred love and energy that lie at the ground of all that breathes can cauterize and heal all that is not whole within us." -Ronald Rolheiser