

Easter—Easter Morning and Easter Evening—April 11th and 12th, 2020

Scripture Readings

John 20.1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”

³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³ They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

“They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).

¹⁷ Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20.19-23

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

John 20.24-29

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

²⁸ Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

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²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

John 20.30-31

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Introduction

On Easter Weekend, we heard a message that went beyond the story of Easter morning. The miracle of resurrection was first revealed in the morning, but it kept going! The risen Jesus then appeared to his disciples that night, and again one week later. Jesus keeps showing up then and now. In the context of COVID 19, Jesus showed up in our homes at Easter!

Engage the Scripture

- Read John 20.1-18. Even if you’ve read this passage before, what stood out to you? Did you notice all of the running? Why were Mary and the disciples in a hurry on Easter? Has an appearance (or absence) of Jesus caused you to pick up your pace? Describe.
- Read John 20. 19-23. Why were the disciples afraid and behind locked doors? In a few short sentences the mood in the room went from fear to peace and joy. Did Jesus have to be present for that shift to happen? Are there any “locked doors” behind which you hide? Have you ever felt the presence of God when you were afraid?
- Read John 20.24-29. What do you notice about the door when Jesus shows up this time? Jesus had previously left the disciples with peace. Has fear returned over the previous several days? What are Jesus’ first words this time? Peace.

Thomas missed out on the risen Jesus’ first appearance to the disciples. This next time Jesus shows up to a Thomas who doubts that he could be alive. In this appearance, the movement is from doubt to belief. Jesus showing up has now addressed fear and doubt. What might happen if Jesus showed up in your place of sheltering these days? What might he be able to transform in you?

- Read John 20.30-31. We have a record of the Easter story for a reason. How do you take this story and live a life of resurrection that might help others to believe?

Pray

Pray with at least one other person and close with this confession of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!