

The Jefferson Spirit

Sundays at 9:00AM

April 20, 2025

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Easter Sunday

He is Risen!

Scripture Reading: John 20:1–18 (NIV)

The Empty Tomb

20 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.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

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. they will see me.”



Interesting Facts – *John 20:1–18*

1. Mary Magdalene Was the First Witness of the Resurrection

Mary Magdalene holds a unique honor: she was the *first person* to see the risen Christ. In a time when women's testimonies were not valued in court, Jesus chose a woman to carry the **first resurrection message**, showing the radical inclusion of the gospel.

2. It Was Still Dark When Mary Arrived

Verse 1 notes that Mary came to the tomb *"while it was still dark."* This is both literal and symbolic—she came in grief and confusion, walking in darkness. But by the end of the passage, she walks away in **resurrected light and joy**.

3. Mary Didn't Recognize Jesus at First

Mary thought Jesus was the gardener (v.15). This echoes other resurrection appearances where Jesus is not immediately recognized—perhaps showing that **spiritual eyes** must be opened, not just physical ones.

4. Jesus Calls Her by Name

Mary recognizes Jesus only when He says her name—"Mary." This moment echoes John 10:3, where Jesus says, *"My sheep hear my voice... He calls them by name."* The resurrection is not just global—it's **deeply personal**.

5. Peter and John Race to the Tomb

Verses 3–8 describe Peter and "the disciple Jesus loved" (John) running to the tomb. John arrives first but lets Peter enter first—showing both his respect and the excitement surrounding the resurrection discovery.

6. The Burial Cloths Were Folded

John notes that the linen wrappings were left behind, and the cloth over Jesus' head was folded separately (v.7). This detail quietly points to order and **deliberate resurrection**—not a hurried grave robbery, as some feared.

7. Mary Becomes the "Apostle to the Apostles"

Jesus tells Mary, *"Go to my brothers and tell them..."* (v.17). She becomes the **first evangelist** of the resurrection, sent to declare the good news to the disciples—a high honor and sacred task.

8. Jesus Says "My Father and Your Father"

In verse 17, Jesus says, *"I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."* This is a powerful moment—He is declaring a **shared relationship** with God, inviting believers into His intimate connection with the Father.



Order of Worship

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Musician: Gwyn Reynolds

***He Lives, p.310 UMC Hymnal**

*Call to Worship (Congregation)

Leader:

Christ is risen!

People:

He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

Leader:

This is the day the stone was rolled away.

The grave lost its grip, and death was defeated.

People:

This is the day love broke through the darkness.

Jesus is alive, and hope is alive with Him!

Leader:

Come, let us celebrate the risen Savior—

With hearts full of joy and voices lifted in praise!

People:

We worship the One who conquered the grave.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

***Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise, p.312 UMC Hymnal**

Scripture Reading: John 20:1–18 (NIV)

Sermon: I Have Seen the Lord!

Offertory - UMC Choir

*Doxology - p.95 UMC Hymnal

*Lord's Prayer - p.895 UMC Hymnal

***Thine Be the Glory, p.308 UMC Hymnal**

*Sending Forth

Postlude

Easter Sunday Quiz

1. Who were the first people to discover that Jesus had risen from the dead?

- A. Peter and John
- B. The Roman guards
- C. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary
- D. Thomas

2. What did the angel say to the women at the tomb?

- A. "Why are you crying?"
- B. "He is not here; He has risen!"
- C. "You are standing on holy ground."
- D. "Peace be with you."

3. What was rolled away from the entrance of Jesus' tomb?

- A. A golden gate
- B. A heavy stone
- C. A curtain
- D. A tree

4. Which Old Testament prophet spent three days in the belly of a great fish—a foreshadowing of Jesus' resurrection?

- A. Elijah
- B. Isaiah
- C. Jonah
- D. Daniel

5.



What day of the week did Jesus rise from the dead?

- A. Friday
- B. Saturday
- C. Sunday
- D. Monday

6. Which holiday do we celebrate to remember Jesus' resurrection?

- A. Christmas
- B. Good Friday
- C. Easter
- D. Pentecost

7. What did Jesus say when He appeared to the women after His resurrection?

- A. "Follow Me."
- B. "Greetings!"
- C. "Peace be still."
- D. "Do not cry."

8. What is the common Easter greeting among Christians?

- A. "The Lord is good!"
- B. "He is risen!"
- C. "Joy to the world!"
- D. "It is finished!"

9. What is traditionally eaten on Easter Sunday in many cultures?

- A. Candy canes
- B. Roast turkey
- C. Ham or lamb
- D. Fish and bread

Answer Key:

- 1. C – Mary Magdalene and the other Mary
- 2. B – "He is not here; He has risen!"
- 3. B – A heavy stone
- 4. C – Jonah
- 5. C – Sunday
- 6. C – Easter
- 7. B – "Greetings!"
- 8. B – "He is risen!"
- 9. C – Ham or lamb
- 10. B – New life and the empty tomb

Sermon Insights

Sermon Lesson:

In John 20:1–18, we witness one of the most tender and powerful moments in Scripture: the risen Jesus calling Mary Magdalene by name. At first, she doesn't recognize Him—her grief is too deep, her expectations too final. But when He speaks her name, everything changes. This moment reminds us that Jesus meets us personally in our confusion, sorrow, and questions. The resurrection isn't just a grand event—it's a deeply intimate encounter with a Savior who knows us by name. Like Mary, we are invited to move from despair to hope, from confusion to calling, and from weeping to witness. When Jesus speaks your name, it means new life has begun.

Application:

1. Walk in Resurrection Hope

Application: Start each day this week reminding yourself that *Jesus is alive—and so is your hope*. Write down one area of your life where you need to see God move, and pray boldly with resurrection faith. Don't let fear or discouragement have the final word—let hope rise.

2. Call Someone by Name

Application: Just as Jesus spoke Mary's name and changed her world (John 20:16), reach out personally to someone who may be hurting or feeling overlooked. A phone call, text, or conversation could be the encouragement they need to feel seen, known, and loved.

3. Share the Good News

Application: The women at the tomb didn't keep the resurrection to themselves—they *ran to tell others*. This week, look for one opportunity to share your faith or invite someone to church. Your story might be exactly what someone else needs to hear to begin their own.

Conclusion:

Easter is not just a celebration of what happened two thousand years ago—it's a declaration of what is still true today: Jesus is alive, and because He lives, so can we. The empty tomb is God's eternal reminder that death doesn't win, hope never dies, and no situation is beyond His power to redeem. So as we step into this new week, may we live as resurrection people—full of faith, overflowing with grace, and boldly sharing the good news that life has conquered death, and love has the final word.