

**A Sermon for Easter Sunday  
April 20, 2025**



**The Rev Barbara Bond  
New Life Episcopal Church**

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[Easter Sunday – The Episcopal Church](#)

## Luke 24:1-12

A group of women get up early on Sunday morning and make their way to the tomb. They are bringing spices, to use in wrapping the body of Jesus. Their leader Jesus died three days ago, Friday, and this is their first opportunity to do their sacred duty to his remains. They arrive at the tomb and see that the stone has been rolled away. They are astonished. The stone rolled away, and there is no body. Then it gets even weirder. Two men in dazzling array (do you think maybe they are angels?) say to the women, "Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." The women are astonished and run to tell the disciples, who dismiss them as telling an idle tale. But Peter isn't so sure – he runs back to the tomb and sees it is just as the women described.

He is not here, said the angels.

I once had a seminary professor named Paula whom I much admired. Paula had been a Methodist pastor for some years, but she decided to go back to school for her doctorate, and to seek ordination in the Episcopal Church. By the time I met her, she had accomplished all those things. I asked her what motivated her. Why did she leave her pastorate in the Methodist church? She replied, "Remember what the angels said at the tomb? He is not here!"

So she sought the Risen Christ elsewhere. I understood, because my seminary experience was the most intense encounter I had had with the Risen Christ in my life until that time.

Our Gospel account this morning is from the great writer Saint Luke, who has given us so many wonderful and memorable episodes from the life of Jesus. And when he wrote about this encounter with the angels, he was hardly finished with his story. There is more! The Risen Christ stays on earth for forty days after The Resurrection, according to Luke. What is he doing all that time?

We know the wonderful story of the Walk to Emmaus. Luke tells this story, which happened in the afternoon of the day of Resurrection. Two of Jesus' followers are walking along the road to Emmaus, which is about seven miles from Jerusalem. They are despondent, having lost their leader Jesus, but they have heard the strange tale that the women told, of arriving at the empty tomb and hearing what the angels said. About this time, the Risen Christ joins them. The disciples do not recognize him as Jesus, but they are happy to have him as a companion on the way. The Risen Christ tells them about the Jewish scriptures, the prophecies, the expectations, and the walkers come to understand things better – but they still aren't sure about it, or about who this person is. Well, when in doubt, have something to eat!

So the three of them stop at an inn for dinner. The innkeeper brings them bread and wine as starters. The Risen Christ takes the bread, blesses it and breaks it (does this sound familiar?) and the two disciples suddenly recognize him for who he is. He is known to them in the breaking of the bread. And then he disappears.

Here we have what is familiar to us: a Eucharistic scene, complete with bread, wine, and Jesus. The Risen Christ is present at the Eucharist, then and now.

The Risen Christ is present right here, with you, in this joyous assemblage.

Where else do we see the Risen Christ? I'll bet many of you are going to partake of an Easter banquet, at home or perhaps in a restaurant. The Risen Christ will be with you in your celebrations today.

Some of you may be sad today, missing family members who have gone on to the next life. They of course are with the Risen Christ in eternity, but he is with you too, right now, offering comfort.

All of your efforts for those less fortunate – the Risen Christ is right there with you, organizing items for the Children's Network, gathering food for the hungry, clothing for the naked, bringing hope to the downtrodden. The Risen Christ is active, all the time.

Where is he? Not in some empty tomb, but rather out in the world, leading us all forward in hope for new life in abundance. He is fighting for justice for those who are mistreated. He is present in our worship, in our relationships, in our laughing, in our weeping, in our living, in our dying. The Living Christ is omnipresent – everywhere, with an open embrace for everyone. The message of Easter is clear: Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed: Alleluia!