

Easter Morning Sermon
Breach Theme
Mark 16: 1-8

Let's cut right to the chase.
It's over.
The tomb is empty.
And life is full.
God wins – life triumphs over death
hope
once just a whisper in the dark
is set loose in the world and will never – EVER – die.

Jesus is risen
he is risen indeed
Alleluia – alleluia!!!

turns out that the hole in the fabric of the world -
that hole is cross shaped
letting in light
and
a gateway to life deep and dense and everlasting.

the whole universe is filled with joy.

Let yourself just soak in that for a bit.
Tomorrow you can ask why and how and who...
today – in the fullness of this moment
let the deepest, truest part of you know what it knows
and feel what it feels
and hear again the message of the angels.

Jesus is alive

Death has done its best
and it wasn't good enough.
Life and love prevail.

Now: you and I both know that this is the sweetest truth that we will ever be called upon to bear.
We gather here after the fullness of the moon to do the only thing we can do – bear this truth together.

It is something the body knows before the mind catches up. At the angels' words something in us leaps toward the message.

This is not a day for shallow breathing, my friends. This is a day when creation emerges as from an underwater cage, freed at the last minute, lungs about to burst, heads breaking water, inhaling for dear, dear life and filling our screaming lungs with precious, blessed, life giving air. Gasping, inhaling thankfully and noisily.

Those who have experienced the crucifixion don't sip at the empty tomb. They tip it up with both hands and drain it dry
unmindful of how it runs down our chins and
filled with thanks that even as we drain it empty
it fills again.

There is a time for scholarly debate: for ossuaries and carbon dating of shrouds and textual analysis.

This is not that day.
The tomb is empty
and life is full

Our hearts respond, and dare to beat more quickly
our very molecules cry out
our mouth goes dry
the hair on the back of our neck prickles

something earth shaking is filling the air

our minds, slow to catch up, wheezing behind, dragging too much thinking – our minds say how can it be?

That's ok. They'll be along later. Or they won't
it doesn't matter, because
Jesus is risen. Death's power is not final.
Jesus is risen.
Once and for all
ONCE
and
for ALL.

How did it happen?
We haven't got a clue.
What happened inside that tomb
was a moment of deepest intimacy between Jesus and the Creator
like all acts of love. Never to be spoken of to others.
Too intimate. Too intense.
All we have is the new life that is its result.

Here in Mark not even a witness,
no Resurrection appearance
only a messenger telling them it is so.

If you were following in your Bible you'll see that we stopped at verse 8. In some Bibles it continues on to verse 20 telling how Jesus appeared to Mary and the others
but all the scholars agree that those verses were added much later by someone else.

Mark, the first to write his gospel
ends it like this:
Verses 5-8

you can see why someone would add, can't you?
What kind of ending is that?
Is this any way to run a resurrection???
Where's the earthquake, the light, the Jesus sightings??
Nothing.

5-8 again

I love that ending. Mark is a genius.
At least I think so.

It's an open-ended Gospel. Ending with a proclamation but also a question.
Will they tell?
Will they remember that before he died, he told them he'd meet them again in Galilee?
Who is going to tell if they don't?
There's this empty space at the end of the gospel
Who is going to fill it?

Who will go for me, says the God of the empty tomb?
Who will tell this Gospel news to the world?

Ever since then there have been those who say with lips and lives - "here am I – send me"

Equipped with memory
or trust of the memories of others
and bread and wine
and compassion
open hearts and willing hands and a capacity for wonder
they told the story

He's alive. In prisons
IN AA meetings they told the truth. There is One stronger than your demons.

At kitchen tables and soup kitchens they tell the good news: He comes to the poor, and he comes to
reorder the system that keeps them that way. And....
fear, that sad old control freak, has given up and slunk away in shame.
Jesus is alive.
Life wins.

In hospital waiting rooms
at the women's shelter
in tent cities and protests in the streets
on hockey rinks and basketball courts and ski trails
they tell the good news.

**YOU ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD. THE IMAGE OF LIFE AND LOVE. THE WORLD IS
GOD'S HOME MEANT FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE.**

Hope prevails.

Against those who would twist the Gospel into an instrument of power judgement and revenge, they have spoken the truth regardless of the cost.

The way of Jesus is the way of peace. Of justice. Of radical hope and the embracing of all creation.

And to those who hear the gospel as comfort only they have spoken the words of life
a hurting, broken world needs you.
Get off the couch!

My deepest prayer for you today is that you will be filled with this resurrection truth
and hear the call to mend the world – to fill in the blank at the end of the Gospel and go fill the world
with Easter glory.