

## The Risen Christ, Hidden in Plain Sight

We greet each other on Easter morning with “Christ is Risen!” We respond, “He is Risen Indeed!” We are confident that the risen Christ is very present and we light the Christ candle as visual symbolic evidence.

But where was Jesus on the first Easter morning? Nobody seemed to know. John tells us that Mary was upset as she ran to the disciples crying. **“They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb and we don’t know where they have taken Him.”**

Luke writes that the women were **all upset at the empty tomb** and were asked by angels. “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He has risen as He promised.” They ran off to tell the disciples who accused them of nonsense.

Mark writes that when the disciples actually went into the tomb, they were greeted by a young man in a white robe saying, “Do not be amazed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth. **He is not here.** He has risen.”

Similarly, Matthew tells of the women meeting an angel who comforted them. “I know you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. **He is not here** He has risen.”

Everybody is looking for Jesus on that first Easter Sunday.  
John tells us that even when Mary actually sees Jesus, she doesn’t recognize Him.



Mary Magdalene looked at the Risen Christ  
And thought He was a gardener.  
She had never seen a risen Christ before.



Luke writes of two others *Cleopas and Simon (a name given to Cleopas’ companion in the 3d Century)* who walked with Jesus for miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus and did not see Him.

The fact is that Jesus was there, hidden in plain sight. Jesus is present beyond our meager expectations.

From Genesis on God promises to always be present. One of His names is Jehovah- Shammah.  
The God who is.

In Genesis 28, vs.15 God confirms His covenant with Abraham to Jacob, "And behold, I am with you, and I will keep you wherever you go. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised."

Isaiah 49:15 "but I will not forget you. Behold I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands."  
Hebrews 13:5 & 6 reminds us "For He Himself said, I will never leave you nor will I forsake you. So that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid."

Jesus' last words to the disciples just before His ascension, "Lo I am with you always even to the end of the age."

Do we see a pattern of promises? The resurrection was a highly traumatic event for the disciples. Memories of the crucifixion were still vivid in their minds even as they saw the risen Christ standing before them. Jesus was hidden in plain sight. So, it is for us. We know in our heads that Jesus is present but unexpected crisis and devastating news can momentarily blind us. "Where is God in all this? "Where did He go?" "I've slipped back from the resurrection to the crucifixion." "I feel abandoned."

I remember a colleague telling me of a note slipped under his study door. "If you feel far away from God, guess who moved?"

God is "the still point in our turning world" to paraphrase T.S.Elliott

If we feel that God is hidden, He is hidden in plain sight obscured only by us being distracted by circumstances. And there are many distracting circumstances swirling around us recently.

We mourn the loss of economic stability yes, but more than that we grieve the loss of decency, compassion, and empathy displaced by the chaos of greed, egotism and lust for power. We yearn for a moment of quiet where we can reset our spiritual perspective.

The world indeed is ever turning. The art in life is to discover the still point of the turning world. At that still point for us is the Risen Christ. The end of all our exploring is to arrive where we started and to know the place for the first time. (from "Little Gidding" in "Four Quartets,")



Jesus is with us always even until the end of the age. Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone. Easter is our time to focus on the Resurrection. Let it be the still point. Let our lives revolve around it. Don't be distracted.



Wendy and I wish you a fresh awareness of the Risen Christ this Easter