

“Who Is This Man?”
“The Jesus Who Surprises Us All”

We begin Easter. While Lent is forty days, the Celebration of Easter is fifty days, ending with Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit. During these Easter days, our gospels readings will mostly focus on the lives which were changed because they experienced the resurrected Jesus. They became witnesses to the new life Christ offers. This year, Easter falls on April Fool’s Day and Easter is a surprise. It was a surprise on the first Easter and it continues to be a surprise now. Easter is more than a day, it is a gift and a way of life. *Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, Indeed!!!*
Happy Easter! ---Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“The Jesus Who Surprises Us All”**

Prayer for the Week

God of amazing surprises and powerful love, your Easter victory is our sign of hope. Your Easter triumph is our promise of new beginnings. Your Easter alleluia is unexpected, undeserved and graciously welcomed. We need your Easter—the promise that dawn brings new possibilities, the assurance that your love is stronger than death, the hope that every day might be touched by Easter joy! Let us feel the possibilities for living life surrounded by your powerful love and surprising grace. We pray in the name of our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus. Amen

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

Monday, April 2, 2018 Mark 16: 1-6

Here is Mark's first account of that first Easter. These verses are the first of three ending for Mark, the earliest gospel. What emotions did the women experience? Was the early morning cold or cool? In your mind, how do you see the angel? What did the angel's voice sound like when the words "Do not be afraid" were spoken? *Meditate today, on that first Easter and how you experience the resurrection of Jesus today.*

Tuesday, April 3, 2018 Mark 16: 7- 8

The women left the tomb "with fear and great joy." What an interesting turnoff phrase. They haven't seen Jesus and they only know what the angel has said. Then with fear and great joy and they see Jesus! He also tells them to "not be afraid" to go and tell the disciples that he is going ahead of them. *Have you ever felt fear and joy at the same time? Which emotion took precedence? Do you experience the risen Christ in such a way that you go tell others?*

Wednesday, April 4, 2018 2 Corinthians 5: 13-17

Followers of Jesus were sometimes considered "beside themselves." Who wouldn't question these believers who embraced a resurrected Christ and witnessed this reality in their lives? Easter brings new life and a transformed world view. Every person becomes a new creation and people are no longer judged on their backgrounds, their gender, and their race, for all are brothers and sisters in Jesus. The world these believers knew was forever changed because of their relationship with Christ. *How are you changed and made new in Jesus?*

Thursday, April 5, 2018 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Paul reminds the church at Corinth and us that we are given the ministry of reconciliation because Christ has reconciled all the world to himself. We are ambassadors Paul says, God making his appeal through us. Another word might be witnesses. We are witnesses for Christ and the new life and new hope promised in resurrection. All who love Christ are called to this ministry and this task of witnessing on behalf of Christ. *How will you be an ambassador for Christ this week?*

Friday, April 6, 2018 Mark 16: 9-15

Each gospel records the resurrection of Jesus a little differently. Mary Magdalene looked for Jesus in the tomb, but he was not there. She told others, they didn't believe her. Finally Jesus appears and "upbraids" the disciples for not believing. And yet, they became the first evangelists sharing the good news of God's love and grace through Jesus. Today, hear the words of the angel for you: **Do not be afraid! Go and tell others that Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!**