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Christ fills everything everywhere with his presence (Ephesians 1:23)

Alleluia, the Lord is Risen!

I love the resurrection stories, the Easter stories. Each Gospeller tells a slightly different group of stories, yet, for me, they all come together in a seamless whole of wonder and joy. Beginning in the dark on Easter morning, before the sun has risen, and lasting through the glorious sunlit morning of Pentecost fifty days later, we join the disciples in a period of indescribable joy and wonder before their journey, and ours, picks up again. We live together in Eastertide, a time when they and we truly come to know the beginning of wisdom, knowledge of the Holy One. (Proverbs 10:9)

The week preceding Easter was for the disciples a week packed with activity. Back and forth they walked from Bethany where they were staying to Jerusalem, up the Temple Mount. The days were full of controversy and conflict, culminating with the arrest Thursday night and the horror of Friday. Saturday, the Sabbath, was spent in hiding in the same upper room where they had gathered on Thursday and where they had planned to celebrate the Passover on Friday. They stayed indoors, which was a good thing – staying indoors kept them safe from the eyes of the Temple police who might, just might have been looking for them. The Romans probably thought that with

the leader dead and the followers scattered, there was no need to pursue anyone further.

Then came the first day of the week and the world was changed forever.

Who would have thought the world would change? Certainly not the women, not the disciples or Peter – no one thought of an empty tomb. The women set out, in the dark, to anoint the body only to discover the tomb empty of Jesus but inhabited by angels.

Immediately, I have questions. How many women – were there two – Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome – or three – Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome? Which James was Mary the mother of? James the Zebedee brother or James the brother of Jesus – no, no, probably not him, the Virgin most likely remained in seclusion, mourning – or James the son of Alphaeus? Probably him, but maybe there was still another James. Who would have thought the name was so common. How many angels were there – one, fearsome and strong as in Matthew or one consoling as in Mark or two gentle and reassuring as in John and Luke? Or maybe three, the two inside and one outside who didn't stay long?

I attempt to make sense of it all – identify all the players but to no avail. And yet it doesn't matter. It is Easter and the world is changed forever.

And the Risen Lord, he comes and goes. Sunday morning Jesus appears to Mary. Later that day, he joins two disciples, as they walk home to Emmaus from Jerusalem. Almost simultaneously he appears to the gathered group in

the room where they had been hiding. He comes and goes. He appears to them in Jerusalem and in Galilee, after they have followed the instructions given by the angel, and gone home and begun to pick up their old lives. They are fishermen – James, John, Nathanael, Thomas, and Peter – so they go fishing. But they are markedly unsuccessful – their old lives are over, though they do not know it. And then my favorite story – breakfast on the beach – the charcoal fire, the fish and bread all ready – all prepared – truly heaven on earth.

I attempt to construct a timeline but time isn't what it was. Time seems simultaneously compressed and expanded. This time is God's time, not mine, not ours.

It is joy and wonder – it is Easter – fifty days long, the fullness of time – fifty days we, like the disciples, live not in not earth time, our time, *kronos time*, but in God's time, *karios time*, which, as in the beginning of time, has intersected with earth time, making all things new.

It is Easter and we now live in Christ, who fills everyone and everything everywhere with his presence, a new creation, for everything old has passed away and everything has become new!

It is Easter and the world is changed forever!

Amen.

Alleluia, the Lord is Risen!