

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2026

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“Easter Sunday”

Based on Matthew 28:1-10

The tomb is empty and Jesus is alive!

But you've heard that before, haven't you.

You've heard it many times before.

This all makes for good story telling.

And some would say, better movies.

But what is the Good News for us today, some two thousand and more years later?

Matthew's account of the empty tomb is bold and dramatic, just as his description of the final events on Calvary. Matthew was definitely a 'go big or go home' kind of writer.

On Good Friday, as Jesus drew his final breath, there was a great wind that tore the temple curtains in two, according to Matthew, and a frightening earthquake that moved the ground in groaning fashion. It was almost as if the Creator Himself, was showing His anger at the loss of His son; as if the earth was shouting, “This was my beloved Son. You killed my Son!”

Today, Easter Sunday, just as dramatically, Matthew describes yet another earthquake, frightened soldiers, hysterical women, a missing body and a risen Saviour.

Two important stories. Two earthquakes.

- Dramatic effect, some would say.
- A little too coincidental, others might say.

Aside from the obvious chaos, the writer of Matthew wants you, the reader, to take note of the beginning and the end of the events at Calvary, as if he were trying to say of these two stories, “Pay attention. This is important!”

As the scene unfolds in Matthew's account, a dazzling angel takes center stage. The angel rolled the stone away, and said, “Come. Come and see.” Hang on to that phrase, because we are going to hear it again.

The soldiers were beside themselves, which shouldn't surprise us too much. Angelic visions have a habit of doing that. But it is unclear to me, whether their fear was because of the unexpected visit from a heavenly winged

creature, or the fact that the angel pointed out that the very tomb they had stood in front of all night, was now empty. They had somehow lost the dead man they were supposed to be guarding, and it was unlikely that the news would be well received by their superiors. They might very well be the next ones dragging their cross to the Hill of Golgotha.

The women were anxious as well, but I doubt that Mary, the mother of Jesus was terribly surprised of the angel's presence at this point. Mary and angels had a long history. But I suspect that the announcement of an empty tomb brought to her mind, concern for the well being of the disciples, other believers hiding in the city, and the threat of another rampage by the Romans.

Then of course, there is the mystery of the empty tomb. Just how did Jesus' body disappear from a sealed tomb guarded by Roman soldiers?

- A miracle?
- Movie magic?
- I cannot say.

But I do know that leaving room for the mystery of God to weave its way through our

hearts, is essential for our faith journey.

- We do not know everything.
- We do not understand everything.
- We are not supposed to know or understand everything.

Only God knows all, and we must accept that.

And finally, the encounter with Jesus. The women rushed from the scene and bumped into Jesus Himself. It only deepened their confusion. "You're alive! The tomb? The angel? How?" And Jesus said, "Come. Come and see. I am alive." A second time the phrase, "Come and see."

Here it the Good News for today.

In an anxious world, where prophetic signs are often missed in the noise of news reports and the messiness of social decline, our Saviour quietly beckons us:

Come
Come closer
Come and see

Leave room for Me
In the things you know and understand
In the things you don't understand

I will fill the emptiness within.
I will give you a glimpse of eternity.
For I am alive.

Death has not won.
Darkness will never win.
Come and see.