

**Sermon Notes from CMJ**  
Easter Day - Year B

**Readings for Principal Service:** Acts 10:34-43; Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Mark 16:1-8

**Introduction** – He is risen! He is risen indeed! These words encapsulate the joy and hope of our faith this Sunday. Resurrection Sunday marks the end of Lent and the beginning of a new season, known as Eastertide. Easter is more than a day; it is a season! And before people get upset over the word Easter, we should be clear that the season is known as Easter in only two languages, English and German. The word means “spring” and is not derived from a female pagan fertility goddess. Actually, in Latin and Greek, the day is called *Pascha*, which is the Aramaic form of Passover.

**Common Theme** – Resurrection is the common theme, as it should be. We have journeyed with Jesus through the wilderness. We have come with him to Jerusalem to face the cross. We have sat at his feet at Passover and heard the new commandment to love as he has loved. This journey is actually important to us as his disciples. Without Passover, Easter makes absolutely no sense. Without the death of the Messiah, you cannot have a resurrection; and without a resurrection, you cannot have the gospel. The gospel can be stated in one sentence – Messiah rose from the dead. And that is indeed very good news.

**First Reading: Acts 10:34-43** – Peter gives a short account of the good news to Cornelius in Caesarea. The gospel is now proceeding to include the Gentiles as Peter declares that, “God shows no partiality.” The prevailing view of late Second Temple Judaism was that God did show partiality towards the Jewish people over the Gentiles. The gospel is more than a good rabbi teaching love and kindness who ends crucified on a tree. Peter testifies to the personal witness of himself and others that the resurrection is true. The good news is for all, and we are commanded to share this news with all peoples.

**Second Reading: Isaiah 25:6-9** – Isaiah echoes a prophetic hope of the heavenly banquet that Jesus also alluded to at the Passover, where he hinted that he would drink of the vine again in his Father’s kingdom (Matt 26:29). Isaiah notes that this great feast, the messianic banquet, takes place on earth, on the holy mountain, and not in heaven. In this passage, the prophet notes three great hopes that comprise the redemption: the final enemy known as death is defeated, the veil over the nations which hinders us from seeing God is destroyed, and the rebuke against his people (the Jewish people) will be removed. What a great hope to have and to proclaim!

**Third Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24** – Psalm 118 does not name an author in the title, which is uncommon. However, today’s Psalm does contain the name of the Messiah. Jesus in Hebrew is *ישוע* (Yeshua), which means “salvation.” Verse 14 – *עָזִי וְזַמְרָת יְהוָה לִי לְיִשׁוּעָה* – says, “The Lord is my strength and my song and has become my salvation,” (my Yeshua or my Jesus). This name is intrinsic to his character and mission. The name of the Messiah appears throughout the

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Hebrew Bible, as does his prophetic redemptive role. He is the stone the builders rejected, but following the resurrection, he is the chief stone holding together the whole building, the body of the Messiah, together in his eternal love and power.

**Fourth Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11** – The gospel, at its source, is the resurrection of the Messiah. We must receive this good news for us to draw forth its many benefits. Paul urges the Corinthians to maintain the faith, “hold fast to the Word,” lest they believe in vain. Apparently, some in Corinth maintained that there was “no resurrection for the dead,” which would mean that Jesus also did not rise but remained in the grave. How then is death defeated without a resurrection? The gospel becomes null and void without the resurrection! Paul delivers concrete evidence and eyewitness accounts of the fact of the resurrection. The detail of the 500 witnesses on one occasion (verse 6) is not recorded in the Gospels; however, following the resurrection, Jesus spent another 40 days continuing to teach his followers many things concerning the Kingdom of Heaven (Acts 1:3). He was indeed alive again!

**Fifth Reading: Mark 16:1-8** – The women who follow Jesus play an important role as witnesses to both the crucifixion and the resurrection. In the Gospel accounts, it is Mary Magdalene who is a prominent figure at the tomb of Jesus. And in the case of John’s Gospel, Mary Magdalene is the only woman mentioned, although when speaking with Jesus she uses the personal pronoun “we,” indicating there are other people present. Interestingly, out of all the Marys mentioned at the tomb, Mary the mother of Jesus is not among them. Most likely she is under the care of the disciple whom Jesus loved and remains in Jerusalem. The angel who stands guard over the empty tomb proclaims the good news for us today. He was crucified, but he is not here; he is risen! The angel also gives us further instructions, “Go and tell.” The resurrection is something we must carry forward with us every day. It is an invitation in our hands for the world to come and meet the risen Messiah. The veil is removed, and we can all see Jesus. Hallelujah!

### ACNA Addendum

**Colossians 3:1-4** – Paul’s message to the Colossians in this passage is that we should live the resurrection. Our practical faith walk is founded on the theological truth that Messiah has been raised from the dead and has ascended to heaven. We should now hold on to a different world view. As Paul says, “Our minds are set on things above and not on earthly things.” The world view of this age is corrupt and has no hope to offer this world. Jesus is enthroned in heaven and our hearts, and hope should be connected there too. The promise is that the resurrected Messiah will return in glory and, because of our connection with him, we too will appear in glory.

**Further reading** - Aaron Eime, “Easter, Passover, Ishtar and Myths.” Online:  
<https://www.cmj-israel.org/learn/easter-passover-ishtar-and-myths>.

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