

**Sunday April 20, 2025**  
**Easter Sunday**

**Meditation:** “Whom are you looking for?”

I’ve been stumped this week. I’ve preached so many Easter services that I wasn’t sure what new thing I could talk about. In the past, on Easter weekend I’ve talked about the difference between the Roman Imperial Army entering Jerusalem en masse to maintain good order, by which I mean control, and the countervailing entry of God’s anointed one, surrounded by a cheering crowd, entering Jerusalem to usher in a completely different way of relating to one another, a completely different way of living, called the Kingdom of God. We know how it turned out. Empire killed the one who could upset their control and the wealth they extracted at the expense of the masses. And three days later, God acted against the empire by restoring life – opposing empire’s way of killing to control. I’ve talked about the symbolism of the temple curtain being torn, not as a sign that we now have direct access to God without having to go through the priesthood, but as the Jewish practice of kriah – the tearing of an article of clothing when your heart is torn by the death of a loved one. At Jesus’ death, God’s heart was broken, and the only fabric that could be construed as being somewhat close to God’s apparel was the temple curtain. I’ve talked about this world’s no to God’s love being countered by God’s yes to life by resurrecting Jesus. I’ve even reflected how this weekend starts and ends in a cemetery. In the Garden of Gethsemane (garden being a euphemism for cemetery) Jesus is arrested, and in the garden near Golgotha, the tomb is found to be empty. I’m just not sure how to come at this yet again. And after two thousand years of Easters, preached by probably millions of priests and ministers and pastors around the world, what more is there to say?

The question rolled around in my head all week. Questions, questions, questions. I remember the endless questions of childhood. Oh, the endless questions, and none of them with easy answers. Why is the sky blue? Where does the sun go at night? How do airplanes fly? Where do babies come from? And then I noticed that Jesus asks the exact same question in the cemetery or cemeteries, three days apart. “Whom are you looking for?” The words just rolled off his tongue in the Garden of Gethsemane when the Romans and the Temple police come looking to arrest him. They are looking for Jesus of Nazareth – a troublemaker who is stirring up the people against the authorities. The same words rolled off his tongue when Mary is inconsolable after finding the tomb empty. “Whom are you looking for?” Mary is looking for her Lord – the teacher who has shown them how to live and love one another in the face of authoritarian rule. The first time it is the empire that is looking – looking to protect itself at all costs, including killing those who

speak against it. The second time it is Mary, looking to align herself with a different way of living than empire living – it is the inbreaking of the Kingdom of God.

Last week I asked, “Who are you expecting?” and this week the question is, “Whom are you looking for?” What do those questions have in common? What is different about those questions?

One is passive and the other is active. We can sit passively, waiting expectantly; but looking, searching – that is active.

So, here is my question this Easter. Are we waiting for someone to come and fix what is wrong with the world, with our community, with our church, with our lives? Or are we committed to actively live in the world to set aright the wrongs? Are we willing to accept empire and live in it, making us complicit with it, all the while hoping for an outsider, a saviour to free us from it? Or are we committed to live as though God were supreme ruler of the world, and not our political or business or even our ecclesiastical leaders? The first is waiting for someone else to save us. The second says salvation is already here, waiting for us to live it. Christ is risen! Will we sit and wait, or will we rise and live his risen life?