



# Weaving God's Promises

## LESSON 28

### ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN!

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#### SUMMARY OF TODAY'S STORY

On Sunday morning, the third day after the death of Jesus, Mary and Mary Magdalene go to the tomb and find an angel there, with the stone rolled away. The angel tells the women that Jesus has been raised from death and sends them to Galilee to tell others.

As they are leaving the tomb to tell the disciples, Jesus appears to them, and they worship him.

Jesus then tells his disciples to "go out to all the nations," baptizing and preaching the Good News in his name.

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#### KEY CONCEPTS

- Alleluia!
- Joy
- The disciples' charge

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#### WHERE YOU'LL FIND TODAY'S STORY

##### In the Bible

We recommend the *New Revised Standard Version* Bible.

**Matthew 28:1-10 (11-15), 16-20**

##### In Our Sunday Lectionary

Today's story is told in church on the following Sundays:

Year A: Easter Day and the Monday of  
Easter Week

Year B: Easter Day and the Monday of  
Easter Week

Year C: Easter Day and the Monday of  
Easter Week

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## WEAVING OUR STORY WITH THE BIBLICAL STORY

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Jesus rose to life again. In this, we see the power of divine love and forgiveness. Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurates the kingdom of heaven right now.

And when we know the Good News of God in Christ, Christ gives us his Great Commission, as written in Matthew 28:17-20: "go out to all nations." It's not enough just to believe. Jesus tells us to bear to all nations the message of salvation through Christ.

Matthew ends on the promise of the never-failing presence of Christ—just as he began his gospel: *God with us, Emmanuel*. Jesus tells us, "And I will be with you always, to the end of the age." God stays with us, no matter what.



## THE EPISCOPAL THREAD

On Easter Day, Episcopalians join with other Christians to celebrate the risen Christ. Note that in the Episcopal Church, the cross is almost always an

empty cross. The crucifix is much less evident. The Christ who is worshipped is the risen Christ, the Christ who was crucified but now is alive.

Some Episcopal churches have reclaimed the tradition of the Great Vigil of Easter, an ancient service that was included in the *1979 Prayer Book* and that, when observed, is seen as "the first service of Easter Day" (*BCP*, p. 284).

Easter hymns in *The Hymnal 1982* (New York, NY: Church Publishing, 1985) are #174-213. Sometimes these hymns are sung at other times, when the message of the resurrection is proclaimed, for example, at a funeral.

In this lesson, we hear Jesus commanding his disciples to make disciples of others, to baptize them and to teach them. From this "Great Commission" comes Holy Baptism as one of the two principal sacraments of the Church, commanded by Christ himself.

In the Episcopal Church, Easter is not a day but a season, lasting for 50 days (The Great Fifty Days). Thus Episcopalians hear the opening acclamation each Sunday during Easter, “Alleluia! Christ is risen!” And the people respond, “The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!”

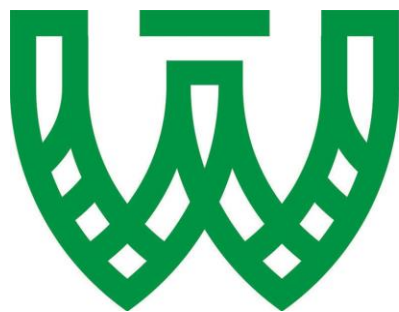


## WEAVING GOD’S BELOVED COMMUNITY

Jesus’ resurrection is a time of celebration. It is a reminder that Jesus and God’s Beloved Community never truly end, that God continues to stay with us, no matter what.

Before they knew Jesus had been resurrected, the Disciples were sad and scared. They didn’t know how their community was meant to keep going or what to do next, but they had each other. They knew God’s love and their love for one another could sustain them, just like it sustained Jesus on the cross.

- What are some ways we can celebrate the God is with us no matter what? How can we share that with others?
- How do we support those around us who may be scared or hurt, remembering that not every outcome is one we expect?



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### MATTHEW 28:1-10 (11-15), 16-20

Three sad days pass by. Jesus is dead. Three days ago, they buried him in the tomb.

Jesus' two women friends, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, are going to visit the tomb. They think about Jesus all the time and now they want to pay their respects to him. It has just been three days since he died.

The women close their eyes, afraid.

When they get there, the ground under them starts to shake. An earthquake!

No! An angel of God is making the earth move! Mary and Mary open their eyes and see the angel coming down from heaven. The angel stops at the big stone that covers the tomb, and then rolls it away from the opening. Then he jumps up lightly and sits on top of the stone.

Mary and Mary stare at the angel. Yes, it is an angel. He looks like lightning. His clothes are as white as snow – no, whiter! Whiter than any white on earth!

The men who are guarding the tomb see the angel. His appearance is so frightening to them that they shake and tremble, then cower in a corner not moving. They are like dead men, so still are they.

But the angel turns to Mary and Mary. He has some news for them. He says, "Do not be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified."

Mary and Mary nod their heads. Yes, that's why they are here.

The angel says, "He is not here! And he is not dead! He has been raised up from death back to life. He is alive! Remember that he promised you that he would be raised up?"

The angel says to them gently, "Look! Come see the place where he was laid in the tomb. Look, it's empty! He is not there!"

Mary and Mary stand there like statues. Where is he, then? Isn't he in the tomb?

The women peek into the tomb. Even though it is dark in there, they can see. Yes, it's empty. Jesus is gone!

Then the angel says to them, "You are the first to find out. Now go and find Jesus disciples. When you see them, say to them, 'Jesus has been raised from the dead, and he is on his way to Galilee right now. So go to Galilee and you will see him there.'"

Mary and Mary leave the tomb. They are both very afraid and very happy at the same time. They run back to find the disciples. But before they find them, suddenly Jesus shows up in front of them. He says to them, "Greetings!"

Is it really Jesus? Jesus, who was dead? *Yes! It is him!* Mary and Mary fall down at his feet and worship him. But they are still afraid.

Jesus says to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell the men, my brothers and my disciples, to go to Galilee. They will see me there."

### **The disciples see Jesus in Galilee**

Jesus wants to meet the disciples on the mountain that is in Galilee. So the 11 disciples, without Judas, go up the mountain. There, they see Jesus.

They fall on their knees and worship him when they see him.

Jesus says to them, "Now that you see me, I give you work to do. Go and tell everybody the good news, so that they can be disciples, too. And then you can baptize them, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And then, teach them what I have taught you."

The disciples nod. They can do this. Jesus was dead and is now alive. Through Jesus, they can do anything.

Then Jesus says to them, “And remember, I am with you always, even to the end of time.”