

Sunday, March 31, 2024 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church
Bible Study
Easter Sunday
“Are You Looking for Jesus?”
Mark 16:1-8

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes). In pairs or groups of three, have participants share, “What is your favorite memory of Easter Sunday?”

Mark 16:1-8 Context. The Gospel of Mark concludes with this reading. Unlike the other gospels, Mark gives no account of Jesus’ appearances after his resurrection, and simply ends with the women fleeing from the empty tomb in fearful silence. Over time, different scribes provided a couple of “epilogues” drawn on the resurrection appearances that can be found elsewhere in the Bible (Matthew: to the disciples in Galilee; Luke: to the disciples on the road to Emmaus; John: to the disciples in the upper room; etc.).

Read Mark 16:1-8

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the text?

Read Mark 16:1-8 again -

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- Who were the women mentioned in Mark 16:1, and why did they go to the tomb?
- Why did the young man inside the tomb say Jesus was not there? How would you have reacted if you had heard that?
- Why do you think the young man inside the tomb mentioned Peter in Mark 16:7? [Perhaps so Peter would know Jesus' resurrection, considering Peter's denial of Jesus during the crucifixion events.]

Then Mark says an odd thing. He says they (the women) ran. In terror and amazement, they ran. And they said nothing. To anyone. The end. Most scholars agree this is Mark’s original ending. **Silence, fear, and awe.** And running away. The early church didn’t like that ending, so it gave us a more comfortable certainty in the verses that follow. But why would Mark do such a thing? Leave the story so unfinished? Because yours is unfinished too. Think about it. Mark is telling the story to people who knew that Jesus was alive, yet he says they told no one. How did the word get out? How did the word get past the stone of their fear? He rolled away the stone.

Even the stone of our inadequacy. **Their silence wasn't the final word. God's hope was the final word.**

- What are your thoughts on the comment above?
- In what ways does the resurrection of Jesus impact our faith today? How does the resurrection message provide hope and assurance in the face of fear and uncertainty? How might you live in light of the resurrection?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, end by praying the following or a similar prayer:

Loving God, we thank You for the incredible hope we find in the resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. As we leave this space, empower us to live as witnesses of this transformative message. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.