

# **Sermon for Sunday, April 12, 2009**

**Easter Sunday**  
**By Tim Ljunggren**

**First Lesson**        **Acts 10:34-43**  
**Psalm**                **118:1-2, 14-24**  
**Second Lesson**    **1 Corinthians 15:1-11**  
**Gospel**                **John 20:1-18**

“They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”

With these startling words, Peter and the other disciples were greeted on that first Easter Day. Mary Magdalene’s announcement opens the same question to you and me as well: Do we know where they have laid Jesus? How can we find him on this Easter Day?

Peter and John ran to the tomb, but all they found was an empty space and empty wrappings. Later that evening, they were to find where he was: Not laid in another tomb, but alive in their midst. Moments after they left the tomb, Mary found where Jesus was; he was alive, and she fell at his feet in worship. That afternoon, two disciples on their way to the village of Emmaus found where he was: Not dead, but walking along the road, explaining scriptures to them, and present to them in the breaking of bread. A week later, Thomas finds him again in the midst of the disciples, alive and still bearing the scars of his passionate love for the human race.

But where is Jesus today? Does anyone here know?

It’s the process of discovering Jesus in their midst in new ways which occupied the disciples for the remainder of their lives. Their discoveries are the substance of the New Testament writings. Jesus did not depart but remained present. The body of Christ was found in new and different forms.

Often, we Christians have seemed to proclaim a Christ who has vanished and left no traces behind. We appear to be proclaiming nothing more than a historical event which happened once upon a time. If we proclaim a faith about something

that happened a long time ago, a man who lived in the distant past, such a faith is no more than a brittle historical record.

So, where is Jesus today? Does anyone here know?

The original Christians experienced Jesus in their midst. But you and I are often left with the impression that for us today there is not a direct encounter with the risen Lord. Where has Jesus gone? Has he stopped talking with us? Walking with us?

No.

They have taken the Lord's body from the tomb. Where have they laid it? They have laid it in the midst of the world, in the midst of this city, in the midst of this gathering. We sing that Jesus Christ is risen today because we see the risen Christ all around us, in the eyes and in the faces of those sitting beside us, in the newly baptized, in the bread and wine of the altar, and in the people we encounter in each moment of our lives.

Christ is risen indeed. His body walks the earth today, healing, teaching, feeding, suffering, reconciling, forgiving, dying, and rising. You and I and all the human race are the living answer to the question that Mary Magdalene posed on that very first Easter Day. The Lord is taken from his tomb and placed in the center of the world.

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!  
Amen. ...