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Mark 16:1-8

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Resurrection of Our Lord

Prepared for: Lutheran Church of our Saviour, Greenville, SC

- Mark is the Gomer Pyle of gospels.
 - “Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!”
 - Overt and genuine in joy and excitement.
 - Childlike in storytelling
 - And...and...and...and
 - John the Baptist...
 - and then people came from the entire countryside...
 - and then Jesus was baptized...
 - and then the dove came to him...
 - and then a voice came from heaven...
 - and then Jesus was thrown into the wilderness...
 - and then John was arrested...
 - and then Jesus called the first disciples...
 - and then Jesus healed the man with the unclean spirit...
 - and then Jesus healed a bunch of people at Simon’s house...
 - and then Jesus headed out to pray...
 - and then Simon and the disciples found him...
 - and then he went throughout Galilee preaching...
 - and then a leper came to be healed...
 - And that’s just the very first chapter!
 - Mark’s gospel continues with fairly short, excited and exciting snippets!
 - This author’s depiction of the Resurrection is no different.
 - It takes all of eight verses.
 - And it ends with words that should catch your ear and leave you surprised, “[The women] went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.”
 - “They said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.”
 - That shorter and longer ending of Mark that’s in your Bible? The earliest texts we have that include them are several decades newer than the ones that end with verse 8.
- Back to Mark’s description of the Resurrection:
 - The Sabbath has ended and Mary, Mary and Salome head out to Jesus’ tomb to anoint his body for its final burial.

- Pay attention to this!
 - They go to the tomb knowing exactly what they will find: A dead body!
 - A dead body.
- They had to wait until after the Sabbath, so it was early Sunday morning.
 - They'd probably stopped to purchase spices either Saturday evening or early Sunday, on the way to the tomb.
- Why spices? Have you ever thrown away chicken skin/bones and then left them in your kitchen trash for a few days?
 - A decaying human body is an equally unpleasant odor.
 - First century tombs: Caves cut into stone. Bodies were placed there for a year or so and then, when all that was left was bones, the bones were put into an ossuary and placed deeper into the cave. Because the decaying bodies were closer to the cave opening, the area around the "cemetery" carried a stench.
 - The women bring spices for the very practical reason of minimizing that scent.
- This is an act of love. But this is not an act of people who expect to find their Messiah alive. This is an act of faithfulness. It is not, we could say, an act of faith.
 - They get to the tomb and, instead of trying to figure out a way to get it open so that they could anoint the body, the tomb is already open.
 - And empty.
 - Well, not exactly empty. There was a "young man" in there, "dressed in a white robe."
 - And he's the one who gives them the shocking news, "He has been raised; he is not here!"
 - "Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!"
- And how do they respond?
 - "They said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid."
 - We know this isn't true! Even if Mark's version of this story was the only one we have, we'd know that this isn't true!
 - Why? Because we know the story! We've been told the story! The women did what we all do with good news. They told. And it spread. So now we all know.
 - Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
 - He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!