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The Resurrection of Our Lord  
April 5, 2026  
Text: Luke 24:1-12  
Title: Easter . . . A Place of Remembering (Adapted from a sermon by Dr. D. Schmidt)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. It's easy to get lost at Easter. With the church dressed up and the fragrance of lilies, with the songs and the praise and the celebration of victory. We can get lost because there is so much to this Day. But as St. Luke tells the Easter story, he tells it in a way that keeps us from getting lost.

With all of the details of that first Easter morning, Luke focuses our attention upon one simple thing: remembering. The first Easter was a swirl of activity and emotion. There is a body to be prepared and the smell of spices. A tomb has been opened and the body is gone. Women come across men with clothes like lightning. And when these men talk, it's like they know the women. The angels know what they are doing: "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" And they know what has happened: "He is not here; He has risen!" and they even know what has been done and said in their past: "Remember how He told you, while He was still with you in Galilee: 'the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again'" (v. 5-6). And in the midst of all of these things, as the women are struck with wonder and fear, what does Luke focus our attention on? One simple thing: "They remembered His words" (v. 8). That's what Luke wants us to know this morning as we celebrate Easter. When God rose among His people, in the midst of the wonder, the fear, and the worship, His disciples simply and faithfully "remembered His words."

God, on Easter morning, sent angels to the tomb to help His people remember and this morning, through His word, He helps us to remember as well. God has made the empty tomb a place of remembering for us this morning. Memory does many things. A person from your past

can come back into your life and with a few simple words everything can change. They simply say something like, “Do you remember when . . .” And things begin to change. That’s the power of memory, and I want to talk about two ways in which remembering can work in our lives.

On the one hand, remembering can take us away from our present and lead us to a world that is past. I encountered this kind of remembering at my mom’s funeral. All of us came together at the funeral home, and we were all standing there around the casket. All it took was for someone to remember and mention something that mom had said or done, and soon we were all letting those memories take us to another place. We were actually able to relax a little bit, and through those memories we were even able to laugh about her. Such is the power of remembering. It can take you away from the present.

Then there’s a kind of remembering that brings us more fully into the present instead of taking us away. You see this with grandparents when they hold their first grandchild. At first, grandpa is nervous. It’s been so long since he held a baby. He’s a little awkward at first, and a little afraid he might hurt her. But after a moment, he remembers what this was like. He hugs the child, and whispers silly things to her. He then looks up with a goofy grin and begins to talk about what it was like when you were young. This time, memory is bringing him more fully into the present. With it, he is able to delight in the joy of holding his granddaughter in his arms.

Two types of remembering, and once again we have the question, what kind of remembering is happening with the disciples that first Easter? When God makes the tomb a place of remembering, are they taken away from their present or brought more fully into it?

For these women, the Lord’s words bring them more fully into the present. With the words of Jesus, they begin to understand the strange new world that surrounds them. Empty graves and men who dress like lightning that are really angels. When you remember, these

things make sense: Jesus had talked about a Heavenly Kingdom. The world is God's and God's Kingdom has come. What about the pain of the crucifixion? Was it all a mistake? No, Jesus had told them: His betrayal and death were part of God's will. God so desired to save all people that He gave His only Son to bear the punishment for their sins. And now, punishment is gone. Divine vengeance is over and the open grave gives us a glimpse of Heavenly Glory. Angels talk to humans. Humans speak to one another, sharing a message that saves every man, woman, and child. God loves you, and in Love, He gave His life for you. And now He lives and reigns eternally. Suddenly, life for these women has become worth living again, and they run from the tomb to live fully in His Grace.

We gather today and God continues to come and make life worth living. By remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus, we enter more fully into life in this world. We all have sins in our past that make us a bit nervous about going on. A broken marriage, a broken childhood, a broken relationship with God, these things come to mind and we are uncertain whether we can ever live again with meaning. But God comes today and brings one other matter to our attention. He calls us to remember His work in our life through Jesus, His Son. Water on your head in baptism has made you a child of the Kingdom. God loves you, and gave His life for you and now He lives and reigns eternally. Today God reminds you that you are part of His story. A child of the Kingdom who will live eternally. And so, like these women, life has become worth living. God sends us to live fully in His grace, and what does that life look like?

For certain it appears strange to our world. Luke writes, "when they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women because their words seemed to them like nonsense" (v. 9-11).

Those who went to the tomb as mourners have now come back as witnesses. They have names and a life experience and a story to tell. God has put words into their mouth. They proclaim to the world that God is the victor but the world . . . well, the world is not ready to listen. The apostles don't believe them because their message sounds crazy.

We gather today and God makes us witnesses of an eternal event. But our world? It shakes its head at us. When we remember this story, they act as if we have gone into another world and lost touch with reality. "A world of sin and the devil and angels and demons? That's a world with outmoded morality and strange views of creation and answers to questions that people no longer ask," they say. "Too much of this and you won't be able to function or enjoy the good life." That's the world's reaction. But Easter shows us without question that God's ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. When He causes us to remember the resurrection, He does not take us away from this world and lock us up in some religious belief system that has no connection to the present. No, God sets us free to live and to experience life with deeper meaning. We live this day as forgiven children of God.

We enter life forgiven. Have you ever had that experience where you meet a friend you've wronged and you try to begin again without ever talking about it? Over time you grow accustomed to ignoring the problem. You begin to pick up your friendship again. But it's awkward, because there is always the fear that something may suddenly spark the memory. So, we end up standing in fear before friends, only partly known and partly loved. That's how we live when we have never been forgiven. Before God, we stand only partly known and partly loved. We spend a lot of our time trying to cover up our mistakes, acting as if they never happened. Acting as if we have no sin and don't need to be forgiven. Making it seem as if the

only people who are sinners are those outside the church. But there's no fooling God. God knows our errors, He knows our sins, and our sin is always in His presence.

But He also knows His gift of life and this morning He asks us to remember the death and resurrection of His Son. We confess to Him our wrongs but He offers us forgiveness. He knows our sin, but He also knows our salvation. Jesus has defeated the power of sin, death, and the devil for us. He is risen from the dead, and we are fully known and fully loved. In God is our strength and our salvation, and when we do enter the world, we don't need to hide ourselves from others. Instead, we rely upon the faithful memory of our Savior, the forgiving work of our God. We honestly speak of our sins and ask forgiveness. We begin again in the lives of those we have wronged. When suffering the sins of others, we forgive as we have been forgiven. We enter the world not in fear but in assurance. Not in denial but in honesty. Not in blaming others but in praising God. Remembering the resurrection, we confess the honesty of our weakness and live in the strength of our God.

So we enter life forgiven and, at the same time, we live by His guidance. Have you ever noticed how when people claim to hear the voice of God, it is always something spectacular? These people hear God tell them to sell all that they have, to journey to some distant land or to a mountain and to await further instructions. Did you ever notice how God never simply says to these people: "treat your neighbor better" or "visit your friend, she is hurting"? For them, God's words of direction are usually spectacular and out of the ordinary. We, however, have a God whose words are filled with simple guidance for living as His people. His word directs us to love our neighbor, to forgive as we have been forgiven, to visit those who are sick, to encourage the weak, to lift up the suffering in prayer. Give thanks. Rejoice. Love your spouse. Honor your parents. These are the simple words of guidance from God. You don't earn salvation by

them or succeed in the business world if you try them. They are simply words that show us how to live a life in the name of the God who has made us, redeemed us, and sent us out to live fully in His Grace.

God has brought us here today for many different reasons. Some come with frustrations. Others with joy. All of us with sin. What is important this day is not why we have come but how we will leave. And for this reason, Luke and the angels ask us to remember the death and resurrection of God's Son. In Him, you are forgiven. God has defeated the power of your sin by His death and now God invites you to share in the power of His everlasting life. The empty tomb is a place of remembering that fills our lives with deeper meaning. Go, then, assured that you are forgiven. Live in God's guidance. You are fully known and fully loved because Christ has risen! He has risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.