

EASTER TO TRINITY SUNDAY



Revised Common Lectionary /Scripture Citations for Year C - All Seasons
<http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/calendar/2024-25/?season=all&download=txt>

Welcome to the last leg of the Liturgy journey for year C: Easter to Trinity Sunday. Our hope is that individuals as well as group/class members will make use of this devotional material as it not only reflects the Sunday sermons but ensures that we take our learnings deeper. We do this with scripture readings, daily devotions, reflections on scripture and questions. May you hear His truths, ensure it is transformative and experience God's love for you personally.

- Week 1: Sunday 20 April - The empty tomb.
- Week 2: Sunday 27 April – Jesus appears to his disciples.
- Week 3: Sunday 4 May – Jesus and the miraculous catch of fish.
- Week 4: Sunday 11 May – Further conflict over Jesus's claims.
- Week 5: Sunday 18 May – Jesus predicts Peter's denial.
- Week 6: Sunday 25 May – The healing at the pool.
29 May – Ascension Day
- Week 7: Sunday 1 June – Jesus prays for all believers.
- Week 8: Sunday 8 June – Jesus the way to the Father.
- Week 9: Sunday 15 June – Trinity Sunday.

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Week 1: Sunday 20 April *The empty tomb*

Bring God into the meeting with prayer, lighting a candle, listening to a worship song.

Hymn: And Can It Be? - Traditional Hymn | Charles Wesley. Performed by St. Martin's Voices
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnBzi5df4zs>

Read the Bible readings provided:

Liturgical Date: Easter Sunday
Calendar Date: Apr 20, 2025
First reading: Isaiah 65:17-25
Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Second reading: 1 Corinthians 15:19-26
Gospel: John 20:1-18

John 20:1-18 - New International Version - UK

The empty tomb

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' ³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped round Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. ¹³ They asked her, 'Woman, why are you crying?' 'They have taken my Lord away,' she said, 'and I don't know where they have put him.' ¹⁴ At this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realise that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ He asked her, 'Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?' Thinking he was the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.' ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means 'Teacher'). ¹⁷ Jesus said, 'Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."' ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: 'I have seen the Lord!' And she told them that he had said these things to her.

A reflection on the Bible reading by: **REV ZAMANI SIKUPELA**

The Easter Sunday Gospel tells us about the disciple's discovery of the empty tomb.

Jesus promised that He would rise from the dead, and on the first Easter Sunday, Jesus proved once and for all that death could not hold Him down. By rising from the dead, He confirmed the validity of all His teachings and sacrifice on the cross.

Mark closes his Gospel with the story of the women's discovery of Jesus' empty tomb. Matthew also includes the story of the guard posted at Jesus' tomb. Luke refers to the story of the visit of Peter and another, unnamed disciple to Jesus' tomb to verify the women's report. John, who is generally recognized to be independent of the other three, has an empty tomb narrative which some would say is the most primitive tradition of all.

You will know that the resurrection of Jesus is foundational to our Christian faith. When Christ rose from the dead and left behind an empty tomb, He demonstrated his power over death and gave the gift of eternal life to everyone who believes in Him. This says our ultimate destiny as Christians is not the grave. Our destiny lies in the hands of our loving and powerful God.

You can imagine the disappointment of Christ's disciples when Jesus was crucified. That disappointment is expressed by the two travellers to Emmaus in Luke 24. They experienced the heartbreak of losing a friend and teacher. Surely doubt also crept into their hearts. The disciples had witnessed Jesus perform many miracles, but when it came to saving Himself, Jesus had failed. At least through the eyes and expectations of the world.

We learn that even after Christ's resurrection, some of the disciples still struggled with doubts even after seeing the risen Jesus. Eventually, we see the disciples living on mission and sharing what they have witnessed.

On Easter Day we are told that our Lord has a risen body glorious but let us never forget that some of that glory is in the marks of his wounds. They are his credentials, "*Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself*".

The empty tomb highlights the importance of living a life of purpose and meaning. It is the reminder of God's faithfulness, even when it doesn't come when or how we expect it. The empty tomb is the physical manifestation of God's faithfulness. As Christians, the empty tomb represents the pinnacle of our faith. It is a powerful reminder of Jesus' incredible sacrifice on the cross and the triumph of His resurrection over death.

As I reflect on the empty tomb, for me it is a sign of new life, a new beginning, for everything is being emptied. It means dying to my old self and starting a new life. A life of wholeness and holiness. A life that is Christ -and other- centred.

The empty tomb allows us to celebrate Jesus' victory. It is also a call to evangelism, as we are called to share the Good News of the Gospel with others. The empty tomb is a powerful reminder that our hope is not in this world but in the promise of eternal life with God. It is a powerful symbol of hope for believers, as it represents the triumph of life over death and the promise of eternal life. One of the primary ways the empty tomb represents hope for believers is through the assurance of eternal life. The empty tomb stands

as a sacred threshold between death and life, darkness and light, despair and hope. It proves that death is not the story's end but the beginning of a new life. It gives us the courage to face the world, knowing that Jesus has already won the victory. The empty tomb was not just a historical moment; it is available today. We can experience the glory of the resurrection and its transformative power in our lives. Through the empty tomb, Christians can find the courage to face difficulties with faith and perseverance, knowing their ultimate destiny lies with a loving and powerful God. It reminds us that God is faithful, even when His promise seems impossible to fulfil. Although there is always suffering in this life, the resurrection of Jesus Christ brings us faith and hope that suffering will soon end, and that we too, will experience the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let the empty tomb be a constant reminder that Christ's victory over death is our victory. Embrace the empty tomb as a sign of God's unfathomable love for you and let this love overflow to all those you encounter on your journey of faith.

When all seems lost, there is hope found in the empty tomb. Let us all seek the resurrected Jesus during our times of struggle. Be filled with hope! The tomb is empty! Christ is alive!

Questions for group discussion:

1. How would you have felt if you were one of Jesus' disciples visiting the tomb and found it empty?
2. What evidence was there, backing the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
3. What is the significance of the empty tomb in the Easter story?

Daily lectionary readings:

Monday, April 21, 2025: [Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24](#); [Joshua 10:16-27](#); [1 Corinthians 5:6b-8](#);
Tuesday, April 22, 2025: [Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24](#); [Judges 4:17-23](#); [5:24-31a](#); [Revelation 12:1-12](#);
Wednesday, April 23, 2025: [Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24](#); [2 Samuel 6:1-15](#); [Luke 24:1-12](#);
Thursday, April 24, 2025: [Psalm 150](#); [1 Samuel 17:1-23](#); [Acts 5:12-16](#);
Friday, April 25, 2025: [Psalm 150](#); [1 Samuel 17:19-32](#); [Acts 5:17-26](#);
Saturday, April 26, 2025: [Psalm 150](#); [1 Samuel 17:32-51](#); [Luke 24:36-40](#);

FAMILY TIME:



Written by: Magogodi Nkuna

Week 1 title: The tomb is empty
Scripture: Luke 24:1-9

Song 1: Celebrate Jesus Celebrate!

Song 2: Because He lives, I can face tomorrow

Application

Don't you just love the Easter season! Who can resist pancakes, Easter eggs, hot cross buns, and pickled fish? But Easter is about more than just treats. It's about the incredible events that took place: Jesus' crucifixion and his amazing resurrection three days later! Normally, when someone dies, we mourn for a long time. But with Jesus, it's different. We mourn his death, but just three days later, we celebrate his resurrection!

Here are some of the reasons that we celebrate the empty tomb:

- Jesus' resurrection proves our Christian faith is true and gives us a strong foundation.
- His resurrection gives us hope that Jesus is always with us and can overcome any challenge.
- The empty tomb shows the power and truth of Jesus' resurrection, giving us hope and guiding us forward.

Discuss as a family

What does the empty tomb mean for you?

Close in Prayer.