

HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

AWAKE



Before welcoming the Hope of the Resurrection, we invite you to prepare by singing the celebration hymn, Christ The Lord is Risen Today, written by John Wesley in 1739. Hundreds of Christians from across the globe, including the United States, Africa, the Philippines and Eastern Europe have joined together to experience the risen Christ. The Discipleship Ministries Virtual Easter Choir Project recording can be found [here](#).

“Easter was when Hope in person surprised the whole world by coming forward from the future into the present.” (N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*)

During times of tragedy and uncertainty, faith is a way of living in spite of evidence to the contrary. As the Letter to the Hebrews so eloquently puts it, “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (11:1)

As we celebrate the Hope of the Resurrection, we are invited to connect with the two Marys at the tomb. Surprised by an angel, and later by the risen Jesus, they were awakened from a state of fear to great joy.

AWARE



Hear Matthew's Easter message of hope as you stir to new life on faith's horizon:

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. (Matthew 28:1-2)

Daily prayer and breathing exercises help to widen our awareness of new possibilities during our present situation. In what ways can the hope of Easter “roll back the stone” of fear and anxiety that can easily define our day moving forward?



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ALIVE

His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay." (Matthew 28:3-6)

Shadowed by great gloom, the two Marys see the empty place where Jesus lay accompanied by messengers bright as lightening and white as snow. The resurrection quickened in them a new sense of being alive and vital. How can this be true for you? Write what is speaking to you in your journal or on this devotion by downloading the PDF and printing or writing in the fillable text field provided.

ABIDE

"Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. (Matthew 28:7-8)

As the two Marys quickly ran from the tomb as messengers to the disciples, they symbolized the hope of the resurrected Christ "coming forward from the future into the present." As counterintuitive as it may sound, what are the ways you can abide in the present with a renewed understanding that God intends a very different future for the world?

Write your reflections here

ARISE

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." (Matthew 28:9-10)

Giving thanks for the hope that came to the two Marys, they worshipped Jesus. But Jesus gave them the benediction to arise, to "go" and "tell" how their lives had been so instantly changed from despair and doubt to awe and gratitude.

- Practice breathing exercises and pray daily.
- Check in with your partner or virtual group to share hope.
- Continue to make contributions to your journal.

