

GRACEPOINT CHURCH

Weekly Devotional

Easter Sunday

A Great Time to be Alive – Ian France – 05.4.2026

Scripture

Matthew 28:1-10; 1 Peter 1:3, 6-8.

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

Observation

Matthew 28:1-10

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary made their way on the third day, the day after the Sabbath to the tomb. It was the first day of the week and they came expecting to find Jesus lying where He had been placed after He had been taken down from the cross. Matthew records there was a great earthquake, but it did not cause the stone to be rolled away. Rather it was the angel, rolling the stone away that caused the earthquake and it happened before the women reached the tomb. So, the tomb was open by the time the women arrived. They found the guards shocked and confused. Matthew records they were terrified and stupefied, looking like dead men. But the women saw an angel sitting on the stone that he had rolled aside. The angel immediately reassured them. He reminded them that Jesus had said He would rise again – they should have expected that He would not be there. He invited them in to where Jesus had been placed before the tomb was sealed. The tomb was new – so there were no other bodies within its walls; and it was empty – there was no room for any deception. In this way, the women became eye-witnesses to the fact that Jesus had conquered death and rose again. The angel told them to go quickly and tell the disciples that Jesus was risen from the dead. These women had not left Jesus at the cross; and now they were the first messengers to tell others of the good news that Jesus was alive. They were to tell the men to go into Galilee where they would all see Jesus. The women ran, still afraid, but filled with joy as they obeyed the angel's instructions. As they ran, they met Jesus, who greeted them with one word: Rejoice! And they fell at His feet and worshipped Him. Jesus told them not to be afraid and repeated the instruction the angel had given them: Go and tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they would see Him. He refers to the disciples as 'My brothers', for the first time, reassuring them that their cowardice and infidelity would not be held against them.

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
PBO Reg. No. 18/11/13/690

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1 Peter 1:3, 6-8

In his first letter, Peter considers the salvation offered by God and his immediate response is praise. He encouraged his readers as he reminded them that salvation is a gift of God because of His great mercy, not because of anything people do. Peter tells his readers that they are a new creation born into a living hope because they receive eternal life in the Saviour who has conquered death. It is their inheritance and it is imperishable and will never be corrupted or fade away because it is recorded in heaven. ... So even though they may be going through the trials of life, that God uses to test their faith by fire in the same way gold is purified, they can still rejoice. These are not trials to show God how much faith His followers have; but rather to show His followers what kind of faith they have. Such testing displays the enduring quality of the faith of a Christ-follower and they will see Him in the end for, as Isaiah says: The wilderness and the wasteland will rejoice and blossom as God brings about restoration for all those who follow Him (Isaiah 35:1)

Icebreaker:

What was your most memorable Easter? What made it so special for you?

Application

- How would you describe this time of your life as you listen to the news or follow social media? Does the Good News of Easter change your perspective at all? Why/why not? If it does, how does it do so?
- Can you be afraid, but joyful as the women were? What hope do you have in dark times?
- What good can you see in the world today? Spend some time brainstorming as you think about this.
- How can the season of Easter (as opposed to Easter Sunday) impact the way you live in the next 50 days? How can you 'live Easter'?
- One person made an enormous difference in Newlands with his spade. What can you do, as an individual, to be one of the Easter people who changes the world? What can Gracepoint do to make a difference in a new way? (Let the office know of any ideas you may have).
- What does this barren piece of land in Newlands represent in your life?
- How can you offer a second chance to the people in your family, community, work place etc? What would that look like?

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- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

Service

Decide, before you leave this session, how you can live as 'Easter people' and be accountable to one another for the 50 days between now and Pentecost.

Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/matthew-28/>

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/1-peter-1/>

