

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



Find us on Facebook: **Dunedin Methodist Parish**

Presbyters	Rev David Poultney	974 6172
	Mobile phone	022 350 2263
	Office phone	466 3023
	Office email	parish@mmsouth.org.nz
Parish Stewards	Mrs Jan Stewart	473 9141
	Ross Merrett	489 7663
Tongan Steward	Mr Kaufusi Pole	455 0096
Parish Prayer Convenor	Elaine Merrett	489 7663
		elaineross@xtra.co.nz
Pastoral Convenor	Beryl Neutze	477 7377
Mornington		
Parish Office		466 4600
		bulletins@mmsouth.org.nz

PARISH BULLETIN

9 April 2023

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 16 April 2023

9.30am	Mornington	D Poultney
10.00am	Mosgiel	E Merrett
11.00am	Glenaven	D Poultney



AN EASTER REFLECTION

David Poultney

It may be surprising to some that there are different versions of the resurrection story. In Matthew it is just the *two women, two Mary's* who go to the tomb. No spices are mentioned. An earthquake rolls away the stone and there is only one angel who appears to them. The women are told to go spread the word and they do, with great fear *and* joy!

In the Luke version, it is written that *women who had prepared spices* went to the tomb. They saw *two* men in dazzling white and they go out to tell the eleven disciples. The women were named, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and there were other women, too.

In John's version, it is *only Mary Magdalene* who goes to the tomb. She tells Peter and some other disciple and *they* return. While Mary is weeping, she sees two angels and then the figure of Jesus appears whom she thinks is the gardener.

In the Mark version, it was *three women: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome* (a friend of Jesus) who bring spices to the tomb. They see one man dressed in white, presumed to be an angel, who tells them that Jesus is not there but they will see him in Galilee and to go tell the disciples. In this version, they go out in amazement but Mark writes that they don't tell anyone and the story ends. There is a second Mark ending that many scholars believe was added at a later time....

How lovely it is that women play such a crucial role in all of these Easter stories. Women were often neglected, not even named in Biblical stories, yet here they are daring to go to the heart of the situation, witnessing both the violence at the cross and the miracle at the tomb.

They dared to go and see with their own eyes, they dared to go beyond the stone...and it was surely a leap of faith.

In Mark's minimal writing style and to-the-point urgency, the women flee, too afraid to tell. It makes me wonder...if these women were not going to tell, someone surely needed to. Would we? Would we tell the good news, and what would this good news be?

It seems to me that Jesus died because he refused to compromise a kind of love that came from his connection with the Holy. He refused to compromise his deep love for God and for all life, especially those who were vulnerable to the powers of the day. Although this way of living was seen as threatening to the authorities, it is this compassionate lifestyle that has inspired us across generations.

The resurrection story is an affirmation of life. The Greek word that has been translated "resurrection" comes from the root, *to continue*. All versions of the story say that Jesus was not only *not dead* ...but that he *continued*. He may continue in different ways for each of us. Certainly he continues through his impact in the lives of people who have been following his *way* of love, forgiveness and compassion for more than two thousand years.

Easter joy has a depth that goes to the root of our being. We are fully made by a Divine Creator that yearns for our wholeness. We also are challenged not to compromise this way of being in the world. Easter joy allows us to embrace a freedom from the fear of death that can enable us to live this faith...and our lives... to the fullest. Easter joy affirms life itself!

Each of us finds ways to live into this Easter joy. To discover our own ways of loving the Holy, of looking for the Sacred in all that surrounds us as well as in the lives of our neighbours. We live the Easter joy by serving others with kindness, loving and forgiving deeply and making peace in our own place as well as in the world.

Happy Easter