

# A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

## “While It Is Still Dark” 4/13/22

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark,  
Mary Magdalene came to the tomb  
and saw the stone had been removed from the tomb. (John 20:8)*

Sunday morning, we will acclaim – **Christ is Risen. He is Risen Indeed. Hallelujah.** But before Sunday, we must endure Friday. The betrayal. The anguish. The death. The darkness of the tomb. The part of the story we which we could skip. But before there is resurrection, there must be death. But we have hope, no night is so dark it can hinder the coming of morn.

As soon as she could, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene ran to the tomb. Broken hearted, still in pain, no light to lessen the gloom, she went to the place of Jesus' burial, to be close, to grieve, to escape her own empty room. It was still dark. No light to encourage or to shine on the path. Looking for hope in a time of none. When she sees the stone rolled away, she fears someone has stolen His body. She needs to see her Lord, to help her to understand what has happened, to have a tangible place to put her grief. Something to help her make sense of this past week, of the past 3 years.

Mary had to share this loss with the others who've followed Christ. A couple of the disciples return with her, sure enough, the tomb is empty just as Jesus had said.

Death and resurrection. It's life. One buries the dried-up bulb in the fall and, in the spring, as the sun rises earlier bringing warmth to the dirt and to the day, the plant comes forth, rising to the new day. Bringing beauty and a fresh fragrance to a reawakening world.

It is all about death and resurrection. It's enduring the death, the loss, the set-back. It is the questioning, the confusion, the what, in the world which strengthens us to look harder, which causes us to endeavor to face difficulties, finding hope and the will to go on.

Life. Gains and losses. Pluses and minuses. Learning from losses. Overcoming obstacle so you can become the person you were created to be.

God came to earth as a human, we remember this act of love, this gift of grace in December. Just following the longest night, just as the sun begins to start adding minutes to our day. Just as things, though still dark, start to show more light. When our need for hope is greatest, God graces us with a rich supply, in His Son. Jesus came to live and laugh and love. To show us a new and better way. A way to the Father. A way to live for others, a way of everlasting life. His way was counter cultural. Jesus' way did not point to Rome or to wealth. His way, though honoring traditions, pointed to a new way, a new covenant - in His blood. Shed for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Jesus was abandoned, He endured crucifixion, and God raised Him from the death. God's love and forgiveness, God's promise of eternal life cannot be contained in a stone tomb.

As the days lengthen, as the sun shines with promise; yet, while it is still dark, we look and see the tomb is empty.

**Christ has risen. He is risen indeed. Hallelujah.**