

Spring is Still Springing

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

—John 20:1

Then Jesus did many other miraculous signs in his disciples' presence. —John 20:30

A month ago, as our worship services began on a lovely sunny Sunday morning, I gladly proclaimed the first day of spring and it felt like it. The day was warm and soft, and full of life. One week later, Sunday morning was cold and wet and spring seemed to have disappeared.

Even though we had a later Easter this year, Easter morning, especially at the sunrise service, was COLD! (As Chris Oehl closed the service for us, he proclaimed, “He is frozen, he is frozen indeed!”) And while it has continued to warm up and dandelions are already blooming, our daughter in Oneonta, New York, had a foot of snow on Tuesday of this past week.

Spring. It's a process. It comes in fits and starts and stops and sunshine and mud and blossoms and frost. We start to believe it has come at last, and then. . .

Last Sunday we shared in the true Easter proclamation: “Christ is risen, he is risen indeed!” We celebrate the risen Christ, and then tend to move on to whatever is next in the church calendar. But it is still Easter in the church calendar. The Easter season lasts from Easter Sunday until the day of Pentecost. We hold a tradition that the resurrected Jesus used these forty days to appear, and teach, and help followers to understand what was next for them. Believing and understanding the resurrection. It's a process.

We get the best sense of this spring-like back and forth in the last two chapters of John. There is joy and weeping and running and fear and believing and doubting and fishing and a picnic. Sounds like spring, doesn't it? And that is as it should be. We need to keep questioning and learning and doubting and believing. This is the way of faith. The work of God in Christ is tremendous!

What makes me most hopeful in spring is that once the birds start to sing in the mornings, no matter the weather, they keep singing. They have faith that spring is here. May we sing with their joy throughout this season and beyond.

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.



Early on the first day of the week ... Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.

John 20:1, NRSV