

## My Tomb Opens Today

By Rev. Sheryl Stewart

Easter Sunday

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Read Matthew 28: 1-10

Originally, I had thought all three of us clergy would put in a thought, poem, story, or short meditation, and that Marcy, our minister of music, might work in one of her songs. This would, somehow, work its way into our archives. My plan, made by someone totally non-techy, was too confusing and unwieldy. Don suggested that I come up with a more traditional presentation and he would tape me on some magical cell phone device and post it all on YouTube.

So, here I go. My sermon title, “My Tomb Opens Today,” is based on a poem I read, which shows Jesus leaving His tomb on Easter Sunday and heading for mine. I’d sent this to my Cousin in NH, Nancy Nilsen and a couple of friends who live nearby her farm. This touched them and I felt it was a divine truth worth repeating. It was not for Himself Jesus died and not for himself that God rose Him from the dead. This was for us.

[Gospel Reading] *Matthew 28:16-20 (New King James Version (NKJV) 16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.*

*18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go [a]therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." [b]Amen.*

The Easter story continues as the eleven disciples go on to Galilee as directed and receive "the Great Commission." Ironically, the Bible records, ". . . when they saw Him, they worshipped Him, but some were doubtful." Jesus knew what He was talking about when He told the parable of the rich and poor man in the afterlife and the rich man requests that Lazarus warn his living brother in a vision. God replies, "Even if someone were to return from the dead, they still wouldn't believe." And so, it was.

I have one further thought, one based on the commission which Jesus gives those who do believe. It also relates to a thought from John: 1: 4, 5. and Mat. 11: 30 [RSV].

***(John 1:4-5)***

*4 In him was life,[a] and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

*(Matthew 11:30)*

*30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

I know the correct way to read this as encouragement that the way of Jesus is doable. However, thinking of what Jesus asks us to share, I felt that “My burden is light” just might be a bit more literal!

At the start, it was just God and the night:  
Nothing to be seen, nowhere in sight.  
Then, God had a thought and said it just right,  
And Jesus spoke up: “My burden is light.”  
The first light He made the Son called “the sun;”  
Feeding the plants, helping rivers to run.  
Burning in space so the world can have fun.  
Our sun keeps giving, but the Son wasn’t done.  
Salvation and life for you and for me.  
Insight is in sight: for everyone free.  
Enlightened hope – an eternal decree, --  
And abundant joy that others can see.  
It is all God’s gift; It isn’t a right.  
No one can earn it or steal God’s delight.  
No one can equal it, try as they might.  
Jesus says, “Share it for my burden is Light.”

He is alive! His tomb is opened and so is mine. He has asked me to share the good news, the Gospel of light. Let's do so, for His burden is Light!