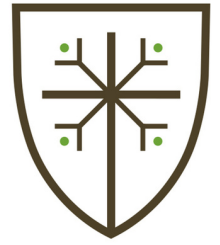


# SERMON NOTES



## New Creations

An Eastertide Sermon Series

artwork by Ty Nathan Clark

March 31, 2024

### SERMON INFO

#### TITLE

"The Distinctiveness of Easter"

#### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

#### TEXTS

Isaiah 25:6-9

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Mark 15:42-47, 16:1-8

### DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. In what ways do you sometimes find yourself a "functional skeptic?"
2. Where do you most see the hope of the resurrection at work in your own life?

### SERMON IN SUMMARY

Today, Easter Sunday, is the Sunday of all Sundays in the church year. And this week, Tim shared with us on the Gospel account from the book of Mark. He asked the question, "Who is this account for and what is its impact?"

#### Audience

Christianity was not the only messianic movement in the ancient world. Many rose up and their leaders were killed in the same way of Christ, and all the movements died with their leaders except one. And the difference, according to Mark, is this day, the resurrection. Mark lingers over Jesus' burial in his gospel, and he does not linger over very much in his writing. His point is that even amidst the skepticism of his day, everyone agrees that Jesus really died and was really buried. Skeptics had to come up with historically plausible alternative explanations for the resurrection. In the world of the ancient near east, the aim was to escape your body, for the spirit to transcend the physical and material world. So, someone coming back into his physical body after death was implausible for them. And thus the skeptics sought something plausible. We are often functional skeptics ourselves. There is a religious shift happening in our culture away from God and we have to ask ourselves, "Is the same shift happening in our lives? Is something else taking precedence in our lives, more captivating, more motivating?" If we live that way long enough, eventually we'll believe that thing is life. And that will come into contact with our faith and turn us from functional skeptics to actual skeptics. Our faith follows how we live and how we live follows what we give ourselves up to.

#### Goal

In Greek, the last word in the Gospel of Mark is "for," a conjunction, meant to connect two ideas. Mark leaves this intentionally open-ended because he wants the church to know that they are the other side of the conjunction. What will we do when we leave here? We need to be intentionally unsettled like the women who go to the tomb. They are a picture of disillusionment, they have no idea what they are going to do next, what their future holds. If we lose the thing our life was built on, we become afraid of the future. Is Jesus is alive, regardless of what our past has been, our future is greater. To the women at the tomb, a resurrected Jesus says, "The whole world is going to be renewed and me with it, not just my mind but my body also." Only Christianity says that. The promise of an entirely resurrected world gives hope to the person who has been crushed by the world.