

**Anglican Parish of Kingscliff -St James Kingscliff and St Mark's Pottsville
Easter Sunday Sermon 2026**

Title: The Empty Tomb in a Broken World

Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10

Introduction

Good morning brothers and sisters. Christ is risen! Alleluia! He is risen indeed, Alleluia!!

We gather today on the most glorious morning in history. Yet we are keenly aware that we celebrate this Easter against a dark horizon. We turn on the news and see global uncertainty, the shadow of war, the ugliness of violence, and the heartbreaking reports of our brothers and sisters in Christ in Nigeria and other places being persecuted and killed for their faith by Islamic fundamentalists.

It is into this very real world—a world of bombs, tears, terror, and tombs—that the angel descends in Matthew 28.

The Reality of Fear

Look at the women at the tomb. They are not there out of confidence; they are there out of love and duty. They are grieving. They are afraid. Yet they followed their heart to the tomb to see their Beloved. What if we followed our hearts and not our fears?

They just witnessed the most injustice the world has ever seen—the Son of God murdered by the very people He came to save. Yet, they kept faith in Him.

In many ways, they are us. We look at the graves of our dreams, the violence in our world, and the rising tide of evil, and our first instinct is fear. It is natural to be afraid. But the Gospel does not leave us in our nature.

The first words out of the angel's mouth are, "Do not be afraid" (Matthew 28: 5). And then, astonishingly, Jesus himself meets them and repeats it: "Do not be afraid" (Matthew 28:10).

Why? Because everything has changed.

Jesus says to us today, in the middle of our fear and uncertainty: I have overcome the grave. He says to the Christian in the war zone: You are not alone. I am with you. He says to the one who feels defeated by injustice: The tomb is empty.

The Victory of Love

We must understand what happened here. God created this beautiful world, but humanity's disobedience marred it with sin (see Genesis 3). Yet God did not abandon us. He made a covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12), spoke through the prophets, and promised a Saviour.

In the fullness of time, Jesus came (cf Galatians 4). He lived a life of love so wide and so deep that the powers of this world could not stomach it. They rejected Him. They killed Him and put Him in a tomb.

But here is the truth that changes everything and the good news that has changed history:

Death could not hold Him down.

On the third day, God the Father raised Him by the power of the Holy Spirit. In that moment, God unleashed a force of love that shattered the gates of hell. Evil, death, and injustice were not just pushed back—they were defeated. The empty tomb is God's "No" to fear and His eternal "Yes" to love.

All Will Be Well

Jesus ascended into heaven. Right now, at this very moment, He is interceding for you and for me. And He has promised to return at the end of time to make all things new and well. He will wipe every tear from our eyes and all eyes shall see Him in glory (cf Revelations 1:7). He will bring every persecutor to justice and every Christian martyr home.

Because of the Resurrection, love has the last word. Not ISIS. Not war. Not the grave. Not sickness, Not trauma. Not hurt. Not injustice. Not greed. Not violence. But Love.

The Invitation

So what do we do? Today, Christ invites our hearts. He invites our repentance. We have given into fear and sin. We have doubted His presence. But He has given His all for us—His body, His blood, His life. What have we given to Christ?

Let us give Him our all in return. Let us live as Easter people, not fearful people. Let us become authentic witnesses of the resurrection.

Conclusion

Friends, the tomb is empty. Whatever you face today and tomorrow—whether persecution, sickness, bereavement, separation, loss, fear, or simple anxiety—do not be afraid. You are not alone. Jesus is with you, even to the end of the age. He loves you immensely. And because He lives, "all will be well, all will be well and all manner of things will be well."

Amen.

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