

Mary Ann Hill

Sermon, Easter Sunday 2025

It was early on Friday morning, in the darkest hours before dawn, they came for him in the garden, days before they met him with palms and praises.

Now they came with swords and spears and clubs.

And he asked them "Who are you looking for?" They answered Jesus of Nazareth.

Now it was his friends who came to look for him in the garden.

They came with their hopes and fears, their sorrows and disappointments, their love and their loneliness!

When they didn't see him, two of them left. But the woman stayed.

She didn't recognize him, on the first day of the week, when all was made new.

That is, she didn't recognize him until he called her by name. And suddenly, she could see him, in a new light.

I'm an introvert, and when I fly, I tend to keep to myself. I'm polite, and friendly if pressed.

But I typically put on headphones and have my nose stuck in a book.

An extrovert I know makes small talk with everyone he sees. One day, he was sitting next to a man who was clearly a business traveler. When the man opened his laptop, my friend noticed that his screen saver was a photo of a child, so he asked, "is that your little boy?"

Two hours, and hundreds of photos later, it was very clear that this man loved his son dearly. My friend thought that he must have been away from home a long time, so he asked him "How long have you been away?"

The man replied "Oh! I just left this morning!" One day away from his son was too much.

It may be hard to believe it, but that's how God loves US. One day away is two much. Three days?

We have all faced the darkest hours before the dawn. Even if we haven't dealt with personal loss, and many of us have, most of us have lived through a world-wide pandemic, one that took nearly 3 million lives.

And we have seen the ravages of war in places like Ukraine and Gaza.

And closer to home we have had to deal with a deeply divided country and volatile politics.

But even though these things are of human making that doesn't mean that we have been abandoned.

Even in the darkest hours before the dawn, God is with us.

Through the saving work of Jesus, God has adopted us as his beloved children,  
and he calls each of us by name. He sent Jesus to call us home.

And he keeps calling until we get there.