

## Easter C 2022 Luke 24: 1-12

*But these words seemed to them an idle tale.* God chose the women to be the first evangelists—to see the empty tomb, to receive the news of Jesus’ resurrection, and to share that news with the others. Maybe the disciples didn’t trust the women, or they didn’t see how their story was plausible, or just couldn’t get their hopes up and have them dashed one more time, but the disciples—with the exception of Peter—thought the women had made it all up, which, let’s face it, is really the only reaction that makes any sense at all.

When I was in college I had to read some books by CS Lewis—not the good ones about lions, witches, and wardrobes, but his books on apologetics—the well-reasoned, systematic arguments defending Christianity as a logical philosophy. The only problem is that Christianity doesn’t make any logical sense. Pretend you don’t know anything about what we’re supposed to believe. Then I tell you that a Divine Being, who has existed for an eternity that we can’t fathom, created this world and everything in it, saw what a mess we were making of it and decided to come in person to fix it, and did that by being born to poor parents in a barn, serving the most marginalized members of society, and preaching such a radically compassionate and inclusive world view that it scared both the leaders of his own religion *and* the Roman Empire enough that they executed him; and then after dying and being buried, he came back to life three days later...If it’s the first time you’ve ever heard that story, it should sound like an idle tale to you, too.

The women weren't looking for the living among the dead. They were looking for the dead among the dead, because dead men stay dead, and tombs do not open and empty out on their own. There aren't many things we can rely on absolutely—death and taxes (and the taxes are due tomorrow, don't forget). But the men in dazzling clothes asked the women, and the women asked the disciples to stop believing the one thing that they—that everyone—knew to be true.

So the disciples thought the women's words were an idle tale...but they didn't think that for long. Keep reading and we hear that Jesus started showing up all over the place—still bearing the marks of the crucifixion, newly able to appear inside locked rooms, but definitely himself, alive, recognizable to his disciples when he shared meals and discussed scripture with them. The one thing for which the disciples dared not even hope had actually happened.

Easter does not require us to hear this story and think it is perfectly logical and reasonable. Instead, the Resurrection invites us to hope in a love that, for all the world, seems impossible. That none of this makes good sense *is* the good news, because a God bound by our understanding or even by our faith, wouldn't be a God of endless love and infinite possibility. And so it is because we need hope when we're hopeless, joy when we're crushed by grief, life when we're dying, and possibility when everything seems impossible that we defiantly cry out: Alleluia! Christ is Risen! **(Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!)**