**Resurrection #2 Stories Luke 24:13-35 John 20:19-31**

Everybody is on high alert right now!

Everybody is rattled!—and for good reason!

We’re invaded by worry, sadness and grief!

The case and death tolls mount!

We know the people who are dying, even if we don’t know them personally.

An uninterrupted barrage of COVID-19 collateral damage breaking news!

Lack of money! Lack of Work! Lack of Rent! No Food. Companionship! School! Business! Athletics! Art!

We’re lonely and bored and frustrated by **derailed intentions** and **delayed futures.**

Still, as the guy in the Spectrum ad says when he’s about to be walked into the volcano to appease the gods and end the drought…..*What if we tried something else?? Got water from the river to the fields….with tubes or something…..?*

Yes! Yes! What if **we** **tried** now to **pay attention** **to another DImension** of the current discomforting SITUATION

What I call the **5th dimension**—the dimension where love exists—since love doesn’t exist in space-time.

Love exists wherever and whenever love happens—here, there, anywhere and everywhere.

Where God exists—since God doesn’t exist in space-time.

God exists whenever and wherever God happens—here, there, anywhere and everywhere.

Come on, people! Let’s flip the script! Start paying attention to things we don’t usually see in the space and time where we typically live.

Let’s pretend we can see things no one else can see.

Let me give you an example.

Once upon a time, along with their mother, I helped our three children—who were Spanish speaking—to learn English.

One of the key methods, suggested by Bi-lingual experts at Ohio State University, was to read to them a certain kind of book that contained lots of intriguing, somewhat hidden visual cues—which they had to locate on the pages—along with repeated words and sounds.

One of our favorite books was entitled *“Only the Cat Saw”*

What does a curious farm cat see when the sun goes down— the stars come out—and all in the family are fast asleep?

A bard owl stalking a tiny field mouse!

The daughter Tessa, who was supposed to be asleep—under the covers, reading with a flashlight!

**Only the cat saw!**

Farm horses stir in their corral as they watch fireflies blink in the night air!

The cat on his hind legs furiously swatting at them.

The burst of a shooting star at 3 in the morning.

**Only the cat saw!**

Mother nursing her newborn baby before sunup.

The sun rising on sheep munching grass in the pasture!

**Only the cat saw!**

Suppose you and I pretended there was something else to see these days!

What if there really is another dimension to see!

Another world even to see!

Could we imagine our way out of this panicky, pandemonium of a pandemic?.............................

This viral enemy has given us a heightened awareness of science.

The value of scientists!

And the scientific method!—Acquiring knowledge through careful observation, experimentation, and measurement-based testing.

Aren’t we all **praying** **furiously** for scientists to succeed in their life and death race to find a vaccine for COVID-19?.....................

But did you know that the most well known scientist in recent history—Albert Einstein— began his scientific journeys by **imagining** things that no one else could see.

Einstein **imagined** his theories about how the universe worked long before he could ever think of proving them.

For instance, Einstein imagined this: You are standing at a train station. Lightning strikes each end of the train at the same time. You see them instantaneously.

Someone else is on the train, in the middle of the train. So the light from the back of the train takes time to catch up and she sees it after the lightning that hit the front of the train.

So, Einstein imagined in his thought experiment, time is relative to where you are and how fast you are moving.

That’s how Einstein began to **imagine** his Theory of Relativity.

What’s happening in the universe is relative to where you are and when you are….

Just this past Thursday, it was reported that astronomers saw a star dancing around a black hole, proving yet another part of Einstein’s theory of Relativity—105 years after he proposed it.

**Which of you is ready to open the imagination window?**

The window through which we might **see** our survival as a global human community and in personal relationships.

* Suppose we began uniting a frightened world through acts of kindness?
* What if we started treating everyone like we were walking our children home at night!
* Imagine starting to forgive every family member, living or dead, who we haven’t forgiven as of **this** morning!

What if we started paying **close atten**tion to the **5th Dimension**!

That is a lot of what love is—you know. You pay close attention to your relationship with another person.

You love God by paying close attention to your relationship with God.

Imagine practicing a 5th dimension intention like that!**...........................**

Normally, on the Thursday before Easter, we have an authentic Passover Seder here. Not this year! No dancing! No hidden matzah. No Next Year in Jerusalem.

Next year? Just in person, please.

Barry and Debbie Speert! We really miss you two beautiful mensches! We miss reading the Haggadah aloud with you!

And we also miss that decisive moment in every Seder when we open the door for the prophet Elijah to come in.

Because one year—at that very moment—when we opened the door, Elijah actually walked into this room.

A homeless person who needed something to eat!...................

All the stories after Easter are what I call **Resurrection Number 2** stories.

Two people are walking along a road to a village called Emmaus later Easter afternoon. The risen Jesus comes up alongside of them and joins them. But they are too distracted to realize it’s him. Later, at a meal, something happens to change their minds

In an upstairs room, where disciples are gathered that night, Jesus walks through a closed door.

You may say, well, nobody can walk through a closed door.

But a 107 year old Dutch woman just did. Critically ill with COVID-19, she walked out of confinement in her nursing home room alive, and as a 5 year old, she walked out of the 1918 flu epidemic alive. If she can walk through two doors, Jesus can walk through one.

You might argue that she was alive, and he was crucified!

But what if the story is really about the disciples in a confined space, the upper room, realizing that the Spirit of Jesus had come in and was giving them courage and vision just to go on, leave death behind and create a new future

If you were with us last week on Easter, maybe you, like me, felt the spirit of Jesus came through the walls and sit down in the room here or where you are, as Jennifer Weiman sang “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth”

Hey! Say Amen, somebody!

Thomas, who replaced Judas as the 12th disciple, didn’t believe he was seeing the risen Christ in that upstairs room.

But then something about his wounded appearance changed Thomas’ mind.

Today, there are a few million Thomas loving Jesus followers in, of all places, India.

The wounded appearance of the world right now demands that we change our minds.

This pandemic demands that we go beyond the mind we now have.

You have all heard of the Big Bang! Well it’s time to make the Big Shift!

We need to shift from an economy that’s focused on consuming—which we see now is highly vulnerable to any severe social trauma—to an economy that’s based on creating.

Guarantee a basic income to everyone. Not to mention health care and child care.

You will begin to see people create a future for themselves and their planetary neighbors.

Creative entrepreneurship will explode!

Sure, some won’t do much at first. But so what? They’ll buy stuff from the ones who are creating new things in the Big Shift.

Time to follow Jesus and walk through some closed doors! Leave death behind and create a new future!

Earlier this year, I told many of you about my one time mentor and friend, Dr James Laue of Washington University and George Mason University, President Jimmy Carter’s advisor on an effort to create a National Peace Academy—Jim kept a secret his whole life. He did not tell anyone until a few days before he died that he was there, on the balcony where Dr. King was murdered, holding his leader’s head with a towel he had retrieved from his motel room next door.

Take a look at the famous photo. You can see Jim there.

He went on to a live a life dedicated to peace and justice making.

I think he saw something that no one else could see.

The African American spiritual says, “*Were You There When They nailed him to the tree?”*

That spiritual also says, at the very end *“Were you there when he rose up from the dead?”*

Were you?

Are you?

Can you imagine Jesus rising within you in this terrible hour in the planet’s history?

We need to see Jesus rising in you!

Everybody you know—and some you don’t know—need to see this in you!

You need to see this resurrection No. Two— within you.

Everyone needs to imagine that we **can** rise up from this death—and create a new personal and planetary life!

Amen.

Rev Scott Myers, Westport Presbyterian Church Sunday after Easter Sunday, April 19, 2020

Late on Easter afternoon, two people are walking a lonely road into the sunset.

They are discussing the grief and horror the death by execution of their leader, Jesus.

A third person comes up alongside them and begins to talk with them. This third person suggests there is a way to make sense of the calamity by listening for the voice of God.

They don’t understand him. They keep walking toward their destination—Emmaus.

Later, on the same day, disciples gather in an upstairs room. They discuss Mary Magdalene and the other Mary and Joanna’s report of Jesus’ resurrection.

The new disciple, Thomas, who replaced the betrayer, Judas, doesn’t believe it.

He insists on his doubts and disbeliefs. And worries and fears and griefs.

Like we do…..Understood!