

**John** is the fourth of the four gospels in the Second Testament. The gospels are the telling of the story of the life of Jesus of Nazareth and his teachings. John is most likely the last of the four to be written down as it contains a more developed theological content, and heavy use of metaphor. During Lent we've read several stories told only by John, including: the story of the blind man who see and the seeing who are blind and the woman at the well who is seen only by Jesus for who she truly is, not by everyone in her town.

This theme of seeing, or sight, or vision is key throughout the gospel of John. The empty tomb story is punctuated by the word "to see". It echoes and in in conversation with other key parts of John's telling of Jesus:

"<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to Thomas, 'Have you believed because you have *seen* me? Blessed are those who have not *seen* and yet have come to believe.'" – John 20:29

"<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have *seen* his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever *seen* God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

John 1:14-17

**Whom are you looking for?** :: In her commentary, Rev. Shroyer notes that the Aramaic translation of Jesus' question to Mary is, "**Who do you want?**" This Easter Sunday, what version of Jesus are you looking for? What version do you want and what version do you need? Are there versions of Jesus you need to let go of?

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:**

- What engaged, enraged, or surprised you in these texts?
- When Mary comes to the tomb, she doesn't initially recognize Jesus. The veil is lifted for her only after he calls her by name. What veils need to be lifted for you? What is the force that lifts them?  
How has your image of Jesus shifted over time? What was your image of Jesus in childhood? What was your image of Jesus when you were an adolescent?
- What invitation do you hear the Spirit of God speaking to you – or to us, as a church – to act, speak, be or change through this word of scripture?

**SCRIPTURE READING FOR EASTER SUNDAY -  
APRIL 9, 2023 @ CAPC OAKLAND**

John 20:1-18  
NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

<sup>1</sup> Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and *saw* that the stone had been removed from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>3</sup> Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup> The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He *saw* the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup> and the cloth that had been on Jesus's head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he *saw* and believed, <sup>9</sup> for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples returned to their homes.

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, <sup>12</sup> and she *saw* two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>13</sup> They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup> When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? **Whom are you looking for?**" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (*which means Teacher*). <sup>17</sup> Jesus said to her, "Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have *seen* the Lord," and she told them that he had said these things to her.