

Sermon Title: **“Whom Are You Looking For?”**

Bible: **John 20:1-18**

When: on Easter Sunday, April 9th, 2023

Where: about 30 people (plus YouTube streaming viewers) at Gilroy UMC

Opening Prayer

Christ is risen. Christ is risen indeed. Let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock, and our Redeemer. Amen.

1. Easter Traditions

Happy Easter!! When was the last time that you did an Easter Egg Hunt? Last Week? Last Year? Or 10 or 20 years ago? I have prepared for Easter Egg hunts many times, but I have not participated in an Easter Egg hunt. In Korea, when I was young, there were no egg hunts. There was no Easter bunny, either. Instead, we had egg coloring. It was a little different from the traditional egg dyeing done here. At Sunday School, I colored hard-boiled eggs with colored pens. I wrote some messages, like “Happy Easter” or “He is risen.” I drew some cute pictures like flowers or faces on the eggs.

When I came to America, I learned about Easter egg hunts and egg dyeing. But unfortunately, I was too old to enjoy them. What I could do is to prepare an Easter egg hunt. But the joy of the resurrection has been with me all the time.

I also learned about Mexican Easter eggs, which are filled with confetti made up of small pieces of paper. It is fun to play with these confetti eggs, but it takes a while to clean up.

Last year, I tasted Italian Easter bread for the first time. This Italian Easter bread has eggs in it. You can see the real eggs. It tasted good, but I was surprised to find whole eggs in the bread.

There are many different cultures that celebrate Easter with eggs. Then, why do we have Easter bunnies at this time of year? Why not Easter chickens? In my research, the Easter bunny tradition came with the German immigrants to America in the 1700s. Because bunnies reproduce a lot, they symbolize new life.

Do you have any special traditions to celebrate Easter? Just as we have a lot of beautiful traditions and cultures to celebrate the joy of the resurrection, I hope for us to experience more.

2. Easter in the Four Gospels

In our Bible, we have four gospels. The stories about the resurrection of Jesus are a little different, if we read carefully. For example, the Gospel of Mark has three different endings, according to the different reliable Greek manuscripts. How many women came to the empty tomb? There are different numbers and names according to each Gospel. Each Gospel has different perspectives of how to remember and what and how to write. In today's reading of the Gospel of John, Mary Magdalene is the central figure. In other Gospels, there are other women mentioned. Like our different traditions and cultures, the stories about the very first Easter are different. But all of them in the stories came to the tomb, and they were looking for someone.

3. Whom Are You Looking For?

What are you looking for this Easter Sunday? I would wish to look for Easter eggs if I were young. Whom are you looking for this beautiful Easter Sunday? I am looking for our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. That's because death has no victory. I am looking for our resurrected Jesus Christ, because the darkness cannot conquer the light. I am looking for our living Jesus Christ, because hatred cannot win. But love wins.

Even though we are all different, even though we all come from different places, we are here to look for our resurrected Jesus Christ. You are the evidence and the witness for the resurrection, like Mary and the two disciples. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is ours. The victory of Jesus Christ is ours. The love of God is ours. Death has lost its sting. The hatred and the darkness have lost their powers. The resurrected and the living Jesus Christ is in all of us. Today, when we take bread and share the cup, let us remember not only the life of Jesus Christ but also the living Jesus Christ in us and in our daily lives. So, let us win again with the love of Jesus Christ. Let us shine again with the light. Let us be the hope and the life for this world. The living Jesus Christ is in you, each of you.

Closing Prayer

Our Lord Jesus Christ, you are risen, and you are the living God in us. Please lead us to life, to the light, and to love. In Jesus' name. Amen.