

St. Columba's Episcopal Church  
Easter Sunday – April 5, 2026  
The Rev. Dr. Susan Kraus

Angels! In Greek, *angelos*, in Hebrew, *malakh*. In the Bible what are they? Angels are messengers from God, envoys bringing news to human beings. An angel is a manifestation of God in a form that human beings can apprehend, a form that is as much of God as humans can bear. Angels often begin their message with the words, “Do not be afraid!” As extraordinary manifestations of God, angels are awesome and indeed frightening. And their presence is often accompanied by frightening events in nature – like an earthquake, a flash of lightning, or the sound of thunder. In whatever form angels appear, they have a common purpose – to deliver a message from God.

Angels were significant in the life of Jesus from its beginning. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary with the message that she would give birth to the Son of God. At the time of Jesus' birth, an angel appeared to shepherds watching over their sheep in a nearby field and gave them the message that the Savior was born. We just learned of the angel who appeared to Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary at the empty tomb of Jesus. This angel had an earth-shattering message for these women who had followed and loved Jesus. He was no longer in the tomb because he had been raised from the dead. Jesus was not dead but alive, and they would see him again. With joy, the women took on the angel's work. They ran to deliver God's message to other disciples of Jesus.

Ever since that day – a day unlike any other – countless human messengers of God have passed on the Easter message. We have heard it ourselves more than two thousand years later. Jesus, an innocent man who had been betrayed, abandoned, and killed, was raised by God from death to new life, resurrected life, unending life. His tragic death was not the end.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! That's the headline of the Easter message we have received. There's more, much more. Yes, life is stronger than death. Goodness is stronger than evil. Light overcomes darkness, not the other way around. Self-giving, God-centered love is stronger than hatred and selfishness and indifference. Caring for others with compassion has more power than using and exploiting others. Truth will triumph over lies. As followers of the risen Lord, we are called to trust these messages from God. We are called to live their truth and by the way we live to pass on the message we have received. Every time we choose to love, to care for others with compassion, to tell the truth, to be a light in someone's life.

God has given us the work of angels. No earthquakes or thunder or lightning will announce our presence. We are only human. But we do have holy work to do. We have been entrusted by God to spread a message of hope in God's promises by the way we live our lives. Today we rejoice in the angel's message to two women that Christ was raised from the dead. Can you hear the angel say to you, “Now, go and wherever you are, be an angel of the Lord”?