

# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE  
OF PEACE**  
Called to Connect



## Easter Sunday

*April 4, 2021*

Resurrection proclaims that our stories are never over, even when it seems as they've come to an end. That was true for Mary at the tomb, and it's true for us as we grieve the many losses we've experienced through the pandemic. Easter says that God is always writing a new chapter into our lives. We are never without hope!

## SCRIPTURE TEXT: MATTHEW 28:1-10

Read the scripture text together as a group.

### BACKGROUND INFO

Mary had lost everything at Jesus' crucifixion. She lost her dearest friend, her purpose, her hope. You can feel the weight of it as she walks to the tomb in the dim light of dawn. In Matthew's Gospel Mary isn't going to the tomb with spices to prepare Jesus' body. She knows that the tomb has been sealed and that it's being guarded. In Matthew's Gospel Mary is simply going to grieve all that she has lost. Jesus is dead. His story is over, and so is Mary's. It just doesn't get more final than death. Or so it seems.

But then the unexpected happens. The earth quakes. An angel appears. The guards faint with fear. The stone is rolled away. And there's Jesus. Alive. And I can't help but imagine God seeing Mary's face, and with a voice that fills the heavens shouting, "I'll bet you didn't see that coming, did you?" Mary's story isn't over. It's only just beginning.

Easter proclaims that just when it seems as if our stories are over, they aren't. Easter didn't just happen; it happens. It isn't just the story of Jesus and Mary; it's our story. This thread that runs through all great stories also runs through the story of our lives. Faith is daring to believe that something good is on the way, even if we can't yet see it. Even when we feel that you've wound up in a hopeless dead end. Easter promises hope that our stories aren't yet over.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Mary experienced a "plot twist" when the tomb was empty. Share your favorite movie plot twist.
- Imagine being present on that day. How do you think Mary felt as she approached the tomb?
- How do these events give us hope in our lives today?
- Why is this an important piece of our story?

**APPLICATION:** This week, ask God to reveal what part of your story might need a new chapter. Lean into the hope that Easter gives us; our story is not over and we can trust that Jesus has something good on the way.