

I try to imagine what it must have been like on that first Easter morning when there wasn't the knowledge of the resurrection. When, instead, it was all about death and disappointment. And I imagine Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb in order to care for Jesus' body, to prepare it for burial. The story was over. The hope was gone. And then someone shows up in the garden, and Mary can't recognize him. Thinking that he's the gardener, she says, "Sir, tell me where you've taken the body so that I may bring it back here."

Imagine a woman, literally, thinking that she could carry the deadweight of a man. All of that grief, the heaviness of that physically as well as spiritually, and just then Jesus speaks her name. "Mary," he says, and her eyes are open. And she can see Jesus because she has been seen by Jesus. Her name has been called by the risen Lord, and now she is part of the resurrection story that happens for all of us in baptism. Jesus has called all of us by name and knows every one of us. And we too now are part of the resurrection story. Her mourning was turned into dancing.

I'm going to leave you with this hymn from our newest worship resource, *All Creation Sings*, about the transformation of Mary's grief into joy. Happy Easter, dear Church.



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
 Presiding Bishop
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Woman, Weeping in the Garden



1 Wom - an, weep - ing in the gar - den, who has
 2 Wom - an, wait - ing in the gar - den, af - ter
 3 Wom - an, walk - ing in the gar - den, Je - sus
 4 Wom - an, weep - ing in the gar - den, weep for
 5 Wom - an, danc - ing from the gar - den, find the



pushed the stone a - side? Who has tak - en Je - sus'
 men have come and gone, af - ter an - gels give their
 takes you by sur - prise; when the gar - d'ner calls you,
 joy, for you have seen Je - sus, the Mes - si - ah,
 oth - ers and pro - claim Christ is ris - en as he



bod - y, Je - sus Christ the cru - ci - fied?
 wit - ness, si - lent - ly you watch the dawn.
 "Mar - y!" faith and joy meet in your eyes.
 ris - en; Christ, of whom the proph - ets dream.
 prom - ised; tell the world he knew your name!

Woman, Weeping in the Garden

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.