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St. John's Episcopal Church  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2018  
Easter Morning Phone Call

Halfway into the pulpit, the preacher's phone rings... And he fumbles around under volumes of vestments to *find* the phone...

Hello? (Oh, my, this is sooooo embarrassing...)

I'm sorry, I can't talk right now. I'm in church.

What do you mean you know I'm in church? If you knew I was in church why did you call? Who is this, anyway? You don't sound familiar.

Jesus? Jesus of Nazareth?

Oh, good one, whoever you are! Happy April Fool to you, too!

Um... you mean... this really *is* Jesus?

How can this be Jesus? You're dead!

You were... raised from the dead. I see. Who did this thing, raising you from the dead?

(*At this point, Siri interrupted the call: "I don't have the answer to that, Padre, but here are some sites you could visit."*)

Oh. God did. I see. Well, even though I know God can do just about anything God wants to do, that's pretty damn amazing! Raised from the dead! So... you're not in the tomb anymore?

Have you told anybody?

Oh. You saw Mary? Mary Magdalene or your mother?

Oh – Mary Mags. Well, did *she* see *you*?

Where was this?

Oh – in the garden near the tomb. She thought you were the gardener?

How did she know it was you?

I see. You called her by name. Mary. Well, that probably got her attention!

Hahaha good one, Jesus!

So what did she do?

She ran to tell the others? Oh – you mean the *guys*. Your *male* disciples. I'm not surprised. Did they believe her?

Hold on, I have another call... Hello? Who's this?

Oh – Mary. Which Mary?

Oh, hi, Mary Mags – what's up?

Ah, yes, you have seen the Lord. I knew that. In fact, I have Jesus on the other line, so I'll have to call you back. Yeah, I know you're excited, but this other call is more important...

*Clicks back to Jesus.*

Yeah, I'd have a hard time with it, too. In fact, I'm having a hard time believing it's you on the other end of my iPhone!

Wait a minute, stop laughing, how do I know it's you?

Yup, I remember, you fed all those people with a few fish and a few loaves of bread.

Yup, I remember, you blessed the bread and wine and told the disciples it was your body and blood. (I gotta tell you, Jesus, that was a little creepy...)

Yup, I remember, you raised Lazarus from the dead.

OK, well, I can remember those miracles... So... exactly where are you now, Jesus?

I see. In God's house. With God. God, your Father, and the Holy Spirit. And you have an iPhone? How's the coverage in God's house?

Oh. You don't *need* an iPhone.

So, Jesus. You know I'm in church. Since you've already interrupted the service, what do you want me to say to your people?

He says to tell you to love God and love your neighbor and feed hungry people and offer sanctuary to refugees and immigrants and treat women and girls with respect and stop fighting and stop killing children and get over this racism thing and white privilege because it's a horrible sin that makes God weep.

OK, what else do you want me to tell them, Jesus?

He says, "You are forgiven."

He says, "No matter what you've done, you are forgiven."

He says, "You are loved."

He says, "All of you." (All of them, Jesus? Oh, OK...)

That's pretty radical, Jesus. I mean, our world is so broken right now. War, famine, poverty, racism, I could go on and on but you probably know all that anyway.

Uh huh.

He says, "God can change our lives."

"God can make selfish people generous."

"God can make racist people woke." (You know that word, Jesus? Wow, you're pretty *au courant*.)

"God can bring peace and mercy and justice to our broken world."

Ummmm... And just exactly how is God going to do that, Jesus?

Ah. Love God, love your neighbor.

That's it?!?

Pretty simple, huh.

Jesus, I think you just might give some of us hope.

Oh – that's the point? Gotcha.

Jesus, where are you... really.

You're outside our doors? You're in the streets? You're seriously in a homeless shelter? You're in the church? Here? In Mount Pleasant? How come I can't see you?

Oh. He says I'm not looking hard enough.

He says he's in every one of us if we'll only look and listen.

He says he's alive. Not just risen, but alive.

And he wants us to do better.

And he loves us. That's why he challenged Rome and Herod and Pilate and the high priests. Because he loves us.

Wow.

Well, Jesus, this has been some phone call. I never expected you to call during church. Or any other time, for that matter. It's incredibly powerful to hear your voice.

Oh. I need to listen harder, too.

OK, I guess we all need to pay more attention, huh?

Yeah, yeah, and love God and love our neighbor.

Do you think we'll ever get it, Jesus? Will the world be OK?

Whew. That makes me feel better.

Hey. Thanks so much for calling, Jesus – I know you're really busy.

Oh – your last word is for *us* to get busy. Because we have a lot to do.

OK, I hear ya.

Thanks, Jesus. Thank you so much. I'm really grateful for your reminders.

Um yeah. Amen to that, brother.

Oh – one more thing: Alleluia?

*Heck yeah, Alleluia!*