

# *Stories of Home*

in  
a

# **Post- Resurrection World**



## **Easter Bible Study Guide**

Wednesdays, April 15 – May 6  
6 p.m. in Nativity or on Zoom



Central Lutheran  
MINNEAPOLIS

## Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the final four lessons in the series *Stories of Home*. In this final unit, we'll explore what home looks like in a post-resurrection setting. Over the coming weeks, we'll study the experience of Thomas, the role of the women, the significance of Emmaus, and Jesus meeting the disciples on the beach at the Sea of Galilee.

In all these stories, Jesus appeared in the flesh following the resurrection, and it was after an embodied encounter with the risen Christ that people realized that Jesus did indeed die and rise again.

As we read these stories, pay attention to peoples' understanding that Jesus would return. In the first few decades following the ascension, Jesus' followers believed that he would return and soon – in their lifetimes. Continuing to dwell in *Stories of Home*, how might the anticipation of Christ's return have influenced peoples' understanding of God making a home with and among them?

Anticipation is a powerful emotion, filled with joyful expectation and pervasive anxiety.

These are interesting considerations, so let's get started.

Attend Each Week, or When it Works  
In person or via Zoom

As always, these Bible studies are more holy conversations. No previous knowledge is expected, in fact it helps to seek to enter the study as if for the first time; we call this *beginner's mind*. You are invited to attend in person or via Zoom each week, but the invitation is always open for when it works in your schedule. Remember: always join the conversation, regardless of where you are in your faith journey. For this study, you may want to read the assigned readings ahead of time.

You'll want a Bible for our shared study of "Stories of Home." We recommend a good study Bible and any translation you have is fine. A variety of translations enriches our conversations because of the nuances in language. The study texts are listed in the schedule and at the beginning of each lesson. A basic outline of the lesson is included in this booklet, and the pastors will provide additional information and handouts prior to or in class.

Christ Care Prayers begin each lesson; it is a time when we pray for one another and the needs of the world. If you have a prayer concern that you do not want to share in front of the group, you can send a private chat to the pastor who is leading the study.

Thank you for joining this Bible study, these holy conversations.

## Schedule

<b>Wednesday, April 15:</b>	The Disciples and Thomas <i>John 20:19-29</i>	pages 5-6
<b>Wednesday, April 22:</b>	The Women at the Tomb <i>Luke 23:55-24:12 and John 20:1-2, 11-18</i>	pages 7-8
<b>Wednesday, April 29:</b>	The Road to Emmaus <i>Luke 24:13-35</i>	pages 9-10
<b>Wednesday, May 6:</b>	Breakfast on the Beach <i>John 21:1-19</i>	pages 11-12

## Join Online!

You can join the Bible study online via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 893 2691 1994

Passcode: 031076

# The Disciples and Thomas

Wednesday, April 15, 6 p.m.

Suggested reading: John 20:19-29

## John 20:21

*<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."*

## John 20:27-28

*<sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."<sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"*

## Tonight's Conversation:

When Jesus made his first appearance to the disciples, it's safe to assume that he went to someone's home. While older translations used the word *house* here, the updated translation omits it because the original Greek didn't include the word *house* at all. It simply indicated that the place the disciples were gathered was secured by a lock. Scholars suggest that the reason for this was to demonstrate that Jesus, the Good Shepherd, continued to keep his followers safe. Think "I am the Gate."

Next Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into the disciples, releasing the paraclete or the advocate that Jesus had promised. Jesus breathed into the very breath and flesh of the disciples.

Finally, when Thomas returned home and learned of what the others had seen and heard, he said, "I will not believe unless I see and feel the marks of the nails." And a week later, when the doors will still shut (locked or secured), Jesus appeared again to say "peace." He released his full identity to Thomas whose understanding was then "unlocked" and unbelief turned to belief.

There is a homecoming quality to the story of the disciples' first encounter with Jesus post-resurrection. The fullness of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is fully known

## Christ Care Prayers

## Weekly Conversations and Reflection

1. How do you understand Jesus as "The Gate?"
2. How does Jesus, the Good Shepherd, communicate a message of home?
3. How did the disciples offer a feeling of home to each other?
4. What kinds of things do you want kept outside the gate?

## John 20:19-29

### Jesus Appears to the Disciples

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

<sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

### Jesus and Thomas

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark

of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

## The Women at the Tomb

Wednesday, April 22, 6 p.m.

Suggested reading: Luke 23:55-24:12 & John 20:1-2, 11-18

### *“Seen” (A Blessing for Easter Day) by Jan Richardson*

*You had not imagined  
that something so empty  
could fill you  
to overflowing,*

*and now you carry  
the knowledge  
like an awful treasure  
or like a child  
that roots itself  
beneath your heart:*

*how the emptiness  
will bear forth  
a new world  
that you cannot fathom  
but on whose edge  
you stand.*

*So why do you linger?  
You have seen,  
and so you are  
already blessed.  
You have been seen,  
and so you are  
the blessing.*

*There is no other word  
you need.  
There is simply  
to go  
and tell.  
There is simply  
to begin.*

### **Tonight’s Conversation:**

It is often lost in the great celebration of Easter over the years that the first people to know of the resurrection were women. In all the stories of the Gospels, there is one common person who shows up consistently. It is Mary Magdalene. This Easter at Central, Pastor Peter did an amazing job of reminding us what magic there is when Jesus says Mary’s name, and when happens when he says our name too. It leads me to reflect that Mary Magdalene felt nowhere more at home then when she was with Jesus. Let’s spend some time with the women on that very first Easter in John and in Luke.

### **Christ Care Prayers**

### **Weekly Conversations and Reflection**

1. Have you ever had a time in your life where loss and grief were so overwhelming that no place felt like home?
2. Have you ever known another person who always made you feel at home in their presence?
3. How do you understand the impact the resurrection makes on where we claim our home is?
4. Has the actions you take in a day or the duties you tend to have a sense of home for you?

## Luke 23:55-24:12

<sup>55</sup> The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. <sup>56</sup> Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

<sup>1</sup> But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. <sup>2</sup> They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they went in they did not find the body. <sup>4</sup> While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. <sup>5</sup> The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. <sup>6</sup> Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> that the Son of Man must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again." <sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

## John 20:1-2, 11-18

<sup>1</sup> Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, <sup>12</sup> and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>13</sup> They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup> When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup> Jesus said to her, "Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and she told them that he had said these things to her.

# The Road to Emmaus

Wednesday, April 29, 6 p.m.

Suggested reading: Luke 24:13–35

## John 1:38-39

<sup>38</sup>When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” <sup>39</sup> He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon.

## John 14:1-3

<sup>1</sup>“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

## John 15:1-5

<sup>1</sup>“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup> He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

## Tonight’s Conversation:

Tonight we gather to ponder what home for Jesus looks like through the lens of a few specific moments in Jesus’ life and one central moment of home for Jesus after he is raised from the dead. We will also bring Martin Luther’s deep insight along for the conversation, pondering the sacramental images where Luther experienced the grace of God under all the common elements of home. Abide is the key word in John’s Gospel for a sense of home in God. Stay with us is the key image within the road to Emmaus lesson.

While John and Luke wrote within very different communities they were trying to articulate a sense of home. Here are the themes that overlap in each Gospel. We could add Mark and Matthew, if we had time.

### John

Abide with us  
Christ dwells with us  
Union with Christ

### Luke

Stay with us  
Christ revealed in Word and meal  
Encounter with Christ

## Christ Care Prayers

## Weekly Conversations and Reflection

1. Where do you feel most at home? And why?
2. Who defines home for you? What relationships provide a sense of home?
3. What moments in this account inspire you?
4. How do you reflect on Jesus’ presence and yet not recognized?
5. Martin Luther taught often that God is hidden and yet at work under ordinary forms, perhaps most known in the unexpected and humble, human moments. Does that resonate with you?
6. The key moment is when Luke records that Jesus “was known to them in the breaking of the bread.” It is just bread, and then, it is not. For Luther, God is truly present, or “fully present.” Have you had moments in life when you experienced that “fully present” reality?
7. The road to Emmaus also invites us to ponder what home looks and feels like as we travel our journey through life. Where has home been for you? Where is home now? Where might home be in the future? As Kathleen Norris might ask, what is your spiritual geography of home?

## Luke 24:13–35

<sup>13</sup>Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup>and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup>While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup>but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup>And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup>Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” <sup>19</sup>He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup>and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. <sup>21</sup>But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. <sup>22</sup>Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, <sup>23</sup>and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. <sup>24</sup>Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.” <sup>25</sup>Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have

declared! <sup>26</sup>Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” <sup>27</sup>Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

<sup>28</sup>As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. <sup>29</sup>But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup>When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup>They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” <sup>33</sup>That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup>They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” <sup>35</sup>Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Reflect on or sing together *Stay with Us and Abide with Me* (ELW 629). Music is printed on pages 13-14.

# Breakfast on the Beach

Wednesday, May 6, 6 p.m.

Suggested reading: John 21:1-19

## Tonight's Conversation:

Following Jesus' resurrection and early appearances to the women, disciples, and residents of Jerusalem, the lives of many returned to normal. The disciples returned to the Sea of Galilee where they were fishermen.

On an ordinary day, when the fish were scarce, Jesus appeared as a stranger on the beach offering the disciples fishing advice. And, after telling the disciples to cast their nets to the other side, their nets were so full, they were unable to haul the fish in.

Upon catching the fish, the disciple whom Jesus loved recognized him at once and shortly thereafter they gathered around a charcoal fire for a breakfast of fish and bread.

This is Jesus at his homing best. Gathered with his friends and followers, and knowing that he would return to God, he asked Peter three times, do you love me. Each time Jesus responded to Peter's, 'yes', he replied with a commissioning for Peter to create a home for the next disciples. Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs; tend my sheep; feed my sheep'. Each answer is a final expression to shepherd and home the sheep – to continue the work and the mission that Jesus started – the work of the Good Shepherd.

## Christ Care Prayers

## Weekly Conversations and Reflection

1. How does Jesus affirm and commission his relationship with the disciples in this story?
2. What are the emotions of the disciples? Of Jesus?
3. How was the encounter at the beach a new call to discipleship?
4. What are your favorite parts of this lesson? What moments are challenging or deeply encouraging for you?

## John 21:12

*<sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."*

## John 21:15

*<sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."*

## John 21:1-19

<sup>1</sup>After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he showed himself in this way. <sup>2</sup>Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. <sup>3</sup>Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

<sup>4</sup>Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. <sup>7</sup>That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he had taken it off, and jumped into the sea. <sup>8</sup>But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

<sup>9</sup>When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." <sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-

three of them, and though there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. Jesus and Peter

<sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." <sup>16</sup>A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. <sup>18</sup>Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." <sup>19</sup>(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

## Thank You

Thank you for your faithful study of these Stories of Home. We are grateful for your faithful conversations and exploration of these sacred texts that have informed faith for centuries. Your embrace of these stories ensures that they will continue to be told and shared with future generations.

To end our learning this year, I share these images from Susan Palo Cherwien's meditation called *God in Christ*:

*God in Christ.*

*God in Flesh.*

*God in human form.*

*The impact of the Christ story should startle and delight us;*

*it should form our lives and our desire,  
it should turn our heads.*

*For God entered creation in a new way;*

*God sat at the table and shared bread,*

*God laughed and God wept.*

*God savored sunsets and felt damp sand on the  
souls of feet,*

*God suffered*

*God risked,*

*God danced,*

*And thus God blessed human life.*

*There should be no doubt.*

*Life is blessed.*

*Life is holy.*

*God made God's home with us.*

## Credits

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Cherwien, Susan Palo. "God in Christ." *Crossings: Meditations for Worship*. St. Louis, Missouri: Morning Star Music Publications of St. Louis, 2003. 44. Print.

Richardson, Jan. *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*. Wanton Gospeller Press, 2015. Print.

## Abide with Me

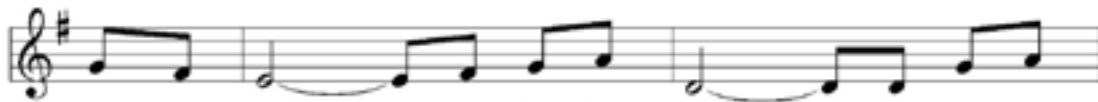
1 A - bide with me, last fully the e - ven - tide,  
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;  
 3 I need thy pres - ence ex - 'ry pass - ing hour;  
 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
 5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes.

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide  
 earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way,  
 what but thy grace can foul the tempt - er's pow'r?  
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness,  
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.

When oth - er help - ers fail and em - ferts flee,  
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see,  
 Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?  
 Where is death's sting? Where grave, thy vic - to - ry!  
 heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee:

help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me,  
 O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me,  
 Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bide with me,  
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me!  
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

## Stay with Us



1 Stay with us, till night has come: our praise to  
 2 Walk with us, our spir - its sigh: hear when our  
 3 Walk with us, the road will bend: make all our  
 4 Talk with us, till we be - hold a joy - ful  
 5 Stay with us, till day is done: no tears nor



you this day be sung. Bless our bread, o - pen our  
 wea - ry spir - its cry. Feel a - gain our loss, our  
 weep - ing, wail - ing end. Wipe our tears, for - give our  
 life you will un - fold. Heal our eyes to see the  
 dark shall dim the sun. Cheer the heart, your grace im -



eyes: Je - sus, be our great sur - prise.  
 pain: Je - sus, take us to your side.  
 fears: Je - sus, lift the heav - y cross.  
 prize: Je - sus, take us to the light.  
 part: Je - sus, bring e - ter - nal life.

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926

Music: STAY WITH US, Walter L. Pelz, b. 1926

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# Notes



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