

4.7.18 Pastor Jordan Gades John 20 19-31

Good Evening! Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ! Amen! He Is Risen! He is risen indeed Alleluia. So there is a tradition in the church that goes back a long time that the Sunday after Easter is Holy Humor Sunday. So in honor of that, I thought I'd start this evening off with a joke. I don't know if you've heard this one before but if you have please humor me and laugh anyway because it's one of my favorites. So the joke goes.

There are these two walking down the street in a heated discussion. They turn a corner and walk into a bar. Now this third gentleman, who is following not too far behind them, sees them walk into this bar. This gentleman, he ducks.

It gets me every time, I really couldn't tell you why I love it so much but I just do.

I think the disciples could have used something to lighten the mood a bit before for this passage. They already have News that Jesus is risen. Why aren't they joyful? You know in the joke at least you get to see someone learn something. You get to see progression happen. You get to see someone see a mistake and do something else. But no, not so with the disciples.

Well it's a good thing that they had Jesus. Jesus who was willing to live and do die for them. Willing to be patient with them. Willing to go the distance. Go beyond death and keep teaching them. It's a good thing we have him as our teacher, shepherd, savior and king.

Thomas always gets the bad rap doesn't he? Not believing when Jesus shows up to everyone else. Of course all of the disciples didn't believe Mary either when she told them about Jesus rising. They had to see to believe.

But we, all of us, are trying to do better. We hear the word of God, we see the works of the Holy Spirit all around us. We know that God is here. Whether it's in a family being called to help others by selling thousands of ginger snaps to help pay for medical bills. We see people guided into giving amazing unique crafts and talents at the silent auction. An auction which will help our high schoolers deepen their faith and leave a mark on their lives that will last for the rest of their lives. I see people in our community and congregation time and time again standing up and feeding those who are hungry through our food shelf and our community meals. I see people passionate about creating community. About making a system of support and love. Whether that's between 76 years olds to 16 year olds to everyone in-between and beyond. I see people use the gifts that they have been given to lead in worship, support the ministries of this church, and make our world a better place, a place where we can all know the peace that we have in Christ.

We know that God is active in this world and yet we still doubt just like Thomas, just like all the disciples. In fact believing and doubting might be the most Christian things that we do in our everyday Christian lives. It really is true. It seems so scary to us but what if we switched that doubt up. What if instead of doubt we said it was a natural curiosity that we are all created with. A desire to know more. To understand more fully. There is a place where we can be

Christians together. Let us discuss our questions, what we are curious about in our faith, about our God, about our lives as a member of the body of Christ, as a beloved child of God? What if that was how we lived our lives of faith. Instead of doubt, reframe that to curiosity. Instead of just assuming "huh it looks like there's nothing I can do" Ask "I wonder what God is calling me to do, what I can do that might be different then the norm."

Doubt just gets all trapped in our own upper room like the disciples were in the reading tonight. They weren't getting anything done. The door was still locked, they were keeping the world at bay so that it wouldn't see there supposed weakness.

But when Jesus shows up.

That changes everything. And the Great thing about Jesus is that he just keeps showing up. Keeps drawing you out of that room. Keeps calling us into the world to share with each other. To sit with one another and discuss what this all means.

Here is where we finally start learning from the past, from the others that have come before us. This is where that joke I made a few minutes ago comes back into play. With our Faith we look to the mistakes of those who have walked these same steps before us. It's time to change how our focus is directed. It's time to stop feeling alone locked in your own room of doubt. Christ has brought us out. Christ has open is loving hands to us and proclaimed peace and victory over death. It's time to start living that new life out. Amen.