



# Weekly Update

## April 11-17

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### Luke 24:36-53 Jesus meets the disciples and eats some fish

This is the first time we have gathered in this sanctuary since March 15, 2020. For thirteen months we have created videos, sent e-newsletters, sent weekly updates, written notes, made phone calls, and tried to uphold three principles of the United Methodist Church: 1. Do no harm, 2. Do all the good you can, and 3. Stay in love with God.

Today we read the third story of resurrection that is found in the Gospel of Luke. As the story is told, these events all happen on the first day of the week—Easter Sunday. The day began with the women finding the empty tomb. Shocked, excited, and a little terrified they go tell the disciples the news that they discovered, “He is not here. Christ is risen!”

Later in the day two disciples, perplexed by the strange news of the women, decide to go home. On their way home they encounter a stranger. This stranger tells opens up to them the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings, reminding them of how Christ must come into the world. When they offer him hospitality, he comes into their home. At the moment he breaks the bread, it is revealed to them that he is Christ risen, and he vanishes. Astonished, these two disciples return to Jerusalem to tell the rest of the group what had happened.

As they are sharing stories of these wild encounters (there is meeting between Jesus and Peter that never gets told), Jesus appears to them and says, “Peace be with you.” He tries to reassure them. He shows them his hands and feet—proof of his scars and proof he is who he claims to be. Then comes what I believe is the key to the entire passage.

Luke 24:41 (CEB) “Because they were wondering and questioning in the midst of their happiness, he said to them, ‘Do you have anything to eat?’”

That seems to be an apt description of their situation—and an apt description of what we may be feeling right now. “Questioning and wondering in the midst of their happiness” could describe me in this moment of preaching in front of people gathered in our sanctuary for the first time in 13 months. I am so happy that we are here, but at the same time I am wondering and questioning. I can’t help

but wonder if this is the right thing to do. I have so many questions about what sort of risks we are taking and what the greater picture of cases in our area is telling us.

There in the midst of this happiness and confusion (which is the situation in almost

all of the resurrection stories), Jesus first offers peace. Then he asks for something to eat. He wants to return to the table and return to the fellowship that he built his life around.

In the Common English Bible, it says that he asks for fish “Because” of their questions and wondering. In other words, Jesus read the room and knew that the best thing to do was eat. Then over a meal he opened up the Scriptures to them. Here in the midst of anxiety, confusion, and joy, Jesus brought peace through fellowship and study. As we move into this next chapter of life as the Church, may we follow Jesus’ lead, and do so with fellowship and study.

Then he moves them forward, telling them to be witnesses. It is their role to find peace in Christ, but then to bear witness to the power of the Holy Spirit. This is our role as well. Even in our mixed emotions, we can be witnesses to what we have seen. We have seen Christ in our midst. We have seen joyful times of worship, even from our couch. We have seen a church come together to share a season of gratitude—reaching out in generosity to teachers and first responders in our community. We have witnessed a church that closed its doors but endured and continued to serve. We are witnesses to the power of the Holy Spirit. As we move forward—never back to normal—may we continue to witness to the love and grace of Christ.



Supper at Emmaus, by Rembrandt. Wikimedia Commons