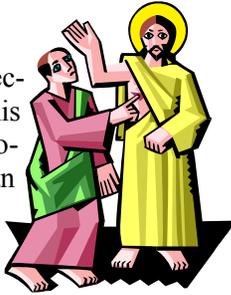


Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

John sat down to write his story of the Resurrection many years after the event, but as he wrote this passage it was as though he were experiencing the moment all over again. Often our English translations can almost, but not quite, capture the emotion of the writer. John, for instance, here used language to paint a picture that places us in the room as Jesus speaks. The beginning of verse 27, for example, could be translated, “Then He is saying to Thomas...” It is as though John is reliving the moment as he tells us about it many years later. John can still hear Thomas saying, “My Lord and my God.”



How much we envy the closeness that the disciples had with Jesus, especially Thomas, because his doubt was answered by the Lord in such an awesome way. We too long to be in the presence of Jesus. Thomas had the opportunity to physically comprehend the risen Christ, but Jesus responded to Thomas’ declaration of faith that though he could see Christ for himself, those who believed without seeing would also be blessed. As you have read this passage, have you ever noticed that Jesus did not say that those who had never known *His presence*, but believed anyway, would be blessed!

What a great statement of the gift of faith! We can know the presence of Jesus; we can know the resurrected Christ as intimately as did Thomas. Jesus is always with us, just as surely as He was with the disciples in their place of hiding. Haven’t noticed Him lately? Maybe that’s because you haven’t taken the time. We recognize Jesus in our lives when we take the time to contemplate His Word or when we take the time to pray—and even more when we take the time to listen. Communicating with God isn’t a one-way prayer-cramming session. We know Jesus’ presence in the silent times of our day. Don’t have any of those? Make some! Satan will continually try to steal away the gift of faith, but John and others knew that when faith is nurtured it remains strong. Perhaps that is why he wrote, “...but these [events] have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

Now is the best time to join a Bible study.

(A message from your Iowa District West Education Committee)

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

1. We are one week past Easter Sunday. What is the time of the event of vs. 19? Vs. 26?
2. What is the significance of Jesus’ words to the disciples in vs. 19, 21, and 26?
3. Who was the doubtful disciple? Why was he skeptical? (vs. 25)



4. What was Thomas’ faith response to the resurrected Jesus? (vs. 28) Having seen the resurrected Jesus again with your “faith eyes” what is your response?
5. Verse 22-23 summarize “The Office Of The Keys.” Review this section of Luther’s Small Catechism (LW p. 304). With whom is the Holy Spirit encouraging you to share words of forgiveness?
6. Vs. 30-31 not only give a summary of John’s Gospel, but of all of Scripture. What is the purpose of God’s Word?

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

In the season of Easter, the media usually pays homage to God by the “investigative reporting” of who Jesus “really” was and how he died. Was he aware of the danger he was in? Was he God’s son or just his chosen prophet? Did he really claim that he was God? From whom did Jesus of Nazareth draw his teaching? The conclusions of these “educational” media events and articles are usually the same old wishy-washy, “Well, it depends on who you want to believe.” It’s kind of amazing when you consider all of the eyewitness accounts that we have of the crucifixion and resurrection.

In this passage we have the account of one of the eyewitnesses, Peter. He tells us plainly that it was all planned! Yes, the whole story was planned out and executed by one person—God! In His love, He would not let us go. Nor would He leave us without proof of His work.



What if there had not been a resurrection? Some so-called religious experts say that it doesn’t really matter if Jesus was raised from the dead bodily, or if it was just a “spiritual” resurrection. The problem with this view is that without the bodily resurrection we have nothing! Paul wrote that “...if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.” (Rom. 15:17) Why would he make such a statement?

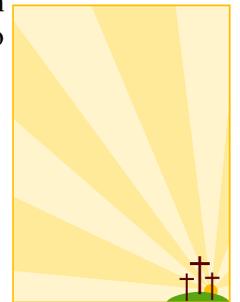
Jesus made claims about His divinity that could not be denied. The religious leaders of the time knew exactly who He was claiming to be—and they crucified Him for it. The resurrection was God’s proclamation that they were wrong! Without the resurrection of Christ, all that He taught and claimed would have been deniable. One would have had no other choice. Jesus would have been a nice guy who “got in over his head” with the authorities. He would have been a nut who thought he was God and paid the penalty for his arrogance. Jesus would have been remembered, if at all, as a good teacher who had some ideas about how to find God. Our loving God knew this and granted us the blessing of the resurrection of our Lord to assure and strengthen us in the everyday challenges to our faith. As we enjoy this special season of Easter, let us celebrate the reality of the resurrection!

Learn about your faith! Join a Bible study group!
A message from your District Education Committee

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

1. Read Acts 2:1-13. What is the context of this Easter sermon?
2. What is the strong law message of vs. 22-23?
3. What is the strong Gospel message of vs. 24 and vs. 32?
4. Peter quotes the Psalm of David (Psalm 16). According to vs. 30-31 how were David’s words a prophecy?
5. Skim the rest of Acts 2. How did the Spirit bless Peter’s words?
6. Reread vs. 23-24. How have we participated in Jesus’ crucifixion? What was God’s response to our wickedness?



Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:13-26

Chapter 2 of Acts also tells the story of a sermon given by Peter, and we usually look at that message on Pentecost. In both sermons Peter proclaimed the resurrection of Christ.

Even though Jesus was arrested in the middle of the night, tried and convicted by the Jewish court by dawn, His enemies were still able to round up a mob and present them before Pilate by mid-morning to shout for Jesus to die. Considering that, is there any doubt that the story of the resurrection had spread through Jerusalem like flowing water? When Peter proclaimed forgiveness even to those who had shouted “Crucify Him!”, the teachings of the dead man who was rumored to have come alive suddenly made sense. And Peter had seen this resurrected Jesus with his own eyes.



Today it is popular among many to either flatly deny the resurrection of Christ or to “de-mythologize” it—a favorite word of some twentieth century “experts.” They would say that Jesus was indeed resurrected, but only in spirit. Many Christians have even been led to believe that it really doesn’t matter. But it does!

If there had been no bodily resurrection, the people whom Peter accused of murder could have shouted, “Says who?!” Paul Meier, historian and son of Walter Meier of The Lutheran Hour, points out several reasons why a bodily resurrection is the only possible solution to the fact that Jesus was nowhere to be found. He says that if Jesus’ body had been anywhere in Palestine the Jews would have found it and dragged it through the streets. (Yet it doesn’t appear that they even looked.) Another reasonable “proof” is that, except for John, all of Jesus’ immediate circle died martyrs rather than deny the resurrection. A statement from another eyewitness of the risen Christ is even more compelling. “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.” (1 Cor.15:17) Peter and the resurrection witnesses confirm that Jesus is risen. Our sins are forgiven—our faith is real and peaceful.

Have you ever been in a study of the Resurrection?

A message from your Iowa District West Education Committee

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:13-26

1. Read Acts 3:1-12. What incident preceded Peter’s sermon?
2. The first part of Peter’s sermon is law. What’s the condemning news of vs. 13-15?



3. Peter also shares the Gospel. What’s the good news of vs. 18-20?
4. The first lessons of the Easter readings are obviously not from the Old Testament. How does this message in the book of Acts refer back to the Old Testament?
5. Peter says “We are witnesses of this” (vs. 15). Also read Acts 1:3. Why was the “witness” of the Apostles so important at this point in the church’s history?
6. The message of Jesus’ resurrection was the central message of Peter and all the Apostles. How does this message impact your life? With whom are you sharing His resurrection?

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 5:12, 17-32

The apostles were in trouble. The same Jewish court that condemned Jesus had also commanded them not to teach in His name. They did so anyway. In a second appearance in the court they insisted, “We must obey God rather than men.” If we read on to the end of chapter 5, we find that the court intended to kill the apostles for their words and only the timely intervention of one of the court’s members, Gamaliel, saved their lives. Instead of death, they received a hefty flogging. Still, they continued to teach and preach Jesus as the Christ not only in the temple but “from house to house” wherever there were people who would listen.

Though one would be hard pressed to find any unbeliever who would agree, we live in a world that is as hostile to the gospel message as any that has preceded it. It may even be more successful in silencing the message since Christians are not being killed (in most nations) for their beliefs or words. However, Christians are being sent clear messages that they are insensitive, out of touch, and wrong. A few of the world’s demands include: Don’t flash your Bible around too much in a public place—it’s offensive; Your religion is no more valid than any other; You are narrow minded and homophobic; You are bigoted in your stand against a woman’s right to abort her child; Your God is too male; Your Bible is only the opinion of a few biased writers; Your manger scenes during the “holiday season” offend; Your attitude that some ideas are good and others evil is archaic and improper; Don’t witness to people of other faiths; Don’t tell your children that worship supercedes soccer practice. What is your response? Do you, out of fear of ridicule or criticism, remain silent among people who need Jesus in their lives?

Our world is not an easy place in which to live as a visible Christian, but the world is where God tells us to be. A good translation of Matthew 28:19 would begin, “While you are going...” We are not to hide out in the church building, sharing our faith with each other within the safety of its walls. The Holy Spirit pulls us into the world and enables us to share the love of Jesus there, no matter what the cost might be.

Have you ever been in a study of the Resurrection?

(A message from your Iowa District West Education Committee)



Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 5:12, 17-32

1. The first lessons for the Easter season are from the book of Acts (rather than the Old Testament). Who is God’s inspired author of this book? (Acts 1:1-3) What will happen in the book of Acts? (Acts 1:8)
2. Why were the Apostles jailed? How did they escape?
3. Where’s the Easter proclamation in this text? (vs. 30-31) What’s the significance of the resurrection for us? (vs. 31)



4. An “angel of the Lord” appears in vs. 19. What does he do for the Apostles? In what other situations does he appear in Acts? (7:30-38; 8:26; 12:7-10; 12:23)
5. In what ways do the words “We must obey God rather than men” (vs. 29) speak to us in our culture and contexts?
6. How do we see the courage of the Apostles? Where did they get their courage? How are they an example for us?

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14, 22-32

Many religions consider Jesus a great prophet and teacher. Some see Him as an early social reformer. Others see in Him a tragic figure who had much good to do in His world, but pushed Rome too far, which cost Him His life. In other words, He had a great political agenda that just got away from Him. Is it any wonder that Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, emphasized the truth of who Jesus really was and is—and, that he emphasized the proof?

The empty tomb was real! Those who heard Peter's words that day had undoubtedly heard rumors that the "prophet" had risen from the dead. Some had probably seen officials searching for information about where the "stolen" body was hidden. It was obvious to anyone paying attention that the Romans were perplexed and that the Jewish leaders were beside themselves in their effort to stop the stories about a resurrection.

Preceding Peter's sermon, the usual celebration of Pentecost had been interrupted by the disciples of the Nazarene. Conspicuously out of sight for weeks, they now burst on the scene preaching their dead leader in many different languages. Having gotten the attention of the crowds, the Holy Spirit then filled Peter with knowledge, wisdom, and the words to persuade thousands that day to see the truth—Jesus really was who He claimed to be. If He lived again, as these eyewitnesses claimed, then He really was God's chosen Messiah! After Peter's sermon, thousands were baptized into God's kingdom. They were excited about their marvelous news and anxious to get back to their homes after the Pentecost celebration so that they could spread the news of Jesus' resurrection.

How about us? Are we excited about the resurrection now that its annual celebration is a distant week away and work, school, kids, spouses, friends, errands, etc., have reclaimed our time and attention? The resurrection of our Lord was real—it is the affirmation of who Jesus is and who He said we are as His children. We have the most exciting news of all time. "Christ is risen—He is risen indeed!"

Learn more about God's mercy and love in a Bible study this week.

A message from your Iowa District West Education Committee.

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14, 22-32

1. What is the context of today's Easter proclamation? (see Acts 2:1-3) Who was Peter's audience? What unusual events preceded Peter's sermon?
2. Where do we hear the Law in Peter's sermon? (vs. 22) Where is the Gospel for us in these verses?
3. What explanation for Jesus' resurrection does Peter give? (vs. 24, vs. 32)
4. Once again today's "first lesson" is from the Book of Acts but references to the Old Testament are included. Who is the Old Testament prophet for vs. 25-28? (See Psalm 16:8-11)
5. How did David already speak of the resurrection of Jesus (vs. 30-31)? Why was the message of the resurrection also important to Old Testament believers?
6. Jesus' resurrection gives confidence to Peter (vs. 32). What confidence does Jesus' resurrection give you? (See LW #139)

Second Sunday of Easter

1 John 5:1-6

Lutherans don't often use the phrase, "born again" to describe their lives, but that is what we are. We are born again through the waters of baptism. We become the children of God and adopted by Him through the work of Christ. All of this accomplishes something wonderful. John reminds us that we really are different after God adopts us into His kingdom.

Before Jesus saved us, we were like the rest of the world: trapped by sin and trapped in an unsatisfying life by our own egos and desires. Without Jesus, we had nothing to work for but our own success, and our success was defined by whatever whim was sweeping our culture at the moment. Success in 1930 was to survive the Great Depression and have a job; in 1944 it was to be part of the battle against an evil in the world; in 1954 it was to have a happy, secure family living in one of the growing American suburbs; in 1974 success meant rejecting the supposed avarice of one's parents and founding "world peace"; in 1986 success was getting into an expensive college and gaining a money-making degree; in 1995 success was collecting as many toys as possible before dying; in this new century success is whatever you want it to be. In short, our definitions of success don't satisfy for long.

John reminds us that we have something greater than success as the world defines it. He says that because we belong to Christ, we can find the most satisfying success—obeying God. He says that we are able to "overcome" the world and its false values. "*Overcome*" does not mean "survive" or "endure." It means that we are victorious in our efforts to set aside the world's values in order to follow God, a "success" that brings a joy to life that is beyond any that the world may offer. Because of God's love for us, we are able to seek Him, obey Him, and love Him. Because God helps us, we can obey His commandments and live the life that Jesus commands. That definition of success is constant, unchanging, and joy-filled. We can do it because our God is both our Master and our Enabler. Our God is alive!

Learn more about real success in a Bible study this week.
A message from your Iowa District West Education Committee

Second Sunday of Easter

1 John 5:1-6

1. The New Testament lessons for the next six weeks come from I John. Using the Concordia Self-study Bible or another reference find out about this five-chapter book. Who wrote it? Who did he write it to? Why did he write it?
2. What two events in Jesus' life were the "water and blood" (vs. 6) events? Why were both events important?
3. What "victory" (vs. 4) event are we still celebrating in the church? How is this victory also our victory?
4. Why are the commandments of God not "burdensome"? (vs. 3)

For Family Reflection

5. Is it enough for family members just to say "I love you"? What else is necessary? How do we show our love for God?
6. Is Easter just a day? Look at a church calendar that lists the next Sundays. How are the Sundays described? How does the description remind us that Easter keeps going and going and going?

Second Sunday of Easter

Revelation 1:4-18

Some insist that John's vision from God described in Revelation was meant only as an encouragement to believers of John's time, and our own, that God is in control of us and our world. Others insist that every scene described will be literally fulfilled during the times leading up to Jesus' glorious return. The truth of what John's letter is meant to be is somewhere in between.

John begins by saying that his vision is from God and his letter is for the seven churches of Asia. He proclaims the risen Christ who will return in the clouds. In all of the New Testament, Christ's resurrection is central. It is because of the Easter miracle that we know that Jesus' teachings, His proclamations, His miracles, and His purpose were exactly as He presented them. The empty tomb is our assurance that He was and is the Son of God, God incarnate. He is co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

John says that Christ has freed us from our sins and that He has in addition made us a kingdom of priests who proclaim "to Him glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen." (vs.6)

During Holy Week we experienced Jesus as the One who walked to execution out of His love for us. We saw Jesus beaten and ridiculed and hanging on a cross. We even saw Him separated from His Father on our behalf. Now John shows us the Savior as the Risen Lord who rules over all.

The world rejects this view of Christ. It insists that He was just a simple servant of God, a prophet of God, a great leader, a man of conviction, a man of love beyond understanding, or a political hero who died for his convictions. The unbelieving world cannot understand why Christians will not settle for that definition of the man. We cannot accept this view of Christ because we know from those who personally knew Him that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God—the God Man. He has given us eternal life. He has made us new creatures who are called to emulate His life here and now. And it is Christ who has commanded us to stand for the truth of Easter; to proclaim that His resurrection is real and that the salvation He brings is the sole way to God.

Learn more about the glory of Christ in a Bible study this week.

A message from your Iowa District West Christian Education Committee

Second Sunday of Easter

Revelation 1:4-18

1. The epistle lessons from the Easter season (the next seven weeks) are all from the Book of Revelation. See vs. 9-10 (and check out a Bible reference). Who wrote the book? Where was it written? When was it written? Why was it written?
2. To whom was the letter written? List the seven churches found in vs. 11. Find out more about these churches in chapters 2 and 3. Is your church like any of these churches?
3. John directs his readers to Jesus. How is the resurrection of Jesus proclaimed by John? (vs. 5-6, 7-18)

For Family Reflection

4. What is your favorite number? The Book of Revelation has some favorite numbers. Where do we find the number "seven" in this text? What is the symbolism of this number?
5. Jesus is the _____ and _____ (vs. 8). (Note the book also concludes with this name. Rev. 24:13) What is the significance of this name?
6. What impressions do you have of the Book of Revelation? Why are you looking forward to exploring this part of God's Word to us? What apprehensions do you have as we begin this book?

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

Do we miss opportunities to share our faith with others? Most of us would admit that we do. It's embarrassing to have to tell God that we have often failed to share Christ with people who need Him desperately. But after all, we are not as qualified as the disciples; not so wise; not so faithful; not so close to Jesus. Right? Let's look at the leaders of the church in today's Gospel.

These men who swore that they would go anywhere with Jesus, suffer any fate at His side, were hiding behind closed doors. They deserted Him at His arrest. They were confused by His crucifixion. They had heard the news of a resurrection, yet they still huddled in fear, waiting for a knock at the door that could mean their arrest. They had spent three years at Jesus' side, learning from the Master, but at this moment, witnessing was the furthest thing from their minds. They weren't so different from us after all. We also find ourselves at times confused, fearful, and woefully inadequate.

But when Jesus appeared to the disciples He did not rebuke them, or dismiss them as His tools in the world. Nor does He come to dismiss us. He said to the disciples, and to us, "Peace be with you." After the disciple's excitement subsided, He repeated, "Peace be with you." And then He told them, and us, why He gives us peace, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." Blessings are accompanied by tasks. Even Thomas, the one who found the idea that Jesus had risen from the dead impossible to believe, received Jesus' love and assurance.

Jesus sent the disciples, and He sends us, not as fearful children, but as witnesses bestowed with faith, peace, and with power. Of course the power is not our own. The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples and enables us. He gives us the strength, wisdom, words, and opportunities to serve others by telling them about Jesus. The world says the message is not necessary, or even offensive, but when the early disciples shared the love of Christ in spite of objections from their own religious leaders, they changed the world.

Learn more about God's mercy and love in a Bible study this week.
A message from your Iowa District West Christian Education Committee

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

1. Why were the disciples huddled in fear? When did their fears disappear?
2. Which disciple missed out on the first appearance to the disciples? How and when did he become convinced of Jesus' resurrection?
3. Verses 22-23 become the foundation for the teaching of the "Office of the Keys" (see Luther's Small Catechism). Review "What do you believe according to these words?" What office and what powers does Jesus give to His church?
4. According to verses 30-31 why did John (inspired by the Holy Spirit) write this Gospel? Why is it important that we read God's Word? Why is it important that His Word is shared with others?

For Family Reflection

5. Jesus says to His frightened disciples "Peace be with you!" Why are those words important to us? When do we share those words with others?
6. Disciple Thomas is sometimes called "Doubting Thomas." Why is he given this title? Have there been times when you have had doubts about Jesus? How has He responded to your doubts?

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

Thomas is “the doubter.” How often we have heard him described that way. We tend to forget about Peter, who, while denying Christ, must have felt doubt and anguish. How about the disciples, who said that they did not believe the women’s report of the empty tomb? How about ourselves?

Which of us, at some time, has not said, “Lord, are you really there?” Which parent has not hesitated to place their children entirely in God’s hands?

Jesus did not condemn Thomas and the other doubting apostles. He answered them with His words, love, and companionship during His earthly ministry. After His resurrection and ascension, He sent the Holy Spirit as their constant companion and strength. His grace and love to them in spite of their stubborn and recurring doubt is amazing. As the song says, “...how sweet the sound.” Jesus also comes to us and answers our own doubts with His grace and love.

What marks us as his disciples is our response to our doubts and His assurances. We, like Thomas, must cling even more to Jesus. We do this because, in spite of those emotional doubts that sometimes plague us, we know that Jesus is all that He claimed to be. This was the answer for Thomas. After being cited as the “doubter”, he went on (according to tradition) to be a witness in India, where he built a church and was killed because of his faith.

The eyewitnesses of Jesus’ life tell us of their own doubts and failings. They tell us of Jesus and His gift of salvation. They traveled and witnessed throughout their lives. They chose to die rather than deny what they knew to be the truth. Men like John wrote down the good, the bad, and the miraculous for us because they knew how hard it would be for us at times. As John wrote, “...these [things] have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

These are hard times for many people—perhaps for you or those you love. In the hard times, doubt tries to creep into our lives. At such times it is no sin to pray to our Savior, “I do believe. Help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24)

Are you asking your friends to join you in Bible study?

(A message from your Iowa District West Christian Education Committee)

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

1. When did Jesus’ first post-Easter appearance to His disciples take place? When did His second appearance to them (with Thomas present) take place?
2. With what words did Jesus greet the disciples? What is the significance of this greeting? When is this greeting shared in our worship service?
3. Why did Jesus make a second appearance for Thomas’ sake? What good news does Jesus have for Thomas? How does Thomas respond?

For Family Reflection

4. Have you ever had doubts about your faith (like Thomas)? When? Jesus came to Thomas to take his doubts away. Who takes our doubts away?
5. Find “The Office of the Keys and Confession” segment of Luther’s Small Catechism. Where in this section do you find Jesus’ words in vs. 22-23? What does it mean for the church to have the “keys”?
6. It’s the Second Sunday of Easter! How many Sunday’s are there in the Easter season? Why does Easter keep going and going?

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

As John wrote his story of the Resurrection many years after the event, it was as though he were experiencing the moment all over again. John had been there at the foot of the cross. From the cross Jesus had asked him to care for His mother, Mary. John, in short, is telling a story that he witnessed himself. He had seen the risen Christ. He, Mathew, and Mark have left us first person accounts. There is no reason to doubt their stories.

John's words virtually carry us to the room where Jesus suddenly appeared after His resurrection. The beginning of verse 27, for instance, says in the original language, "Then He is saying to Thomas..." John takes us into his mind, where he can still hear Thomas say, "My Lord and my God."

Thomas was no more doubtful than the other apostles had been. Remember that when the women came running to the men with the news of Jesus' resurrection, they did not at first believe them. Peter ran all the way back to the tomb to see if the women could possibly be right. The two disciples of Jesus, who were walking to Emmaus and met the Savior, had no idea that He might leave the tomb in which He had been placed. It took a personal experience for them to understand the truth.

Thomas had not been present when Jesus appeared to the other apostles. Their story probably not only confused him but frightened him. Can you imagine seeing a man die, a spear thrust into His body on the cross to prove His death; seeing Him put into the tomb; and then be told that He had returned from the dead?

Thomas gets a bad rap from many Christians, but did he doubt more than you or I would have? We have the New Testament first-person accounts, none of which had been written when Thomas came face to face with the risen Christ.

Jesus says that He will return in the clouds. That everyone will know what is happening. Perhaps part of the reason that He is going to do this is that if He didn't return in the clouds, you and I would say, "I will not believe it until I see it."

Have you invited a friend to attend a regular Bible study with you?

(A message from your Iowa District West Christian Education Committee)

Second Sunday of Easter

John 20:19-31

1. When does this account take place (vs. 19-23)? What had happen earlier in the day? What was significant about Jesus' second visit to the disciples?
2. What's significant about Jesus' greeting "Peace be with you" What does Easter have to do with the peace that Jesus gives? When do we hear these words in the worship service?
3. Why is Thomas sometimes called "doubting Thomas"? Have you ever had doubts about Jesus presence and power? How does God answer our doubts?

For Family Reflection

4. The disciples were behind locked door because they were afraid (vs. 19). What are some of the things that we are afraid of? How does knowing about a risen Jesus help us in our fear?
5. Have there been times in your heart or home where things have not been peaceful? What does Jesus saying "Peace be with you," do to our relationships with Him and with each other?
6. Review the "Office of the Keys and Confession" section in Luther's Small Catechism. Where do we find vss. 22-23? Who forgives our sins? How can we forgive others?