April 8, 2018 Thomas John 20:19-31 (Psalm 145:13- 21) Liturgical color: White

**PRAYER OF THE DAY** God of resurrection, Your son, Jesus, awed his followers by appearing among them. With awe we also celebrate his resurrection and rejoice in eternal life. Amen.

*Joke At the passing of the peace: Joke: “The peace making meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.”*

HYMNS Come down, O Love divine ELW 804, H82 516, UMH 475, NCH 289 We walk by faith ELW 635, H82 209 You satisfy the hungry heart ELW 484 CHORAL The road to Damascus, Frederick Frahm

Psalm 145: 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds.

14 The LORD upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down.

15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.

16 You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing.

17 The LORD is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings.

18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry, and saves them.

20 The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

**Announcements**

Holy Humor Sunday today

Youth Appreciation & Youth Sunday & BCC next week

Birthday/Anniversaries/Prayers

Veterans & can good collection

Conrad weiser musical Sister Act

**Prayers**

Family and friends of (Geraldine) Gerry Essick who died and was buried this week; nurse and very active volunteer and board member of the Free Medical Clinic

Ashley (Sweigart) & Alex baby Jackson Alexander Koch born Fri April 6

Quinn Wartluft home from NICU yesterday

Sam Bright recouperating home knee surgery

Francis Yoh back home? From hospital

*Confession joke:* **A drunk man who smelled like beer** sat down on a subway seat next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick, and a half empty bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat pocket. He opened his newspaper and began reading.  
      After a few minutes the man turned to the priest and asked, "Say, Father, what causes arthritis?"  
      "My Son, it's caused by loose living, being with cheap, wicked women, too much alcohol, and a contempt for your fellow man."  
      Well, I'll be damned," the drunk muttered, returning to his paper.  
      The priest, thinking about what he had said, nudged the man and apologized. "I'm very sorry. I didn't mean to come on so strong. How long have you had arthritis?"  
      "I don't have it, Father. I was just reading here that the Pope does."

*Sermon starter Joke: In a particular small country, there was a king. He was much beloved of the people, and so they built for him a castle. But they were poor people and could only afford to build it out of grass. So they worked for weeks, and finally completed a lovely woven grass castle for him. And the king was pleased.*

*Another country, significantly richer than the first, presented a peace offering of an ornate throne. The king accepted this gift graciously and was most pleased. The only trouble was, the throne was very uncomfortable. So the king got himself a more comfortable chair and kept the massive throne in the attic. Naturally, it fell through the floor and killed him.*

*The moral of this story: People who live in grass houses shouldn't stow thrones.*

NO ONE was giving gifts to the disciples… The disciples are locked in. All except Thomas.

The disciples are locked-in fear and the world is locked-out. But Jesus is king of the kingdom which is not of this world… he was NOT locked-out, he entered in. Jesus had already entered into the human condition of life on this earth as a vulnerable infant. Jesus had already entered into relationships with outsiders like the Samaritan woman at the well, and the blind man. Jesus had already entered into relationships with insiders like Nicodemus and the chief priests. Jesus had entered into the lives of the sick the hungry, the oppressed, even the dead like Lazarus… and into the ranks of the scarred and wounded of humanity. Jesus had already re-entered the life of Mary, there outside the tomb in the garden. Now Jesus enters into the fear, the unknown, and the deep grief of those disciples closest to him. He doesn’t condemn their fear. He does not speed their grief. Jesus chooses the most human element of touch, to re-enter the lives of his disciples. Like Mary at the tomb, they may touch, but these disciples will not be able to hold onto Jesus either. He will leave again, he is not staying permanently touchable, and scarred. In this brief encounter he does give a lasting gift. It will last longer than grass, longer than thrones stowed in grass houses too… Jesus gives peace, shalom.

Jesus says my peace I give to you… please note that peace is not the absence of threat. Peace is hard to come by!

God’s peace… well there a joke to explain that: *Joke: “After a very long and boring sermon the parishoners filed out of the church saying nothing to the preacher. Towards the end of the line was a thoughtful person who always commented on the sermons.”Pastor, today your sermon reminded me of the peace and love of God!” The pastor was thrilled. “No-one has ever said anything like that about my preaching before. Tell me why.” “Well – it reminded me of the Peace of God because it passed all understanding and the Love of God because it endured forever!” ”*

[***www.spotlightministries.org.uk/jokes.htm***](https://igbarb19.wordpress.com/2010/04/20/some-rather-few-peace-related-jokes/www.spotlightministries.org.uk/jokes.htm)

Jesus gives his peace, to a group of faithful people who will soon need to be their own leaders, a group pf people who will be witnesses, sent ones, apostles. A group of people who will be filled with the Holy Spirit and become the beginning of the generations who are the body of Christ on earth. They do not know or understand it yet; but Jesus has given them the foundation for when he is gone… back in his kingdom that is not of this world. It looks incredibly foolish of Jesus to leave this fearful, isolated bunch with the responsibility of being the Church and spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to the world.

I Cor 1:18 8 For the message about the cross is **foolishness** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the **foolishness** of our proclamation, to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom,

23 but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and **foolishness** to Gentiles,

24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For God's **foolishness** is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

26 Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, 29 so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

30 He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption…

His disciples **will** succeed in telling others the good news of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus! Even after their leader has departed.