

King of Glory Lutheran Church
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Year A: Easter 5: John 14:1-14
Rev. Debra Abbott

John 14:1-14 (NRSV)

14 *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ² 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? ³ 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. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”*

⁸ *Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”*

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.” These are the first words we hear from Jesus today. And I find it hard to move beyond them.

I’ll be honest. My heart is troubled today about many things. I am troubled for our world, our country, our community. For friends and family. For what the future holds and how the church will rise to meet the challenges ahead.

Thankfully, Jesus meets us today, is with us today, speaks to us today and knows what is in your heart and in mine. He knows we are troubled. Just as he recognized what was in the hearts of his disciples in our gospel reading.

This weekend we continue forward in this Easter season, a season that runs 50 days, a season where we hear stories of Jesus visiting his disciples after his resurrection and calling us to live as resurrection people.

But in our gospel reading today we are going back in time, before the resurrection. Jesus has gathered his disciples together to celebrate the Passover before he goes to the cross. He has washed their feet and commanded them to love one another as he has loved them.

And then he says these words, “Do not let your hearts be troubled” because he is with his disciples and he sees and knows that their hearts are indeed troubled. They do not understand why he is saying goodbye. They do not know what the future holds. After all their time together, they are not even sure who Jesus is or how to believe in him. Their hearts are troubled.

And so now in John 14, Jesus says to them, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”

Or translated another way from The Message, “Don’t let this throw you. You trust in God, don’t you? Trust me.”

Jesus knows what is going to happen. He knows the road he is on and that it will take him to the cross. And what does he say to those who love him and follow him?

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Don’t let this throw you.

Jesus wants his disciples to remember these words after his death, after he is gone, when they are afraid and alone and confused. When they have no idea where the road in front of them is going to take them.

And now Jesus says these same words to you and to me today.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Don’t let this throw you.

On this day Jesus wants you to hear his words because he knows that your heart is troubled. He knows that trusting God does not come easily. He knows that the road before you is unknown. And now he speaks to you.

You are not alone. The future may be unknown but the road ahead is filled with signs reminding us that Jesus is with us. Jesus knows our troubled hearts today and so he shows us the way forward. We will not travel this road alone. He will guide us and help us.

Jesus said, "I'll come back and get you so you can live where I live. And you already know the road I'm taking." Thomas said, "Master, we have no idea where you're going. How do you expect us to know the road?" Jesus said, "I am the Road, also the Truth, also the Life. No one gets to the Father apart from me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him. You've even seen him!" (The Message)

You do know God, Jesus says. You know God because God has come to you. God lives with you and will never leave you.

Jesus became human and lived with us and died for us so that we would know God face to face.

Now I don't know how you operate on the roads you walk or drive on. Do you have a good sense of direction? Or do you use google maps to get you everywhere you need to go? Over the years I have become increasingly dependent on the directions I can access on my phone, telling me where to go and what lies on the road ahead.

But even with the gift of that technology I always prefer having someone sitting next to me in the car giving me directions for the way ahead. Or better yet, driving or walking in front of me pointing the way forward.

In life it helps to have someone with us, showing us the way forward. Because in life we are always going to find ourselves on roads we have never traveled, running on paths that are new and unknown. Facing challenges and twists and turns that we so often feel unequipped for.

Thomas asked Jesus, "How can we know the way?" And Jesus said to Thomas, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the

Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Thomas thinks that he can't find his way to God. And he's right. We can't find and know God without help. And that is why God comes to us.

Jesus says, if you have seen me, and you have, you have seen the Father. God has come to you Thomas, not the other way around.

I think Thomas was looking for a map, clear directions, an estimated arrival time...but what Jesus offers is so much more than a map. Jesus is on the road with us. He's not just on the road, he is the road, he is the sign, he is the journey!

It's no wonder that this was incredible and confusing to Thomas, Philip and the other disciples. Who would ever imagine that God would come to earth to live among us and know us and die and then come back again.

But it's true. We know it is true because we know Jesus. Jesus says, you know God because you know me. And if you can't believe in me, look around.

Jesus said, “Believe me: I am in my Father and my Father is in me. If you can't believe that, believe what you see – these works. The person who trusts me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things, because I, on my way to the Father, am giving you the same work to do that I've been doing...”

There are signs of God and God's love for us all around, on every road and every path. Acts of kindness. Words of compassion. Food for the hungry. Rest for the weary. Joy and grief sometimes in the same moment. In all of these signs, moments, people and places God speaks to our troubled hearts.

And Jesus who knows all the troubles of your heart says today, give those troubles to me, I have made room for you. I am with you. I know you. I will never leave you. I will show you the way because I am the way.

Follow Jesus who is our way, watch for the signs he gives, live in love and do not let your hearts be troubled.

Amen.