

Coffee to Go|2nd Sunday of Easter

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Josh Mangelson, Blake Smith, Karin Peter

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Karin Peter 00:28

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the seasons, holy days and scriptures of the Christian tradition. I'm Karen Peter, and I'm here with Blake Smith, and we're your hosts on this journey. So the question we ask every week is where are we this week with Jesus. And this week is the second week of Easter. Now Easter is more than a one Sunday deal. Now for a lot of us it is one Sunday deal. We have a big Easter service at church, we go home, we eat chocolate bunnies, ears first, which is the legal way to do that. And then we go on the next day. But actually, Easter is an entire season. And it's a season of joyful celebration and the scriptures and the traditions of the season reflect that. One author I read, called the Easter season, a time of not just celebrating the Sunday, but inhabiting the season of Easter, and I loved that. We talked about living into our discipleship. And that's, that's what that is inhabiting the season of Easter. So the season lasts 50 days. And the kind of quick way to think about that is we fasted for 40 days and Lent. So we're going to feast for 50 days in Easter because the feast is greater than the fast the joy is greater than the grief. So each Sunday and Easter, I'm going to spend some time with the resurrected Jesus, however you picture that or feel about that. And we're going to watch as the disciples and perhaps, perhaps you would me like to see how together we try to figure this all out. So let's dig into our Scripture.

Blake Smith 02:23

Well, before we get to the Scripture, I want to clarify something you well you have said that it's 50 days of feast, and you did happen to mention the Easter Bunny. So I'm wondering, are you saying that I have permission to get a larger chocolate Easter Bunny because it needs to last me 50 days?

Karin Peter 02:42

I'm saying the theological response to that would be a resounding yes.

Blake Smith 02:46

Oh well. I like that kind of theology. All right. Well, our Scripture today comes from John chapter 20:19-31. And as we'll talk about, when we're done with reading the Scripture, this scripture gets kind of a bad

rap. We talk about this passage being the "Doubting Thomas" passage. So here we go. When it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side, then the disciples rejoice when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you, as the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any they are forgiven them, if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas, who was called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails, and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God." Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name. You know, so often this passage is used to kind of discourage doubting. Because like I said, Thomas gets a bad rap. So, you know, how is this relevant to us? I think this, this idea that Thomas gets treated unfairly is important here. What do we do when a group of friends tells us about a great concert or a party they all attended? Don't we feel awkward even disbelieving maybe even jealous? We don't want to believe it, but we really don't want to hear about it. Sometimes because of that we downplay or discount someone else's spiritual experience or set of beliefs. But the scripture reminds us that belief takes many forms. And at times, it's difficult. Thomas was a pragmatist, he wanted to say "show me." And I can relate to that. I don't know about you, Karin.

Karin Peter 06:00

I totally relate to that. I'm very pragmatic.

Blake Smith 06:04

So how can we experience that this week?

Karin Peter 06:07

Well, I think I experience doubt all the time. So it's not just this week, I'm kind of living in that, but that's not really what we're talking about here. But how do we experience this scripture and this season of Easter this week? And I really appreciate your reading of the Scripture, because I actually hear something new every time I hear a scripture read even a familiar passage, like this. So thank you for that. Because this time, I actually heard that the disciples who originally saw Jesus didn't believe without seeing. They had the same thing. But then the writer kind of turns on Thomas, it's like, yeah. All right, so how can we experience this text this week, the second week of Easter when Jesus is appearing to the disciples, and they don't quite recognize them or don't quite believe until they see something to really cement that identity of Jesus with them. So this week, and maybe all through the season of Easter, it might be good to put a little reminder somewhere, so a pretty little wooden Easter Egg, or a picture of an Easter Lily, or even a daffodil, or your favorite spring flower, and put it

somewhere where you're going to see it every day. And when you see it, that's your reminder that we are still in these 50 days of joy. This is still a day of joy so that even if you have had a bad day at work or school, you can have that moment where you recognize even in tough times, even in doubting times this I'm in a season of joy. The other thing I think that is really beautiful about this passage is the comment that Jesus makes to the disciples Peace be with you. Peace being wholeness, and healing and restoration and on all of those things that we in Christian community experience through the peace of Christ. So be a whisperer of peace this week. So every time you encounter another person, just silently to yourself or quietly to yourself, whisper, "Peace be with you" to that person, the checkout person in the grocery store or the barista with your favorite coffee shop, whatever it may be, whisper, "Peace be with you" this week.

Blake Smith 08:33

So there's some questions that come up. And I think it's really appropriate in this moment, because we do this with every one of our episodes, we ask some questions. But maybe at this moment, as we've talked about Doubting Thomas, or the way this scripture is portrayed, would be to say, It's okay to ask questions. We want to make sure that that that is clear, that God is with us in our doubting. I often tell people when we quit doubting, we quit thinking. And when we quit thinking we quit experiencing God, we just take things for granted. So the questions are important. And I want everybody to hear that the doubting is okay. I certainly have had many times of doubt. So the questions that we might ask ourselves are, what are my beliefs about Jesus? How did I develop them? Who influenced them? And you don't have to try to get to any conclusion or outcome, but just live in the space of exploration and, and even doubt. And you can ask yourself the question, Is it okay to doubt? I, of course, would say yes, it's actually a good thing to doubt. But find out where you are on that. Spend some time understanding why maybe that makes you uncomfortable. Is Jesus present in the midst of your doubt? Perhaps you might invite divine presence into your own swirl of belief, doubt, faith and uncertainty. You know, I mentioned earlier that sometimes we downplay or discount someone else's spiritual experience or set of beliefs. And so another question we might ask ourselves is, "when have I done that, when have I downplayed or discounted someone else's beliefs?" Just some great things for us to think about as we ponder this, through this week with Jesus.

Karin Peter 10:31

The second week of Easter. The season of Easter.

Blake Smith 10:36

A time of feasting. So do you have a large Easter Bunny, if you remember nothing else?

Karin Peter 10:43

That's the takeaway from the second week of Easter podcast episode. So how about a blessing Blake. Do we have a blessing this week?

Blake Smith 10:52

Absolutely. May we make space for our doubts and fears, our joys and sorrows, our requests and regrets and allow them to bless us on our journey. As always, we invite you to join us again here at

Coffee to Go for our next part of the journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.

Josh Mangelson 11:24

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