



February 27, 2025
The Women of Easter

Social Time

Thanks to those who brought treats!

Bible Study Business

Prayer Requests and Update Prayer List

Opening Prayer

Hymns – Lisa Schlotterbeck

- *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* – lyrics attached
- ELW 800 *Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart*
- ELW 697 *Just a Closer Walk with Thee*

Scripture John 11:17-53

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” ²³Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.” ²⁸When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” ²⁹And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" ³⁷But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" ³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. ⁴⁷So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, "What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. ⁴⁸If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation." ⁴⁹But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed." ⁵¹He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, ⁵²and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God. ⁵³So from that day on they planned to put him to death.

Sitting Shiva - Jewish Mourning Ritual

Based on Jewish laws, traditions and customs, a Jewish funeral usually takes place within one day following the date of death, and these are solemn and reflective services followed by a gathering at the mourner's home, which marks the beginning of shiva. The first seven days following the funeral is known as shiva, and the mourners generally stay at home and receive guests to help them pray and reflect upon their loss.

'Sitting shiva' is a term used to describe the action of Jewish mourners participating in the traditional rituals of observing a shiva. During the period of shiva, mourners sometimes sit on low stools or boxes while they receive condolence calls. This is where the phrase "sitting shiva" comes from, and it is a practice that symbolizes the mourner being "brought low" following the loss of a loved one.

From a practical standpoint, the shiva process and practices associated with Jewish mourning add structure to the life of a mourner following a death. In the period after suffering a loss, a mourner may be comforted by the structure and routines prescribed by traditional Jewish mourning laws.

From Shiva.com - The resource for Jewish mourning

Discussion: Chapter 2 *Mary Went to Meet the Lord*

1. What do those first days following the death of an immediate family member feel like?
 - a. How do funeral practices and faith-related rituals impact that mourning process in the first few days after the death of an immediate family member?
 - b. What has been your experience with this? Have rituals been helpful? Hurtful? How?
2. Our scripture picks up four days after the death of Lazarus. On page 24 our author points out the significance of four days, “Why four days? One day for the message to reach Him, two days for Him to tarry, plus another day’s journey back to Bethany. But it’s more than simple math. ‘Some Jews believed a soul would stay near a body for up to three days after death.’ A fourth day in the grave guaranteed a body was truly dead and its soul departed.”
 - a. How do you think these beliefs about four days may have impacted Jesus’ actions?
 - b. Could this be why Jesus waited as long as he did before responding to Mary and Martha’s urgent request for him to come?
 - c. As you think about “delays” in God’s response to your prayers, does this example help in any way?
3. What do you think of the Jewish idea mentioned on p. 25 that “when a righteous man dies the world suffers loss. The balance of righteousness verses evil tips in the wrong direction”?
4. When Jesus finally arrives, how do Martha and Mary approach Jesus?
 - a. What is similar and what is different in how they talk with Jesus?
 - b. What underlying emotions do you hear in each of their statement “Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died”?
 - c. How does Jesus tailor his response to each of these sisters based on their differing personality styles and needs?
5. What is the significance of Jesus statement “I am the resurrection and the life?” (p.27).
6. Do you agree with the author’s statement that Jesus was “angry with death itself and the grave’s power to rob people of joy, fellowship and hope”? (p. 34). Why or why not?
7. How does knowing that “Jesus wept” (p. 35) over the death of Lazarus impact how you understand Jesus?
 - a. Has knowing that Jesus wept in grief ever given you “permission” to weep?
8. What about the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from death resonates most strongly for you?
 - a. What makes this such an important biblical story?
9. How do you think Lazarus felt about being raised from the dead?
 - a. After having died and gone to heaven, do you think he would like to be called back into life in this world?
 - b. What might life have been like for him after this resurrection experience?
10. As our author points out, not everyone was happy with Jesus raising Lazarus. Those in power feared him. Raising Lazarus from the dead is what got the leaders seriously plotting to take Jesus’ life (pp. 40-41).
 - a. Why do you think they responded this way?
 - b. Do you think Jesus knew that this act of compassion would hasten his own death?
 - c. If so, why did he do it?
 - d. What does this mean to you?

Birthdays

Lord's Prayer

Upcoming Schedule

Date	Pages	Topic
3/6	43-66	<i>Women of Easter 3 – I Still Would Choose the Better Part</i>
3/13	67-86	<i>Women of Easter 4 – With Palms Before Thee</i>
3/20	87-114	<i>Women of Easter 5 – O Most Afflicted!</i>
3/27	115-142	<i>Women of Easter 6 – Thorns Thine Only Crown</i>
4/3	143-166	<i>Women of Easter 7 – At the Cross Her Station Keeping</i>
4/10	167-194	<i>Women of Easter 8 – I Know that My Redeemer Lives</i>
4/17		Holy Week – No Bible Study
4/25		Pastor Marla on vacation Pastor Elaine to lead Bible Study on the topic of Prayer
		During May continue with <i>Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith</i>
5/1	10-12	Assemblies of God (Pentecostal)
5/8	114-116	Salvation Army
5/15	76-81	Judaism
5/22		Pre-Memorial Day Weekend – No Bible Study
5/29	67-71	Islam
		New Topic for the Summer – To be chosen