

Do you remember the song Eliza Doolittle sings to her young beau Freddy in the musical “My Fair Lady?” In the story, Eliza is a poor match girl whom linguist Henry Higgins takes on as a challenge to teach her to speak proper English and pass her off in high society as a lady. Eliza, desperate for a better life, agrees to learn with him. She meets Freddy on one of her society outings, and Freddy is smitten and begins quoting poetry to tell her of his love for her. Eliza sings this: “Words, words, words, I’m so sick of words I get words all day through first from him (Henry) now from you; is that all you blighters can do? Don’t talk of stars burning above, if you’re in love, show me! Tell me no dreams, filled with desire, if you’re on fire, show me!” Do we love God and Jesus? Are we on fire for the Gospel?

Jesus’ and God’s challenge with the resurrection is how to convince the disciples that the resurrection is for real, that God’s eternal love for the world is real, that it’s not a dream, it’s our reality! This love is to become their new way of life, and they need to set the disciples’ love and lives on fire with Jesus’ mission to teach it to everyone. Words alone would not be enough, so God and Jesus come to the disciples after his resurrection, to help the disciples’ faith come alive again, to show and tell them that sin and death are not the end, and to inspire them to show and tell others Jesus’ and God’s forgiving, sacrificial and everlasting love.

John’s resurrection stories could be called Jesus’ show and tell for the disciples: because, having lived through his crucifixion, they need to live his resurrection. As we shared with the children, we can understand and believe things so much more easily when we see and experience them. So even though Mary has seen Jesus, and has told the disciples, all of them are still cowering behind locked doors, still grieving. Jesus comes to them. The church has often scapegoated Thomas, but he is only asking for the same confirmation the others got! You can’t blame him, can you? Thomas is really us, wanting to experience that Jesus is, truly, alive, and Thomas is really no different from the other disciples of his day. This is why Jesus visited so many disciples after his resurrection, as the Gospels tell us. Notice Mary and the other disciples all had personal visits and

words with Jesus, too...but only Thomas is recorded as naming Jesus “my Lord and my God!”

Thomas is often called the “whole-hearted disciple” – either fully in or not in at all. You might remember that when Jesus first tells the disciples he is going to go to Jerusalem for Passover, just after they have heard that the authorities have it in for him, it is this same Thomas who says, “Well, then let us all go and die with him!” They knew the trip could lead to Jesus’ arrest and death, and it did...but who knew what “rising after three days” meant? Maybe only John remembers, the one who runs to the empty tomb, sees the grave clothes and believes; yet he is among the disciples who don’t recognize Jesus when he comes to visit, until he shows them his hands and side. Perhaps he did not fully understand what resurrection meant either...would that mean Jesus lives again? How could that be? Mary is so absorbed in her grief that she mistakes Jesus for the gardener until he speaks to her. But each disciple is given what they need – his voice, a visual, so that they can recognize Jesus, and rejoice! In all these ways, Jesus is giving them the signs they need to know that he is from God, one with God, and that God is working through him to love them and the world.

The writer of the Gospel of John is circling back to John 3:16 & 17, and to Jesus’ farewell discourse, among other teachings, to show that Jesus’ mission, of coming to represent God’s everlasting love for us is completed now and bequeathed to the disciples in these resurrection stories. Jesus greets them with his peace, the disciples rejoice in his resurrection, and Jesus sends them with his breath of the Holy Spirit to empower them to continue his mission: They are to BE GOD’S LOVE and to SHOW GOD’S LOVE IS WORKING IN THE WORLD, forgiving and loving all others; not condemning, but saving the world.

So with whom do you identify? After living in this pandemic for a year, I think we all are acquainted with grief that blinds us; with needing to doublecheck for evidence, with needing a hands on experience to confirm unbelievable reports. We are all looking for God’s love to be more apparent: to comfort us in grief, to perform miracles of healing, to show us and tell us that death is not the end, to give us reasons to rejoice again, to give us hope for sharing hugs again, to give us strength to stay the course to full recovery and reopening again. The writer of the Gospel of John was writing some 50-60 years after Jesus’ death, to a

church that included believers who have not known Jesus in person. It is important to John to reinforce Jesus' message that you do not have to see Jesus, to believe that he is God's son, that God raised him from the dead. God's everlasting love can now be seen and felt through the Gospel witness, told and lived out in loving acts of disciples who are empowered by God's Holy Spirit.

God comes to us today through his Holy Spirit in scripture and prayer, in acts of lovingkindness by others, in times of shared grief and shared joy with family and friends, in profound insight shared by a stranger. God's love comes to us and lifts us, giving us renewed hope and strength to endure our suffering, as it did the early disciples who were persecuted. God's love comes to us and gives us renewed strength and conviction to stay the course of this pandemic, protecting others by wearing our masks, until our communities have enough folks vaccinated. God did not send his son Jesus into the world to condemn the world, nor is Jesus shaming Thomas – John tells this story so that we ALL know, in all generations, that we who do not see Jesus resurrected, know that we are also loved and saved and sent by him, to love the world! Just as Jesus understands and supports those first doubting disciples, and empowers and sends them; so Jesus comforts and calls us, to believe and to witness to others today.

Our own United Methodist founders, John and Charles Wesley, understood our need for support, and the power of faith to grow as we can share our doubts and questions. They formed believers into small groups to explore scripture together, to be informed and strengthened by the Holy Spirit moving among them, and to be inspired and encouraged to witness to still others in acts of service, and testimonies to God's love at work in their lives.

This is why we have formed neighborhood groups to support and strengthen one another in our faith and service, and to be a strength to still others in our neighborhoods who are not from our church. Our witness, as the people of UMCG who show and tell of God's love at work in our lives in our joys and in our struggles, can make a huge difference in the lives of our neighbors both near and far. This is why we also participate in men, women, and youth groups, in children and family programs, in Bible studies and discussion groups! This is why we sing in choirs, and invite others to come to our concerts and experience faith as it is sung! And it is why we participate in mission activities like Hesed House,

Lazarus House, and why we support Mutual Ground and Tri-City Family Services. This is why our church is branching out to support United Methodist ministries in Kenya and Bolivia, where we know people and hear the testimonies of transforming love, and can go and serve their communities with our brothers and sisters there.

Easter to me, brings even more “Joy to the World,” as we see Jesus resurrected, telling his disciples, “No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground”...he is “come to make his blessings flow, far as the curse is found.” We are blessed now to live by his truth and grace, and called to show and tell others of the wonders of his love...the wonders of his love!

So let us make room for Thomas...and Mary...and Peter and John, and all disciples in our lives, with their doubts and fears, because we are them, and they are us, and Jesus comes and shows us and tells us it’s okay to have doubts! And then, Jesus shows and tells us his love so we can encourage one another, and get to the work Jesus gives us – to BE the Love of God in our world today, to live that love with all others, and give that love to all others, in audible and tangible ways that bless them and encourage them. What will you show and tell others of Jesus’ love, this day, and in the days to come?! Amen.

Pastor Lisa Telomen

Benediction:

Well, I’m here to tell you, it’s time for us to go show and tell God’s love to others: in our words and in our deeds, indeed! BE Jesus’ love that you want to see in our world, and know that God and Christ, and the love of our church, are with you, encouraging you to represent with strength, integrity, and enthusiasm. Amen!

## Children's Sermon

Hello young people! I'm glad to share with you today! Today's stories of Jesus' resurrection makes me think of God and Jesus having Show and Tell time with us. Sometimes for us to understand something well, we need to see it and experience it a bit. Jesus' resurrection, coming back to life after dying, was something God and Jesus wanted the disciples to experience. They needed to heal from their guilt and grief of watching him die. Then, with the Holy Spirit from God and Jesus, they could share the Good News of God's love with others. And that's what they did, and what Jesus' disciples have done for 2000 years, and what we still do today.

If I told you about my dog Mac, that he is small, about knee high, with brown fur and has a wiry coat and is shy of people, would you feel like you know my dog and could describe him to others? But what if I showed you my dog? Let me get him for you... So having seen him, do you think you could tell others about him? You could do that better, and would know him better if you saw him yourself, wouldn't you?

Well, that's like what God and Jesus want us to do – we are to be the Show and Tell for others of what God and Jesus' love is like, so other people can experience it through us. We learn this love at church where we experience it and grow that love with each other. Then we go out to demonstrate it and live it at school and at home and at work, so others can experience it and come to know it with us.

What ways can you show and tell others about Jesus' love? By giving your family members a hug? By sharing toys with friends...by sending a get well card to a neighbor, or taking them cookies...by showing how Jesus loves them, in how you talk with them and take care of them!

Let's pray:

Thank you God, for Jesus' resurrection that shows us that your love is more powerful than death even, and that our love can be forever too, when we love like Jesus. Help us to show and tell that love with others, every day. Amen.

**PRAYERS FOR THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH: SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2021**

*Please keep the following people in your prayers. If you have prayer concerns, or birth or death information to share, please send this information to [communications@genevaumc.org](mailto:communications@genevaumc.org) or contact Lorie Montanye at [lorie@genevaumc.org](mailto:lorie@genevaumc.org) or 630-992-0671. Names will remain on the list for 3 weeks, unless you notify us to have a person remain on the list longer.*

**RECENT CONCERNS**

Donna Darr, Central DuPage Hospital  
Sonja Gallagher  
Maureen Cahill  
Mary Gay McKinney  
Nel Lovins  
Bryan Kelsey, son of Bruce & Diane Kelsey  
Staci Schiele, daughter of Pace & Nancy Harrington  
Krystal Massier, wife of Janet Helm's grandson  
Maryon Attwood, sister of Janet Helm  
Cheryl Mack, cousin of Linda Sato  
Terri Fickling, cousin of Cheryl Mennerick  
Ronald Wilsher, uncle of Cheryl Mennerick  
Jerry Black, friend of the Harrington's, Lillie's and McConnell's  
Global Community dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic

**ON-GOING CONCERNS**

Dave & Ann Erickson	Larry Lounsbury, Tower Hill – South Elgin
Esther Bullock	Davy Shaffer, grandson of Vicki Shaffer
Sue White	Rick Olaerts, friend of Dorothy Urbaitis
Ruth Schow, Wynscape – Wheaton	Laura Willing, friend of Dick & Nola
Keslinke	
Phil & Jane Livingston, Bickford – St. Charles	Caregivers Caring for Loved Ones at Home
Bob Van Nest, Bickford – St. Charles	

**LET US PRAY FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

May the spirit of God unite us in love and respect, and heal our brokenness.

**THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES**

Reed Arrott III, son of Reed & Ruth Arrott, Jr.  
Lynda Cooke, granddaughter of the late Emilie Marquez  
Matthew Isely & Allison Lampe Isely, son & daughter-in-law of Mike & Vicki Isely  
Joe Ingraham, nephew of Rich & Donna Darr  
William Lyon, grandson of the late Gwyn Lyon

**MISSION EMPHASIS**

Appalachia Service Project (ASP) and CASA Kane County