



Central Lutheran
MINNEAPOLIS

**The Gospel of Luke
Bible Study**

Wednesday Nights: 6:00 pm
Monday Mornings: 12 noon

Winter, 2019

Welcome

Thank you for joining this study of the Gospel of Luke. Thank you in advance for your openness to listen for God through this remarkable Gospel. There are four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They follow a similar plot line, but each Gospel draws us to different nuances about Jesus, God and the faith community where the Gospel was recorded. Gospel, by the way, literally means good news.

The invitation

As always, the number one invitation is this: always, always come to class. If you did not have a chance to get to the reading, come to class. If you are away for a week, or two or even three, come to class. God is calling and inviting you to be a part of this holy conversation, so you are welcome at all the sessions or the ones that you can attend.

The schedule

The lesson will be studied on Wednesday nights at 6:00 pm or on Monday at 12 noon. Both studies are open to all. The Wednesday night class will run for six weeks, and the Monday class will run a bit longer. Here is the schedule for Wednesday nights for you to note, the Monday crew will set their own schedule.

January

- 9 – Session One: Welcome and Introduction to the Gospel of Luke
- 16 – Session Two: Jesus' nativity, a Gospel for the disenfranchised
- 23 - Session Three: Jesus as healer
- 30 - Session Four: The parables of Jesus

February

- 6 - Session Five: Holy Week and the Crucifixion (the prayers of Jesus)
- 13 – Session Six: Resurrection and the Road to Emmaus (breaking bread)

The class structure and weekly reading

Each class will begin with Christ Care Prayers, a time to lift up those in need and celebrate with those who have been blessed. You can share your prayers at the beginning of class out loud, or you can share them privately before class. The most important thing we do each week is gather and pray for one another, the needs of the Church and world.

Following the Christ Care Prayers, we will enter holy conversation on the lesson for the day. Some weeks will begin with specific highlights and other weeks the questions that were a part of the weekly reading will be our starting point. The conversation on the lesson will lead us to deeper questions, some from the lesson and some that you will bring.

Generally, our conversations will be in large group, but occasionally a question is so important that we will need to turn to a neighbor to discuss before discussing it as a group.

Before the end of class, there will be a short introduction to the lesson for next week and highlights for the possibilities for reading and daily work.

Quick Overview of the Gospel of Luke

Luke authored the Gospel and the Book of Acts, so most scholars talk about Luke-Acts. The Gospel of Mark was the first Gospel, Luke and Matthew used Mark as a template for their Gospel. In addition to drawing from Mark (his outline and the central lessons about Jesus), Luke and Matthew drew from another source that scholars call "Q" (which is short hand for source in German). As John notes in his Gospel, "if everyone of them (the lessons about Jesus) were written down, I suppose that the whole world itself could not contain the books that would be written." (John 21:25). Mark, Luke, Matthew and John each had to choose from the many accounts, lessons, miracles, healings and parables of Jesus for their Gospel. The gospel writers also drew from their own resources for the life and ministry of Jesus. For example, there are many parables in Luke that do not appear in Mark, Matthew or John. Where did Luke learn of these parables? How did Luke's community shape his Gospel? If we listen carefully, what can we learn about Luke's faithful understanding about Jesus and the faith of his early Christian community?

Why did they write these Gospels? The easy answer is that the first eye witnesses were dying. That leads most scholars to think that Mark was written around 70 AD, and then Luke and Matthew followed. John is later, perhaps as late as 100-120 AD. Another motivator for writing down the Gospels was the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Roman empire in 70 AD. This sent a shock wave through both the Jewish community and the early Christian community.

Before we turn to an outline of the Gospel of Luke, lets pause for a moment to name some of our favorite lessons about Jesus? We can write them down, and as you move through the Gospel over these next weeks you can see if they are recorded in Luke, or if they are in another Gospel. It is possible that your favorites may be in one, two, three or even all four of the Gospels.

My favorite lessons about Jesus:

Overview of the Gospel of Luke

- Chapter 1 – Prologue, John the Baptist, Mary visited by the angel, Mary and Elizabeth, Mary’s Magnificat, Zechariah’s prophecy
- Chapter 2 – The Nativity, Jesus is named, Simeon’s song, Jesus as a boy in the temple
- Chapter 3 – John the Baptist, the baptism of Jesus, Jesus genealogy
- Chapter 4 – The temptation of Jesus, Jesus rejected, first healings
- Chapter 5 – Jesus calls his disciples, leper cleansed, paralytic healed, questions
- Chapter 6 – Conflict on the sabbath, the 12 apostles, sermon on the plain
- Chapter 7 – Jesus heals a Centurion’s servant, Jesus raises widow’s son, John the Baptist’s question, a woman is forgiven
- Chapter 8 – Women followers of Jesus, parable of the sower, lamp under a jar, Jesus calms the storm, girl restored, and a woman healed
- Chapter 9 – Mission of the 12, Herod’s confusion, feeding the 5000, Peter’s confession, discipleship, transfiguration, Jesus heals a boy, Jesus foretells his death, true greatness, Jesus refused, no place for the Son of Man
- Chapter 10 – Mission of the 70, woe to cities, the 70 return, parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus visits Mary and Martha
- Chapter 11 – The Lord’s Prayer, Jesus and Beelzebub, sign of Jonah, light of the body, Jesus denounces Pharisees
- Chapter 12 – Warning about hypocrisy, call to fearless confession, parable of the rich fool, do not worry, watchful servants, time of judgement
- Chapter 13 – repent or perish, Jesus heals a woman, parables of growth, the narrow door, lament over Jerusalem
- Chapter 14 – Jesus heals a man, humility and hospitality, parable of the great dinner, cost of discipleship
- Chapter 15 – Parable of the lost sheep, parable of the lost coin and parable of the prodigal son/ waiting father
- Chapter 16 – Parable of the dishonest manager, law and the kingdom of God, rich man and Lazarus
- Chapter 17 – Sayings of Jesus, Jesus heals 10 lepers, coming of the kingdom,
- Chapter 18 – Parable of the widow and the unjust judge, parable of the Pharisee and tax collector, Jesus blesses the children, the rich ruler, Jesus second prediction about his death, blind beggar recognizes Jesus,
- Chapter 19 – Jesus and Zacchaeus, parable of the ten pounds, Palm Sunday, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, Jesus cleanses the temple
- Chapter 20 – Jesus authority questioned, parable of the wicked tenants, question about paying taxes, question about the resurrection, question about David’s son, Jesus denounces the scribes
- Chapter 21 – The widow’s offering, destruction foretold, the Son of Man
- Chapter 22 – Plot to kill Jesus, preparation for the Passover, Institution of the

Lord's Supper, dispute about greatness, Jesus predicts Peter's denial,
Mount of Olives, betrayal and arrest of Jesus, denial and rejection
Chapter 23 – Jesus before Pilate, Jesus before Herod, Jesus sentences to death,
crucifixion, death and burial
Chapter 24 – Resurrection of Jesus, the road to Emmaus, Jesus appears to his
disciples, ascension of Jesus

Reading for Session Two: Jesus' nativity, good news for the disenfranchised

You have two reading options for this week. The first is to simply read Luke's Gospel. You can read it in one sitting (which can be accomplished in about 90 minutes). Or you can break up the Gospel and read two chapters each day. For this reading option, here are a few questions for you to consider over the next six days:

1. What is your sense of Luke as an author, as you pay attention to the plot and the drama that unfolds?
2. What are the familiar lessons as you read?
3. What are the new lessons for you?
4. What role does healing play in the Gospel?
5. Do you sense a "divine necessity of Jesus' mission?" (David Tiede)
6. Do you sense the tension as it develops in the Gospel?
7. How is the lesson on the road to Emmaus at the close of the Gospel a key to understanding the entire Gospel?

A second reading option is to spend the entire week in the first two chapters. This is a slower reading, with close attention to the images and peoples in these iconic chapters. For this reading you can set your own pace. Here are a few questions for reflection as you read:

1. Pause to review the prologue, the first four verses that Luke writes to set the stage. What do you hear Luke inviting us to consider?
2. What is the setting of the Gospel, and how might this shape the Gospel?
3. Zechariah has doubts and Mary believes, what is going on in the contrast between the priest and the young girl?
4. Mary's song, the Magnificat, is one of the most spectacular moments in all the Bible. What do you hear in Luke 1: 46-55? How does Mary's song set the stage for the entire Gospel?
5. How is Simeon's song a beautiful echo in Luke 2: 29-32?
6. Spend some time in Luke 2: 1-21, the Christmas Gospel, what are you drawn to in this familiar lesson?
7. Jesus as a child in the temple is the only lesson we have about him between his birth and baptism. What do you notice in Luke 2: 41-52?

January 16, Session Two: Jesus' nativity - good news for the disenfranchised

Welcome

Christ Care Prayers

Introduction

Luke tells his story of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary, John the Baptist and Jesus. The lessons in this section of Luke are so familiar, they are a part of the foundation of faith for many. Matthew tells his own story, of Wise Men or Magi from the east, of dreams and Herod's fear turned to horrible rage.

Mark and John do not mention anything about Jesus' birth, beginning with Jesus' baptism as the defining start of their Gospels.

After a few other introductory comments, we will turn to your questions from the reading to explore.

Before we close, a few words of introduction for next week's session and reading.

Reading for Session Three: Jesus as healer

Luke is thought to have been a physician. He is commemorated in the Church every October 18. There are 15 healings in Luke's Gospel, more frequently than in Mark (12), Matthew (13) or John (3). Scholars are drawn to the possibility that, as a physician, Luke had an ear for healings and Jesus' restorative grace. As a Gentile and not a Jew, Luke also is captivated that Jesus heals all people (part of Jesus' work to turn the world "up-side-down.")

This week you are invited to spend time in the healing lessons in Luke. You can read two a day, and then on the last day catch up with the other 3-4 lessons. Or, you can read a healing lesson from the list that captures your imagination each day.

Healing lessons in the Gospel of Luke:

4:31-37 – Healing the man possessed with the demon

4:38-44 – Healing of Peter's mother-in-law

5:12-16 – Healing the leper

5:17-26 – Healing the man with palsy

6:6-11 – Healing a man with a withered hand
7:1-10 – Healing the Centurion’s servant
7:11-17 – Raising the widow’s son
8:40-56 – Raising Jarius’ daughter
8:43-48 – Healing the woman with the hemorrhage
9:37-45 – Healing the child with the demon
11:14-15 – Healing blind and mute man
13:10-17 – Healing of the woman
14:1-6 – Healing a man with dropsy
17:11-19 – Healing the 10 lepers
18:35-43 – Healing blind Bartimaeus

With all the healing lessons, there are some key questions for your devotional reflection:

1. Pause to look at the context, what immediately precedes the healing and what follows? What insights does this offer for the healing?
2. Notice who initiates the healing, is it Jesus or does someone else seek out Jesus for themselves or for someone else?
3. After the healing, what do you notice? How do people respond to the healing? Does Jesus have any response to the healing?
4. Pay attention to your own emotions as you reflect on the healing lessons, are there some lessons that you respond to differently? Why? What is stirred up in your own soul with one or two of the healings?
5. What is the role of the Church in healing today?
6. How is God at work in the medical arts? How are faith and science not at odds, but complimentary to the work of healing?
7. How do you reflect on the differences in physical healing, healing as raising from the dead and healing as casting out demons?

January 23 - Session Three: Jesus as healer

Welcome

Christ Care Prayers

Introduction

How often do we pray for healing? It may be that most of our prayers, throughout our lifetime, are prayers for healing for ourselves, family, friends and world. We see that Jesus' healing work is for restoration, resurrection, contending with evil and justice. Which of these healing moments draw you in at this point of your faith journey?

What are your questions, or your questions from the reading to explore?

Before we close, a few words of introduction for next week's session and reading.

Reading for Session Four: The parables of Jesus

Luke is unique among the four gospels for the parables of Jesus that he includes. Like the healing miracles, we can wonder about what Luke heard in his community. What good news shines in the parables? How do the parables challenge us to deeper faith and compassion? How do the parables draw us to the heart of God?

Luke includes 28 parables in his gospel, and 20 are unique to Luke. The eight shared parables are important to note, but just as important are the 20 that are unique to Luke. For your reading this week, you can ponder four-five parables a day, or pick a parable from the list for each day (there will be some favorites and famous parables to consider). The * shows which are unique to Luke. There are parables unique to Matthew, Mark and John that I do not include on this list.

New cloth on an old coat - Luke 5:36

New wine in old wineskins – Luke 5:37-38

Wise and foolish builders – Luke 6:47-49

*Moneylender forgives unequal debts – Luke 7:41-43

Lamp on a stand – Luke 8:16, 11:33

*Rich man foolishly builds bigger barns – Luke 12:16-21

*Servants must remain watchful – Luke 12:35-40

*Wise and foolish servants – Luke 12:42-48

*Unfruitful fig tree – Luke 13:6-9

Sower and four types of soil – Luke 8:5-8, 11-15

Mustard seed (Kingdom of Heaven) – Luke 13:18-19

Yeast (Kingdom of Heaven) – Luke 13:20-21

*Master and his servant – Luke 17:7-10

*Good Samaritan – Luke 10:30-37

*Friend in need – Luke 11:5-8

*Lowest seat at the feast – Luke 14:7-14

*Invitation to a great banquet – Luke 14:16-24

*Cost of discipleship – Luke 14:28-33

*Lost sheep – Luke 15:4-7

*Lost coin - Luke 15:8-10

*Lost (prodigal) son - Luke 15:11-32

*Shrewd manager - Luke 16:1-8

*Rich man and Lazarus - Luke 16:19-31

*Persistent widow and crooked judge - Luke 18:2-8

*Pharisee and tax collector - Luke 18:10-14

*King's ten servants given minas – Luke 19:12-27

*Wicked tenants – Luke 20:9-18

*Signs of the future from a fig tree - Luke 21:29-31

A parable is not an allegory, or a metaphor. Some scholars argue that they are moral tales, but many scholars invite a different reading: that a parable is a doorway, an invitation in to the heart of God. As an invitation, a parable invites us to engage in the telling with our heart, soul and mind – listening for God with our whole being. Perhaps that helps with the key questions to ask as you ponder the parables of Jesus this week?

1. How does the parable open you to God?
2. How does the parable change or deepen how you think?
3. How does the parable impact you emotionally? What emotions are stirred up as you read and reflect?
4. How does the parable deepen faith, challenge what you believe about God and the work of God?
5. What parable are you drawn to, and why?

January 30 - Session Four: The parables of Jesus

Welcome

Christ Care Prayers

Introduction

Has it been true in your journey of faith that stories, lessons and parables are what stay with you? How has a deep, complex and nuanced story made an impact on how you reflect on God, your life and how we are called to live? A story, lesson or parable does not have to be “true” to carry transformative truth for our lives.

As you reflected on the parables of Jesus, which are old friends? Which parables continue to reveal God to you and deepen faith? Which parables stand as a guide? Which parable challenges and inspires, often at the same time?

What are your questions, or your questions from the reading to explore?

Before we close, a few words of introduction for next week’s session and reading.

Reading for Session Five: Holy Week and the Crucifixion (the prayers of Jesus)

The flow of Holy Week is similar in all four Gospels. We know that Palm Sunday begins the week, and that all the events lead to the drama of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Each Gospel has their own unique energy, Luke is no exception. You have two reading options for your devotional life this week. The first is a reading through the events of Holy Week, the second an interesting invitation to reflect on the prayers of Jesus in Luke, prayers which culminate in Holy Week on Maundy Thursday in the garden.

Like the parables, the events of Holy Week and the lessons that center on Jesus’ prayers in Luke engage our whole person. Similar questions can guide our daily reading and reflection:

1. How does the lesson you chose for today open you to God?
2. How does the lesson change or deepen how you think?
3. How does the lesson impact you emotionally? What emotions are stirred up as you read and reflect?
4. How does the lesson deepen faith, challenge what you believe about God and the work of faith in the world?

Holy Week in the Luke's Gospel

Palm Sunday: Luke 19: 28-44

- Entry into Jerusalem
- Weeps over Jerusalem
- Cleanses the Temple

Monday- Tuesday: Luke 20 - 21

- Jesus authority
- Parable of the vineyard
- Paying taxes to Caesar
- Question about the resurrection
- David's son
- Pride and humility
- The widow's offering
- Destruction of the temple
- "Every day he was teaching in the temple, and at night he would go out and spend the night on the Mount of Olives." Luke 21:37

Wednesday: Luke 22: 1-6

- Plot to kill Jesus
- Judas agrees to betray Jesus (Spy Wednesday)

Maundy Thursday: Luke 22: 7 - 65

- Passover (Festival of Unleavened bread)
- Last Supper (22: 14-23)
- Dispute about greatness
- Peter's denial foretold
- Gethsemane
- Betrayal and Arrest
- Healing the slave's ear (22: 50-51)
- Jesus before High Priest
- Peter's denial

Good Friday: Luke 22: 66 -

- Jesus before the Council (day break)
- Jesus before Pilate
- Pilate's struggle, Jesus' innocence
- Jesus handed over to be crucified
- Simon of Cyrene carries the cross (23: 26ff)
- Crucifixion (Luke 23:32 – 46)
 - o 9:00 a.m. - Nailed to the tree with criminals on either side

- Father, forgive them
- Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom
- Today you will be with me in paradise
- 12:00 noon – Darkness falls (vs 44)
- 3:00 p.m. –
 - Jesus cries, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”
 - Centurion witnesses to Jesus’ innocence
 - Evening: Burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea

Holy Saturday: Luke 23: 55 – 56

- Witnesses to the burial
- Rested on Sabbath

Easter Sunday: Luke 24: 1-12

- Sabbath over – proper burial
- Two men/ angels: Why do you look for the living among the dead?
- Remember
- The women remember, and return to tell
- Peter runs to the tomb, returns amazed
- Same day: road to Emmaus (13-32) and Jesus appears to the disciples (36-53)

Prayers of Jesus in Luke

Jesus’ Prayer at Baptism and in the midst of ministry

Luke 3: Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was **praying**, the heaven was opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Luke 5: Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do choose. Be made clean." Immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴And he ordered him to tell no one. "Go," he said, "and show yourself to the priest, and, as Moses commanded, make an offering for your cleansing, for a testimony to them." ¹⁵But now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. ¹⁶**But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.**

Luke 6: Now during those days he went out to the mountain **to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God.** ¹³And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve

of them, whom he also named apostles: ¹⁴Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, ¹⁵and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Luke 6: 28 and Jesus' teaching to "bless those who curse you and **pray for those who abuse you.**"

Jesus' prayer in the midst of discernment

Luke 9: Once when **Jesus was praying alone**, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" ¹⁹They answered, "John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen." ²⁰He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Messiah of God..."

²⁸Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and **went up on the mountain to pray.** ²⁹**And while he was praying, the** appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" — not knowing what he said. ³⁴While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. ³⁵Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen listen to him!" ³⁶When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Jesus giving the Lord's Prayer

Luke 11: **He was praying** in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." ²He said to them, "**When you pray, say:**

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial..."

⁹So I say to you, **Ask**, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who

searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? ¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Jesus' extended teaching on prayer

Luke 18: Then Jesus told them a parable **about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.** ²He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' ⁴For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" ⁶And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? ⁸I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

⁹He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰**Two men went up to the temple to pray,** one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

Jesus' prayers in the midst of Holy Week

Luke 22: You are those who have stood by me in my trials; ²⁹and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, ³⁰so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ³¹Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, ³²**but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail;** and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." ³³And he said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!" ³⁴Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me..."

³⁹He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰When he reached the place, he said to them, "**Pray that you may not**

come into the time of trial." ⁴¹Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, ⁴²**Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.** [⁴³Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. ⁴⁴**In his anguish he prayed more earnestly,** and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.] ⁴⁵When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, ⁴⁶and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

February 6 - Session Five: Holy Week and the Crucifixion (the prayers of Jesus)

Welcome

Christ Care Prayers

Introduction

That was quite a bit of reading, and significant! After a few words of introduction, we will turn to your questions and insights. What was familiar to you? What was new as your spent time in Holy Week or in meditation on the prayers of Jesus in Luke? How did the lessons engage your mind, heart and soul?

We can also turn to your questions from the reading to explore.

Before we close, a few words of introduction for next week's final session and reading.

Reading for Session Six: Resurrection and the Road to Emmaus

Easter Sunday in Luke will be familiar, but what follows is unique to Luke. The road to Emmaus is a beloved moment that engages our whole person. It draws us deep into our understanding of communion – differently from John, Mark or Matthew.

At the center of the shape of this last part of Luke's Gospel is the good news that, Jesus was revealed to them in the breaking of the bread. You are invited to spend the week in a slower, more meditative reading of this final chapter in Luke's Gospel. Here is a suggested daily reading pattern, with a prompt question for each day.

Day 1: Luke 24: 1-12 – Why do we look for the living among the dead, life among all that does not give life?

Day 2: Luke 24: 13-27 – Jesus joins them in their journey, do you have moments when the presence of God was clearly with you?

Day 3: Luke 24: 28-35 – Stay with us, this is the invitation of the disciples. Then Jesus is revealed in the breaking of the bread. How do you reflect on this event?

Day 4: Luke 24: 36-43 – Peace be with you, this is Jesus greeting for us every day. What does the peace of God mean for you?

Day 5: Luke 24: 44-49 – Jesus opens their minds to understand the scriptures, how have you heard God’s blessing and love during this Bible study?

Day 6: Luke 24: 50-53 – The final emotion in Luke’s Gospel is joy, what does it mean that the Gospel ends with a sense of joy? How does that connect with the “joy to the world” that begins the Gospel?

February 13 – Session Six: Resurrection and the Road to Emmaus (breaking bread)

Welcome

Christ Care Prayers

Introduction

Thank you for this faithful engagement with Luke. Hopefully you have heard God's invitation, word of love and call to follow through this time of holy reading and holy conversation.

The road to Emmaus is at the center of our conversation. Jesus is revealed, again, in the breaking of the bread. This opens us to what follows in Luke's next volume, the Book of Acts. The earliest faith communities are grounded in all that we have discussed, and in what we do each week as we gather for communion. Let's begin with these two lessons, your questions and insights.

Luke 24: Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." ²⁵Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Acts 2: Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." ⁴⁰And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. ⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Closing insights

We will be sure to leave some time to look back and name some of the most meaningful moments in this study, for you. What will you take away for the year of Luke? What will you be listening for each weekend in worship when Luke's Gospel takes front and center?

References:

These are helpful commentaries on Luke that I own, and you can certainly borrow if you would like to go deeper in any specific section of Luke.

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