

sins and to walk in Your ways, guided by Your Spirit and filled with Your love.

We pray for the needs and concerns of others. Just as Jesus showed His wounds to Thomas and brought him to faith, we pray for those who are struggling with doubt and unbelief.

We pray for those who are facing challenges and difficulties, for the sick and the suffering, for the lonely and the broken hearted. May Your healing touch bring comfort and peace to all who are in need. Strengthen our faith, Lord, that we may be a source of hope and encouragement to those around us.

We thank You, Father, for Your unfailing love and faithfulness. May Your Word dwell richly in our hearts, transforming us and equipping us to serve You faithfully.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song:

Peace by Laura Story

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4yT_IU9tA
[c](#)

Closing Responses & Blessing

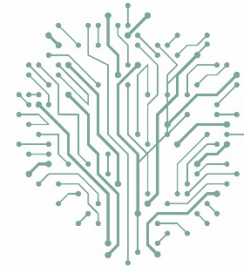
May we have faith in the unseen and believe in the miraculous work of Christ in our lives. May we proclaim with confidence, "My Lord and my God!"

As we go from here today, may the blessing of the risen Lord be upon us. May His peace fill our hearts, His love guide our actions, and His presence be ever near. May we go forth as witnesses of His resurrection, sharing the good news with boldness and joy.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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SALT BUSH

UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Worship for the scattered Christian community

John 20: 19-30
Fear, Doubt & Believe

Welcome

Let us open our hearts to receive the peace and presence of Christ in our midst. Let us also be reminded of the importance of sharing the good news of the Gospel with others, just as the disciples were called to do.

May this time of worship be a time of renewal and recommitment to our faith, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of the disciples and bear witness to the transformative power of Christ in our lives.

Amen.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light the Christ candle to remind ourselves of God's grace, which serves as the illuminating light of the world.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of these lands and waters where we meet, the _____ Nation (of the _____ peoples).

We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, and to all descendants of this/these nations who have cared for this place since creation.

We also honour all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples here today.

Stuart McMillan

Assembly Consultant Covenanting Assembly Resourcing Unit

Music for Reflection

Suggested song:

Grace by Laura Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHwCWnwDGjA>

Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

Luke 13:1-9

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Jesus and Thomas

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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."

²⁶ 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." ²⁷ 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." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ 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."

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

Questions for conversation

- What does this passage reveal about the importance of community and fellowship among believers?
- Jesus breathed on his disciples and imparted the Holy Spirit to them. How does the gift of the Holy Spirit empower us as followers of Christ today?
- Thomas famously doubted the resurrection until he saw Jesus himself. What can we learn from Jesus' response to Thomas's doubt?
- Reflecting on the theme of belief and doubt in this passage. How can we navigate doubts in our faith journey while remaining steadfast in our belief in Jesus?

Silence

Please take a moment to find a comfortable position and prepare yourself for five minutes of complete silence. Gently close your eyes and allow yourself to relax, while remaining fully present and aware of your surroundings.

Prayers of confession and For Others

Gracious God,

Just as the disciples experienced doubt and fear before encountering the risen Lord, we too confess that we often doubt Your presence and power in our lives. Forgive us, Lord, for the times we have allowed fear and uncertainty to overshadow our faith.

We confess our sins. We ask for forgiveness, mercy and grace to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Help us to turn away from our