

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage
FCUCC
April 18, 2021

Fresh Perspectives: Children's Easter Worship

Thank you for everything you have done for this worship service! All the videos, all the planning. Your videos were so creative! You all are awesome!

When we watch the stories of scripture acted out, we might understand the messages a little differently than we do when we only read them. As I watched all of the videos, including Kaleb's and JP's, I noticed a couple of messages over and over:

First, a lot of people in the stories doubted Jesus. They doubted that they should follow him. They doubted that he could break the rules and help people on the Sabbath. And they doubted that he had been resurrected. And those were people we might think SHOULD know better. The scribes and pharisees who rejected Jesus studied the scriptures A LOT and were very religious. And the disciples, like Thomas, who had trouble believing in Jesus' resurrection, had followed him around, listening to his messages. Jesus had told them that this would happen—that he would die and then come back. But they all doubted. You did such a good job showing this, Hilde. The Thomas in your video kept pulling and pulling the scarves out—partially, that was a joke, but it shows something interesting. It's as if Thomas just couldn't believe what was happening and he had to keep pulling and pulling.

The message in this is that it is common to question and doubt. If even such religious people, if even people who had known Jesus and been his followers doubted, then of course we might also doubt. So if you ever have a time in your life when you start to doubt your faith, don't be too hard on yourself. It happens. Like Matilda says in her video, it's okay. You are loved anyway.

The second message I noticed was this one: Jesus kept showing up all over the place, particularly in regular, ordinary spaces—even after he had died! He showed up at church for the scribes. In one of Nora's videos, he was at the tomb. In Nora's other video, he showed up at the fishermen's work, right, and then made them dinner! For Jackson and Mason's video, they were just walking between two places, and Jesus suddenly appeared and walked with them. And in Matilda and Hilde's other video, he appeared on a mountain. Kaleb says Jesus shows up at his home to see where he lives. He just kept showing up, and he did this even though people doubted him and their faith.

The good news and message in this is that, even when people doubt, even when things are sad, when bad things happen, or when you're scared, Jesus will keep trying to reach you and support you. He'll show up on your walks, when you travel, at your work, at your homes, and always at meals. This is a part of what his resurrection means—that he is the life that will never, never die. He will live in our hearts and in our lives, always.

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage
FCUCC
April 18, 2021

And the final message I noticed was this one: In almost all of those stories, Jesus shared a meal with his friends and then sent them out into the world as his disciples. Did you notice that? He asks his disciples to become fishers of people. That can sound like a really weird idea, right? Fishing for people? But what he means is that his disciples are meant to tell his story and share his message. Did you notice in the Lego video that even the scribes and pharisees are now dancing with Jesus at the end? His story is so good, so full of love, justice, mercy, joy, and hope that it catches people's hearts and souls and minds. So that's what we're asked to do—to fish for people by living our lives as Jesus taught and sharing his message of love, justice, mercy, joy, and hope. That way, we will encourage them to feel those feelings, and live like Jesus taught.

So those are the three messages from today: It can be common to doubt. Even if you doubt, Jesus has risen and will always show up in your life. Knowing these things, we are asked to live out and share his teachings with the world.

Please pray with me (I borrowed the beginning of this prayer from Kaleb):

Dear Jesus, you are our hero. Thank you for the ways you dance into our lives. And please help us to be fishers of people, like you asked. We love you. Amen.