

First United Methodist Church

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Who are you in the Easter story? If you go back to the beginning of Holy Week, there are a lot of different characters involved. There's the crowd shouting "Hosanna." How about the religious officials looking to get rid of Jesus? There's the Roman Soldiers. Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas. How about one of the disciples? Onlookers to the trial, flogging, and crucifixion of Jesus. One of the Mary's. The crowd shouting "Crucify Him!" Joseph of Arimathea. There's even those who were indifferent, barely noticing or caring as Jesus passed by. There's other characters that could be mentioned, but the question remains; "Who are you in the Easter story?"

I'll admit that one of my favorite characters is Thomas. There are even times that I am Thomas, wondering what to believe. Personally, I believe Thomas is often given a bad rap for his comments about not believing unless he could see and touch the living Jesus. The other disciples had basically said the same thing after the women returned from the garden that first Easter morning saying the tomb was empty and Mary having seen the risen Jesus. The other disciples didn't believe either, Thomas was just more open and up front about it. I like that about him.

Then, what Thomas longed for happened. Jesus is there standing before him saying, "Peace be with you!" Jesus knew the inner turmoil that Thomas was experiencing. Jesus then speaks directly to Thomas, "See, touch, feel." In doing this Jesus asked Thomas to take a step forward, to move from unbelief to belief.

The word "belief" used in this passage doesn't mean an absolute scientific, empirical proof type belief. It's a trusting belief. Simply knowing the person or persons involved and having faith in and trusting them. Jesus says, "Thomas, you know your friends gathered here, you know me... believe." And he did!

There are times in my life and faith journey I too am a bit like Thomas. In those moments I find Jesus is standing nearby saying, "You know me...you know other followers...trust me...believe!" How about you? Who are you in the crowd? What's your next step to grow in your faith? The living Jesus is there saying... "Believe!"

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

This Sunday, April 8, is **Teacher Appreciation** at Downtown Mitchell First United Methodist. Our Sunday School Teachers will be recognized at both morning worship services. Their dedication and commitment to our children, youth, and adults is a significant part of the ministry of our church being lived out; "Sharing the Love of Jesus with the next generation from the heart of downtown."

God Sightings and Breakthrough's – I am continually asking the question of people in our church, "Where have you seen God at work in our midst?" One answer I've received is with our Youth Group. In recent weeks we've had over 50 youth in our church for youth group. This is incredible!! For months now, we've been praying for "Breakthrough." This is definitely a breakthrough!! God is at work!!! Because of this breakthrough, we do need more adult servants to help with our Youth Ministry Outreach. You can help shape the life and the faith of future generations through this ministry. Talk to Jessica Kremer for more information.