



“Keep a knockin’, but you can’t come in. Keep a knockin’, but you can’t come in. Come back tomorrow night and try again.” –Richard A. Penniman

### Field

<sup>24</sup>But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>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.” <sup>26</sup>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.” <sup>27</sup>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.” <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup>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.”

### Thoughts by Reverend Peter Heide, ELCA Disability Ministries Team, Baraboo, WI

Without physically being able to see, I have a vivid memory of working in the piano tuning shop one day when my teacher said, “Here, let me show you how to fix that. Where’s your hand? Give me your finger.” And then he took my hand and put my finger on the piece of the piano I needed to work on. In that touch, I learned the dimension of the object, its relationship with the parts around it, and the brokenness that needed repair. The solution to the problem was unlocked for me. That was just the first of many times when my teacher would say, “Give me your hand. Put your finger here.” And to this day I can feel each of the parts, the relationship they have with the many parts around them, and then consider a repair solution.

Each year, as we plunge into the Easter season, we are confronted with this wonderful story of the disciples who fear reprisals for being associates of Jesus. The doors are firmly locked. We know they fear the authorities of the day and the temple guard more particularly. The disciples are so fearful, each concerned only for himself, that though Thomas is not with them, they are not concerned even about his whereabouts. But at some point during the following week, Thomas is given entrance. We are now with Thomas in the room; the door is not locked, but it is closed. When Jesus arrives, he again blesses the disciples but does not repeat his sending and commissioning. Instead, in an exchange that always makes me believe that Thomas is blind or visually impaired, Jesus meets Thomas’ demands for knowing by saying, “Put your finger here. Put your hand here.” This intimate contact evokes Thomas’ response, “My Lord and my God.”

Thomas is the one who claims the resurrected Christ as his Lord and savior. The one who was locked out is the one whose revelation changes the world. While the disciples are still gathered in the midst of fear and uncertainty, Thomas has pronounced this new revelation. Jesus responds to the disciples, “Have you believed because you have seen? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

In this story of separated seclusion lays the seed of liberation. For all of those who have attempted to enter and only found the doors locked against them because of fear, this story reminds of the possibility of inclusion. Despite the supercilious taunts from the insiders, “We have seen the Lord, and you haven’t,” Thomas continues to desire and needs to know Christ in ways that we can understand. In those days when you feel that the doors are locked against you, take heart. With persistence, the doors will open, and you too might be the one to make the claim of faith that will change the world. We live in the world of doing God’s work with our hands. Put your finger here, then bear witness to the many other signs of Jesus’ work that others might believe. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Peter