

APRIL'S THEME

PREPARE

SCRIPTURE John 20:19-31

BOTTOM LINE "peace be with you"



•Tonight we will be in the choir format and we will have communion.

**MY GOAL FOR THE NIGHT:**



Tonight at StuMin worship we will begin the process of commissioning our community, our seniors in particular, for the next mission field God has for them. We will celebrate with the seniors all that God has done in their time with us. Then, we will gather around them to send them with our blessing into the next adventure of faith. In our devotional we will stand with the disciples as they meet Jesus for the first time after his resurrection. We'll press into what it means for Jesus to give us peace.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Connect**

Highs/Lows and Prayer Requests - Share your "highs" and "lows" with the group and then gather prayer requests to distribute to the group for prayer throughout the next week.

**Message**

**Devotional: John 20:19-31**

Last week we leaned into the good news of Easter. With readings, prayer, and music we celebrated the way that Jesus is victorious over sin, death, and the devil. As a result, we too are able to experience victory over these forces in the world. It is one thing to claim this truth when we stand in the midst of a great church community that also professes the same truth when times are good, but it is an entirely different thing to hold onto this news when our situation is more vulnerable. That latter scenario is the reality that the disciples were facing in this story. From their point of view, whatever movement Jesus had invited them into had abruptly ended with his crucifixion. Not only were they sad, but they were also fearful because they had been linked to someone who was killed for treason. They were basically enemies of the state awaiting their trial and death as well. To make matters worse, they were expelled from the religious community they had grown up in and so they felt that they were disconnected from God. So, you can imagine that they were afraid.



**PRINCE  
OF PEACE**  
Called to Connect

**STUDENT  
MINISTRY**

**APR 11**  
SMALL GROUP GUIDE | MS/HS

In this way, it is a little easier to understand Thomas' reaction to Jesus. They were beginning to feel a similar feeling to what Jesus felt on the cross: abandoned and hopeless. It was at that moment that Jesus said to Thomas and the others in the room, "peace be with you." If you remember back to when Jesus was on the cross, he told the man dying next to him that he would be with him in paradise that day. In both of these situations you have Jesus making statements that seem totally disconnected from reality. Unless, that is, Jesus knew more about reality than they did or we do.

When Jesus tells the disciples and us to "have peace," what Jesus is asking us to do is to hold together, to be a bridge, between two worlds: Heaven and earth. More than that he is asking us to blend the two of them together; bringing the reality that life ultimately triumphs over death into the here and now so that others may see heaven and be at peace.

We often find ourselves in situations or seasons that don't feel peaceful or heaven-like: When everything is changing about us in middle school. When friend groups shift in early high school. When the pressure cooker of high school gets hottest during junior year. And when we begin the process of leaving home our senior year. To all of these moments Jesus says, "peace be with you." He's not asking you to flip a switch and feel differently, that would be insincere. Rather, he is asking to know differently; to know that whatever is robbing you of joy will not ultimately be the winner. So, whatever the transition or difficult season you might find yourself in right now, peace be with you.

- During worship people say "peace" when they shake your hand. Had you ever made the connection between this way of speaking about peace and those moments in church? What would be different if you did?
- How does it feel to know that you can be a bridge between heaven and earth for your friends in difficult seasons?
- What difficult season are you in right now? How does being reminded of the peace you have access to change that season for you?

## EXTRAS

### Peace Be With You

**What You Need:** Construction paper, crayons, markers, fifth, eighth, and senior lists.

**What you Do:** Your group has a list of people who are about to make a big transition in the next few months. Some of them are seniors transitioning into adulthood, some are fifth graders going into middle school, and still others are eighth graders going into high school. Write them a card, sharing peace with them, as they make this transition. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade groups will write cards to fifth graders. Seniors, Freshman, and sophomores will write notes to eighth graders. Juniors will write notes to seniors. Put those notes together and then place them into the marked bins on the bin cart.

---

## JUST FOR FUN

### Summer Fun

**What You Need:** Paper and pen

**What You Do:** This summer we are going to host six weeks of social gatherings for high school and middle school students in separate places. Write down 5 activity ideas, 5 snack ideas, and 5 game ideas. Examples could include: pick-up ultimate, bonfire, swimming, skiing, and a movie. Snacks could be watermelon, chicken wings, snickers, apples, and ice cream. Make sure to indicate whether you will be in middle school or high school next year.