

**5/25/25 SALT CO**

**STATION VII**

**John 20:19-23**

**Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

WELCOME TO THE SALT CO!

Welcome those who are joining us online.

*Let us know you're here! Email us at [seasonedadults@calvarywestlake.org](mailto:seasonedadults@calvarywestlake.org)*

This is Memorial Day weekend...

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arlington\\_National\\_Cemetery#/media/File:Graves\\_at\\_Arlington\\_on\\_Memorial\\_Day.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arlington_National_Cemetery#/media/File:Graves_at_Arlington_on_Memorial_Day.JPG)

When we stop and remember, *so that we do not forget* those who served our nation with their very lives. Memorial Day began in 1868 to honor soldiers who died in the Civil War. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that over 1.19 million members of the U.S. military have died in wars since the Revolutionary War, (with most dying in the American Civil War, 620,000 fatalities.) Who among them did you know? Let's take a moment for some silence.

Would you join me in prayer...

Our heavenly Father,

We remember and give thanks for these many men and women who gave their lives in the service of our country. In this moment we are reminded once more that true, right and good freedom is never "free". It comes with at times very great sacrifice. We raise them up to You with thanks for their example defending freedoms we enjoy and make the same possible for others. Help us to honor them by caring for their families they have left behind and see to it that their wounded comrades are well cared for. Help us be wise and watchful over these precious freedoms so that when lives are spent they are given for what is right and good. Help us be worthy of the price they have paid.

We pray in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SALT CO is the HUB of Seasoned Adult Ministry. For anyone new...by SEASONED ADULTS we mean:

### **SEASONED AS IN...**

Chronologically-- we've lived a lot of seasons of life

BUT more importantly-

Spiritually--- ...like when sodium and chlorine combined are transformed through a visible **reaction** to make a NEW chemical compound called: SALT... by the grace of God's Holy Spirit in us, when we receive Christ into our lives, we become like THIS [gesture: one hand—two hands—joined together. And we experience **a LIFE LONG transformational spiritual PROCESS** of becoming more and more like Christ himself.

*JESUS CALLS US THE SALT OF THE EARTH.*

And this is the SALT CO (where we pull off the road to gather, AND share stories about how to faithfully navigate the ever-changing terrain on Route 60+; and Route 60++...and +++...

A place where we:

Re-fresh

Re-fuel

And sometimes even...*Re-tool*

This Spring we are exploring a relatively new practice that complements the 14 Stations of the Cross we did on Good Friday. The Via Lucis ("Stations of Light") comprises 14 Stations of Jesus' post resurrection encounters before he ascended (HE IS RISEN!!), all based in the witness of the Gospels, the book of Acts, and Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. We have copies of VIA LUCIS at the back table.

We come today to Station VII found in John's Gospel chapter 20 beginning at v. 19. This Station bridges Easter to Pentecost. It reminds us and re-connects us, *when we begin to forget*, that what drives us in our day-to-day mission work is that *He is risen, indeed!* When we celebrated Easter we were celebrating the beginning of our participation in His work on this planet that continues...

So we come to the next station:

### **VIA LUCIS STATION VII Jesus Appears to the Disciples John 20:19-23**

As before, we'll go through a simple guided process of using our "faithful imaginations" to enter this scene using a reading from the Gospel of John,

1. We'll start by just reading together the scripture so you can imagine the scene.
2. Then, we'll display a rendering of the scene on the screens and invite you to gaze on for a few minutes. If you want a closer look at the image, the table guides will also share the printed a copy provided in an envelope for each table.
3. Then I'll read the scripture a second time and this time try to imagine yourself IN the scene...feel free to jot some notes, or maybe even sketch the scene as you listen.
4. After that... we'll take time at your tables for those who would like to to share some of your thoughts and impressions.
5. Folks online at home our SALT CO team would love to hear your thoughts too-you can email them to me at [seasonedadults@calvarywestlake.org](mailto:seasonedadults@calvarywestlake.org).

Let's step into the Way of Light.

FIRST READING – This week for the first reading the verse will be on the screens and I invite you to read it along with me.

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

### **John 20: 19-23**

For the second reading imagine yourself in that room.

Here is one artist’s rendering of the scene...

<https://bible.arO,t/p/SqItER72InXK1o4RLn5W/john-20:20-and-when-he-had-so-said>

### **SECOND READING**

[What goes through your mind before he comes? What are you feeling when he appears? What is happening in your own heart as you hear what He says to His friends? Imagine him saying this to you.]

As you imagine yourself in the scene...you might jot down or sketch some impressions.

### **TABLE TALK**

1. What do you think were some of the thoughts, feelings, questions of those gathered in that room BEFORE Jesus showed up?
2. Talk about what it felt like when you imagined Jesus saying the FIRST time “***Peace be with you.***”
3. Imagine looking at his hands, and seeing him show you his side. What might you be thinking and feeling?
4. Why do you think Jesus says a second time, “***Peace be with you...***”?

5. How do you see yourself responding when you hear Jesus say, *“I am sending you...receive the Holy Spirit”*?

## VIA LUCIS STATION VII Jesus Appears to the Disciples John 20:19-23

This scene begins in the evening. The doors are locked, window shades pulled tight. This scene at this Station begins in hunkered down whispers. We get this. It's what fear does. What fears have you locked in? What worries keep your blinds drawn?

But at the same time let's not miss John's hint, ***“the first day of the week”***, that would be Sunday, the first day of the new week, the *eighth* day. Jesus rose on the eighth day. Is there an evocation of Genesis 1:1? The eighth day is the first day of new creation.

This is the reason why Christians began worship on Sundays. We are people of the new creation.

The scene unfolds...

***“Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ After he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.”***

-Dale Bruner's translation goes, *“Jesus came and stood right in the middle of them...”* Right where He wants to be in every Christian gathering! Right in the middle of this room right now!

-The scarred marks remain. Earth's wounds brought with Jesus to heaven. Our Lord gets us, He knows how to pray for us...

He said ***“Peace to you!”*** Twice. EIRENE, from which we get the name “Irene”. SHALOM in Hebrew, means all things together right, well, working, flowing, interdependent, like a trinitarian waltz. This is the one-word way to describe what God has in Mind for the entire creation, and us along with it. *Peace. Shalom.* Jesus showing up after brutal crucifixion, after full frontal demonic attack, the forces of anti-life, of having taken us onto himself and

dying with it all, here is Jesus made “new”! *In Him all things will be made new* (Eph. 1:10; Col 1:20; Rev. 21:5).

We could say He gives us a new name- Irene.

Jesus shows up first to show them and the rest of us, every man, woman and child that death--Satan’s ultimate weapon-- has been defeated. That the new creation has now begun...but is Not yet fully realized-- until He appears again and Satan’s remaining power over us will be fully vanquished.

Maybe the first time He said “***Peace be with you***” was to settle them. He is no “ghost” (remember Station VI). After they have seen his hands and his side, his body, now somehow same and yet “different”- “transphysical” as we said last time- they “***rejoiced when they saw the Lord.***” Just like what He told them would happen before His arrest, “... ***but your pain will turn to joy...***” (16:20-22).

His blessing takes on new meaning with new implications when He says it a second time,

***“Peace be with you.”***

With His blessing settling into their souls, Jesus knows they are ready,

***“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”***

Let’s take this in.

How did the Father send Jesus? Jesus recalls His entire ministry! How are we sent? Time for serious bible study of the Gospels. Since we’re in John’s Gospel let’s take a quick look (survol at 30,000 feet).

Look how Jesus was sent out

-to invite others to join him

-having impromptu life-changing conversations like the one with Nicodemus and the woman at the well

-when people came around Him He cared for them and their children.  
And they tended to get well

-He stayed attuned to the Father! (**READ John 5:19-20**)

-He fed people food as well as soul food

-He knew when to go forth and when to withdraw.

-He engaged “authorities” (chs 7,8, 9,) 15:18ff.

-He went out into the midst of “wolves”

-He washed feet and told us to do the same.

-The Father sent Him out in so many other ways...

At Calvary we put it this way, our mission is to help people become disciples who live and love like Jesus. Which requires, as we have said several times, *thinking* like Jesus.

We can think like Jesus because we have a great gift, His word! HOLD UP A BIBLE. Here is how we “learn Jesus”. Here is how we learn His good pleasure (Eph. 5:10).

But we are not just imitating Him with our own “will power”. He knows we need more than that. That’s why...

***“When he had said this [As the Father has sent me, SO I send you!] he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit...’***

-Interesting Greek word found only here for “breathed” [ENEPUSESEN, from EMPHUSAO], only time this word is used anywhere in the New Testament. It doesn’t just mean exhale. It means to “inflate” like a balloon, to blow, to fill, to move, to cause to spin....

John uses a word here that is supposed to set bells going off in our bible story memories:

***“then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being”***  
Genesis 2:7

And then these famous verses from Ezekiel,

***“Thus says the Lord GOD to these dry bones; I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live... I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.”***  
Ezekiel 37: 5, 10

Jesus breathed on His friends, not just the apostles but His community, the way God breathed into the ADAMAH, and ADAM received God’s breath and became a living being (NEPHESH HAYAH) Here in this darkened, locked room Jesus is making bone dry humans fresh and *new*. Alive!

Take that pin wheel in front of you. Imagine that this is you. Very nice looking. Pretty color. Shiny. But notice that it doesn’t spin! A pin wheel is made to spin. But it can’t spin by itself. It needs wind. In Hebrew and Greek the word for wind is also the word for spirit and breath. So, use some of your wind, your breath, your spirit and let’s make ‘em spin! GO FOR IT! Watch the flying colors.

Take some video’s!

Irenaeus once said the glory of God is a person fully alive.

The glory of a pinwheel is when it spins.

In John 7 Jesus puts it like this:

***“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’”*** John explains, ***“Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”*** (John 7:37-39)

What is this Station showing us? Jesus making these people, His people, new people! AKA children of God. AKA “born from above”, “born again” (John 3:3-10). New creation inhabitants! As such—we are ambassadors, agents and CONDUITS of His mission and Holy Spirit presence in the world He so loves.

He is, by His Spirit inhabiting us, walking in our steps, touching with our hands, seeing through our eyes, speaking with/through our voices, listening with our ears...

Station VII bridges Easter to Pentecost. It reminds us of the interwovenness of Jesus’ resurrection and the mission of His people. It re-connects us, when we begin to forget, what drives us in our day-to-day mission work- that He is risen, indeed! When we celebrated Easter, we were celebrating the beginning of our work in His name on this planet that will go on until that Good Day when all things will be made new.

Holy Spirit empowerment for being sent out. Here’s a quick video on the HUGE back story to what Jesus means here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNNZO9i1Gjc>

Two questions for us from this Station:

1. What does it mean to “receive” the breath, wind, spirit of Jesus?

Basil the Great (c.329-c.379) wrote,

*“All share in the Spirit and yet the Spirit remains entire, like a sunbeam whose gentle light falls upon a person who enjoys it as though the sun shone on her alone, whereas in reality the sun is shining over land and sea and mingles with the air. In the same way, the Spirit is present to all those who are capable of receiving him as if given to each uniquely and sends forth grace sufficient and great enough for all, yet without loss to itself; and*

*we profit by sharing in this, but according to our capacity, not according to the Spirit's power."*

*"On the Holy Spirit" Basil the Great (c.329-379)*

We "receive" the breath of His Spirit the way we welcome air into our lungs. Maybe we come to Christ when we have been ground to dust, gasping for air. When we can feel our clay. Again, God's address is found at "the end of our ropes". He has life for you. His life in you and me. Life stronger than anything we suffer, stronger than death.

Here is what we must not miss from this Station: The presence of the Spirit empowers the community to continue the work of Jesus' mission. This is less about getting "filled" than it is about getting into the "flow" (the flood) of the movement of God's Spirit today.

This brings us to the second question:

## *2. What is this empowerment for?*

*Jesus finishes by saying this:*

***"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."***

- a. Notice that these words are addressed to the entire community, not just to the apostles.
- b. In the context of being sent, forgiveness of sins IS the mission of continuing Jesus' work in the world. We are sent out to "love enemies".
- c. Consider what Jesus told us in John 3:

***"And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."***

John. 3:19-21

To have sin is to be blind to the revelation of God in Jesus. Jesus brings people to “judgment”, that is by His revealing work and presence in the world, He brings them to a time of de-cision. No one can be “neutral” about Jesus.

d. This fits with the Holy Spirit’s activity in John 16:8-9

***“And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin, and righteousness and judgment; about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment because the ruler of this world has been condemned.” John 16:8-11***

Taking next right steps at the same time exposes wrong steps, and invites observers to consider *their* next steps... By loving one another we demonstrate another way, another option for the world to “decide” for or against.

-So *we are not judges*. We are witness bearers to the love of God in Jesus. For the world to choose to embrace Jesus is to step into forgiveness. For the world to choose to reject Jesus is to have their sins retained.

So we take lively seriously (rather than “deadly seriously”) our serving Him, learning FROM Him how to be living proof of a LOVING God

So we walk the talk...

## **WALK THE TALK**

1. Car Show coming!!

## **BLESSING**

*“God, the Father of Mercy,*

*we your children give thanks for the gift of forgiveness.*

*While we do not merit this gift*

*-we have not earned a place at the table in your kingdom-*

*you have sent us your Son*

*to redeem and save what was lost... to save us.*

*Christ Jesus,*

*You who give the power of forgiving sins,*

*move us to forgive those who have trespassed against us.*

*As you forgave everyone,*

*even the ones who put you to death,*

*so we, with your loving help,*

*can forgive even serious offenses,*

*and live with a spirit of mercy in our lives.*

*Holy Spirit, Redeeming Spirit,*

*we have received so much in mercy,*

*and yet sometimes we hold grudges and do not forgive.*

*Fill us with your goodness*

*so that we can be a sign of redemption in the world.*

*Show us how it is the strong who offer mercy,*

*how forgiveness can be a powerful force*

*for good in a world in need of love.*

*In the name of Jesus we pray:*

*‘Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

*As it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever.’*

Amen.”

Glenn Byer. Via Lucis, The Way of Light, p. 31

## NOTES

In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus told His followers, “***You are the salt of the earth.***” For the longest time I did not really understand what He meant by this. I used to think of salt as a preservative, as infusing food, as disappearing in order to be effective, as a way to heal wounds, even to make icy roads safer. But only recently did I discover some texts that lead me now to what I suspect Jesus had in Mind.

I discovered Leviticus 2:13 in a section on instructions for making grain offerings in the Temple. The passage reads,

***“You shall not omit from your grain offerings the salt of the covenant with your God; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.”***

What is this “covenant”? The immediate context is remembering God’s arrangement with Moses on Sinai and the gift of the Torah to teach the people rescued from slavery what it will mean to be shaped as the “people of God”. What lies behind and before God’s covenant with Moses is God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21 and 17:1-22. This earlier covenant of God set in motion God’s intention to undo the damage done by Adam in Genesis 3. The covenant referred to in Leviticus 2:13 (also found in Numbers 18:19 and II Chronicles 13:5 which uses this image to refer to God’s covenant with David) is “God’s determination to deal with evil once

and for all and so put the whole creation, and humankind with it, right at last" (N.T. Wright).

*When Jesus called His followers the "salt of the earth" He meant that we are His agents for the spreading power and influence of the kingdom of God overcoming evil with good in the "grinding processes of human history" (Dallas Willard). In other words, God's faithfulness to His promise to unite all things in heaven and on earth in Christ (Ephesians 1:10; Romans 8:19-22) is being worked out through Jesus' people.*

Thus, to refer to our Seasoned Adults (60+) as the "the salt of the earth", is to affirm the Lord's calling on us to manifest God's faithfulness to His covenant promise throughout our lives and spheres of influence on people and creation (the "earth").

This is what we are all about- Seasoned Adults-style. Being sent. Being salt "of the earth". Opportunity for a deeper dive this morning as we see ourselves, our Seasoned Adults selves, in that darkened, locked against fear room, with Jesus standing suddenly in our worried midst. ]

***"...and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews..."*** As we saw last Station, no one saw Him come in by the door. They were locked! [Read I Cor. 15:44, ***"It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body."*** [SOMA PNEUMATIKON] ]

John 3:17; 4:34; 17:3,8. Jesus is sending them, and let's be clear, Jesus was not just saying this to the apostles, the Eleven, His community was there (we'll check out one artist's rendering in a bit). Jesus is sending all of them, all of us (!) to continue the work God sent Him to do.

And so... they were as ready as they could ever be. Are we? What do you need to be ready? Ready to go. Maybe it comes down to taking a next right step... walking the talking.

[The second reason why He showed up was to breathe on them, just as He breathes on us in this room this morning His RUACH, PNEUMA, wind-breath-spirit, read “power”- to have wind is to have breath, strength. Think sails hoisted. To be sent, even “pushed”, out now as His agents, co-workers into the world where we should expect hostility, enemies, eye rolling.]

**“When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit...’**

Holy Spirit [PNEUMA HAGION]

-John 14:15-17, “he will be among you (pl.)” we receive Him together

-This is John’s way to describe Pentecost (June 8 on our calendars) Cf. Acts 1:1-2:42. John offers no commentary while Luke gives us chapters. Long conversations among the bible scholars about this in relation to Pentecost. Is this a “promise” that is “fulfilled” at Pentecost? Or is it that Luke and John describe the Holy Spirit coming in and through us differently? They are perhaps (even likely) unaware of each other’s writings. They are functionally describing the same event: the one gift of the Spirit to his followers by the risen and ascended Lord. This is, after all, the point!!

Note from my study bible: “Since sin, not recognizing and embracing the revelation of God in Jesus, is a theological category in John, forgiveness of sins is not about the act of penance in relation to individual deeds. Rather, forgiveness of sins is the community’s Spirit-powered mission to continue Jesus’ work of making God known in the world and through that work to bring the world to judgment and decision through its response to Jesus (see 3:19-21; 15:22-24; 16:8-11)”

-Consider Jesus’ teaching and actions about sin

3:19-21; 8:21-24; 9:39-41; 15:22-24

-Just as with Jesus, as His people continue His work they (we) bring the world to a moment of decision and judgment with regard to sin (15:22-24).

-This fits with the Spirit's work, 16:8-9.

[We Seasoned Adult types have plenty to fear and worry about, if not our own issues, those of people we care about more than anything. It's one thing to have to navigate our own "stuff", with help we think we'll manage, it's quite another to try to make a difference, to help, to "save" our kids, our grandkids, our friends. I hate that this is how it is. We cannot do "it" for them. Dear Lord, let me do it for him! For her!]

Jesus liked to refer to Himself as the "Son of Man" The new Man. God on the planet being human in order to make us human! He means for humans to be restored to their true image, and vocation. Wisdom is what it means and how to be genuinely human (HUMUS, HUMOR, HUMILITY).

His wind, breath, spirit in us, so we can breathe in His life-giving air (near heaven) and breathe out life for others (lifesaving).

-the Spirit of Jesus will teach us (14:26)

-the Spirit precedes us out into the world to which we are sent to prove the world wrong about sin, and righteousness and judgment.

-the Spirit will declare to us the things that are to come... 16:14]

[-I think Ephesians 3:10 fits here. Our witness reveals, even exposes. illustrate with article written by Chinese Christian who had to flee China, and his observation on the underground church there, living, practicing another way to do "governance" getting for the day when they may be called upon to help rebuild...]