

The Lamplighter



5 Surprising Things Jesus' Followers Did After Easter

After 2,000 years, we've heard the Easter story so many times we often think we know everything about it. But there are some aspects that are not as well known, particularly the actions that the followers of Jesus took in the days and weeks after the resurrection.

Here are five specific things the disciples did after Easter that may surprise us:

#1. The disciples were skeptical. The Gospel records are clear: many of Jesus' closest followers were openly skeptical of the early reports of the resurrection.

When the women who first saw Jesus alive reported what they had seen, the other followers dismissed it as "an idle tale" and "did not believe them" (Luke 24:11).

The Gospel of John adds that one of Jesus' closest followers, named Thomas, refused to believe that God had raised Jesus to life. He insisted that he would have to put his finger in the nail holes in Jesus' hands before he would believe such a thing.

Some of the disciples had doubts even *when they saw Jesus with their own eyes.*

On a mountain in Galilee, Jesus appeared to eleven of His disciples and they worshiped Him there, but, Matthew reports, "some doubted" (Matthew 28:17).

What does that mean for us today? It means that Christians should acknowledge the skepticism they encounter about the Christian testimony. "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have," we are told in 1 Peter 3:15. "But do this with gentleness and respect."

What else did Jesus' followers do following Easter?

#2. They broke bread in Jesus' memory. It appears that the Last Supper rite that Jesus bequeathed to His followers was put into practice very early, perhaps within *days* of the Crucifixion.

A story related briefly in Mark and at length in Luke concerns two followers who had an encounter with the risen Jesus near the village of Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

The disciples did not recognize the risen Jesus but invited Him to eat with them. At the table, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and, Luke says, the disciples' eyes were opened.
(Continued on page 3)



Schedules

Sunday Morning Nursery:

April 02 Norma Stump, Donna Fleming, Grant & Sara Walker
 April 09 Norma Stump, Eli Hancock, Jill Hancock, Amy Jewell, Katie Lusk

April 16* Norma Stump, Abby Pankhurst, Patrick & Jill Hancock

April 23 Norma Stump, Jessica Miller, Jill Hancock, Fran Wright

April 30 Norma Stump, Fran Wright, Amy Jewell, Kristen Gibson

*Adult volunteer needed

Greeter Schedule:

April 02 Darrell Linville

April 09 Glenn Miller

April 16 Nick Papanicolas

April 23 Darrell Linville

April 30 Glenn Miller

Sermon Topics:

April 02

AM *What They Meant* Mth 21:1-2

PM *The Red Heifer* Num 19:1-6

April 09

AM *Easter Appearance* Lk 24:26-38

PM No Service

April 16

AM *Forgiveness* Mth 18:21-22

PM Chosen People Presentation

April 23

AM *Divorce* Mth 19:4-8

PM *Lost* Num 20:12

April 30

AM *Blessing Children* Mth 19:13-14

PM *Crying and Fighting* Num 21:1-8

Sunday Morning Security Team:

8:30 AM

April 02 Marion Simpson, Dillon Edelen

April 09 Norma Stump, Kevin Guiffre

April 16 Courtney Harbin, Marion Simpson

April 23 Dillon Edelen, Norma Stump

April 30 Kevin Guiffre, Courtney Harbin

SS & 11:00 AM

Jennifer Miller, Jerry Pruitt

Jim Miller, Melvin King

Patrick Hancock, Robert Hicks

Terry Mathews, Al Law

Betty Lou Moore, Bob Mathews

Children's Worship:

April 02 Stephanie Walton, Ruth Dillon, Adrielle Law

April 09 Jennifer Cooke, Jessica Miller, Camden Cooke

April 16 Ellen Nupson, Alison Bode, Laura Dillon

April 23 Hannah Pankhurst, Katie Lusk, Abby Pankhurst

April 30 Debbie Schneider, Becky Bucher, Ben Burgess

Tellers for April:

Sheri Bresnahan &
 Betty Moore

**"MANY WHO ARE
 FIRST WILL
 BE LAST,**



**AND THE LAST
 WILL BE FIRST."**

MARK 10:31, NRSV



(Continued from page 1)

A story related briefly in Mark and at length in Luke concerns two followers who had an encounter with the risen Jesus near the village of Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

The disciples did not recognize the risen Jesus but invited Him to eat with them. At the table, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and, Luke says, the disciples' eyes were opened. They reported the incident to the entire community, saying that Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24:12-35).

What does that mean for us?

Christian denominations differ on how they interpret what the Last Supper means, but it's clear from the New Testament that Jesus' earliest followers followed Jesus' command to "do this in memory of Me." According to Acts, after Easter the disciples in Jerusalem "broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts" (Acts 2:45). But Jesus' followers didn't break bread only. They did something else as well...

#3. They searched the Scriptures. With a few exceptions, the earliest followers of Jesus were devout Jews, steeped in the traditions and laws of their ancestors. It was natural, then, for them to search their ancient holy books (or holy scrolls) to find explanations for the extraordinary events that had happened in their midst.

Modern skeptics make much of the parallels between the Gospels and Old Testament texts, examples of what scholars call *midrash*, the Jewish technique of stitching Biblical passages together to expand on a given point or interpret an event. They claim that this shows New Testament incidents were just made up. But this is to misunderstand what *midrash* is.

A modern equivalent might be a journalist who says a current U.S. president "cannot tell a lie," deliberately referencing a very old saying about George Washington but *also*, at the same time, making a comment on a real situation in the present day.

It's clear from the New Testament that Jesus' followers did search the Jewish scriptures, often using the Greek translation known as the Septuagint.

Acts describes how the apostles, particularly Peter, explained in great detail the meaning of passages in the Hebrew Bible and how they explained Jesus' life and mission. The apostle Philip did the same with the Ethiopian eunuch. Later, Paul and Barnabas also explained the Jewish scriptures in synagogues throughout Cyprus and what is now central Turkey.

The meaning for Christians today is that we, too, should be like the residents of Berea who received the Gospel message with great eagerness but "searched the scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (Acts 17:11).

(Continued on page 5)

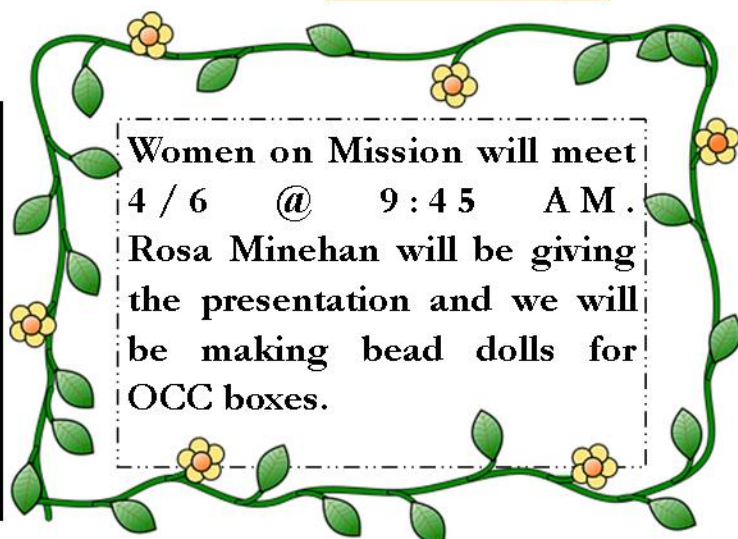




T-shirts
 Pants and Shorts
 Dresses and skirts
 Hats (any style: winter, baseball...)
 Scarves, gloves, mittens
 Socks, shoes, flip flops
 Bandanas, sunglasses
 Rain ponchos
 Shoelaces
 Silly dress up:
 Animals masks
 Superhero capes
 Princess tiaras



Brotherhood--1st Saturday of the month @ 9 AM
 (Contact Dean Irwin 240-682-5397)
ROMEO'S--1st Tuesday of the month (Foster's Grill @ 11:30 AM) (Contact Dale Gordon 301-542-4842)



Women on Mission will meet 4 / 6 @ 9 : 4 5 A M .
Rosa Minehan will be giving the presentation and we will be making bead dolls for OCC boxes.



Ladies of the Light Bible Study--every Tues @ 10 AM
 (Contact: Carolyn Shaffer 301-392-3882)

Women on Mission--1st Thurs of every month @ 9:45 AM
 (Contact: Carol Gill 301-934-9615)

Connect Bible Study--1st & 3rd Thurs of the month @ 6 PM
 (Contact: Karen Law 301-893-3515)

Widow's Support Group--Every 3rd Fri of the month @ 12 PM
 (Contact: Diane Sheffe (240-901-2982) or Sally Sexton (301-934-9317))

Upcoming Mission Opportunities:

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Annie Armstrong offering continues through the end of April.

Upward Games Bake Sales: During all Upward Games- monies help offset OCC shipping costs- If you would like to donate bake goods for us to sell, please contact Jill Hancock or Jennifer Miller.

OCC boxes: Look for clearance items from holidays, winter items, etc to purchase items that will fill boxes.



(Continued from page 3)

#4. They took care of the sick. A major component of Jesus' mission on earth appears to have been healing. Twenty-five of the thirty-seven miracles attributed to Jesus in the New Testament, or fully 65 percent, are miracles of healing.

One of the first things the gospel of Mark says about Jesus is that He was a healer:

[Jesus] healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. Mark 1:34

What is less well known is that Jesus commanded His followers to do the same.

According to Matthew's account, Jesus called His twelve apostles and instructed them to heal "every disease and every affliction" (Matthew 10:1). In Luke, Jesus sends out seventy-two of His disciples as emissaries of the kingdom, instructing them specifically to *heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'* — Luke 10:9, NIV

The very first miracle recorded in the Acts of the Apostles after Easter is the healing of a lame beggar by Peter who was seated on the steps leading up to the Beautiful Gate, probably the spectacular bronze doors donated to the Temple a few years earlier by the Alexandrian craftsman Nicanor.

"I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you," Peter told the man. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" Throughout the rest of Acts, Peter and the other disciples are engaged in a healing ministry, for example through the healing of Aeneas and the resuscitation of Tabitha (Acts 9:32-40).

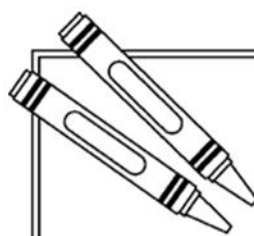


Ever since, Christians have been involved in medical mission work – building hospitals, establishing medical organizations such as the Red Cross. The original hospital for the sick in Paris, France, the Hôtel-Dieu, first opened in AD 651 and still operates today in the very same location.

We should remember that medical missions have been an essential part of the Christian witness from the very beginning.

#5. They invited others into their fellowship. In the 20th century, some New Testament scholars claimed that Jesus never intended to launch a movement or form a fellowship. But that is precisely what the earliest Christian records say. The Gospels and the rest of the New Testament are emphatic that Jesus instructed His followers to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). (Continued on page 7)









K i d s C o R n E r



Just for KIDS

An Easter Message

Mary went to the tomb and found it empty! Find the words that an angel spoke to her. Write the name of each picture on the lines. Transfer the letters to the other spaces to find the verse.

1 2 3 4 5
 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
 15 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24 25 26 27
 28 29 30
 31 32 33 34
 35 36 37
 38 39 40 41
 42 43 44

" 18 42 14 31 3 14 17 7 13 3 17 34 15 17 20
 8 42 10 16 25 38 25 23 30 36 35 3 23 29
 44 42 19 31 27 43 31 ? 42 19 25 4 23 3 9
 42 10 24 19 ; 42 28 42 36 5 24 25 5 27 23 ! "

Luke 24:5

Answers: cross; butterfly; flower; sunrise; egg; duck; man; vine; hat. "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!"

April's Memory Verse

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

UPWARD
practice began
March 27th
and games will
start April 8th.
Come out on
Saturdays @ 9
AM to support
the teams!



There will be an Easter Egg
Hunt on April 23rd @ 4 PM and
then a church dinner @ 5 PM.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

is scheduled for July 17-21!!

9AM-12PM for Pre-K to 5th grade

6-8PM for 6th-12th grade

Contact Hannah Pankhurst 240-681-1132,
pankhurstpatsy@gmail.com

THEME:





April 16th 6:30 PM:
Messiah in the Passover
 demonstration by The
 Chosen People ministry.
 A love offering will be
 taken and a table display
 set up.

April 23rd @ 4:00 PM:
 Easter Egg Hunt will be
 held before church
 dinner @ 5:00 PM

April 27th @ 9AM:
 The Visitation Ministry
 will restart. Contact
 Carol Gill (301-934-9615)

April 29th @ 6:30 PM:
God Loves You Tidewater
 Tour with Franklin
 Graham @ the Charles
 County Fairgrounds in



September 2nd:
 Day trip to see
Moses at the
 Sight and
 Sound Theater.

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From the very beginning, it appears, this was Jesus' intention for His followers. Jesus' first challenge to the Galilean fisherman Simon bar Jonah, for example, was for him to follow Jesus and He would make him "a fisher of men."

Indeed, that was one of Jesus' metaphors to explain what the kingdom of God is like, a fishing net. "The kingdom of Heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind," He told a crowd one day on the lakeshore.

Within weeks of Easter, then, Jesus' followers were inviting everyone who would listen into their fellowship. According to Acts, after Simon Peter's sermon to the crowds gathered at Pentecost, "about three thousand" people joined the community in a single day.

This is surprising because in the ancient world religious groups were often exclusive.

The sociologist Rodney Stark points out that the phenomenal growth of the Christian movement can be explained, at least partially, by the welcoming attitude of Jesus' followers towards groups scorned by other religious movements, such as women, slaves, Samaritans and foreigners.

Stark estimates that the Jesus movement grew at the rate of about 40 percent per decade, from an initial 1,000 followers to roughly 217,000 followers at the end of the second century, to almost 34 million in AD 350, to 2 billion today.

Not surprisingly, the rapid growth of the Jesus movement was also due in large part to the other steps the disciples of Jesus took after Easter – their willingness to patiently answer the skepticism of their critics, break bread with strangers, search the scriptures and take care of the sick.

These, more than anything, proclaimed to the world what Jesus and His followers were all about. It is something worth pondering in our secular world...

Hutchinson, R. 5 Surprising Things Jesus' Followers Did After Easter. faithgateway.com.
<https://faithgateway.com/blogs/christian-books/5-surprising-things-jesus-followers-easter>.



Catherine Foundation Tea will
 be held soon--date TBD--keep
 an eye out for more info.

Fiction

Fire in the Night by Linda Byler (F BYL)

Davey's Daughter by Linda Byler (F BYL)

Children's Fiction

The Halfhearted Vikings by Doug Peterson (F PET)

The Spaghetti Western by Doug Peterson (F PET)

Good Knight, Duke by Ron Kidd (F KID)

Hats Off to Lyle by Ron Kidd (F KID)

Larry Lights the Way by Mary Murray (F MUR)

The Pirates that Usually don't Do Anything by Cindy Kenney (F KEN)

A Knight to Remember by Cindy Kenney (F KEN)

Children's Nonfiction

Noah and the Ark by Kelle Pulley (CNF 222.11)

Miracles of Jesus by David Miles (CNF 232.9)

Juvenile Fiction

Search and Rescue by Colleen Coble (JF COB)

Lost and Found by Colleen Coble (JF COB)

DVD

The Treasure Map (DVD)

The Printing (DVD)

Sabina (DVD)

Library News

What's New and on the Shelf

--Bob Mathews



Join us 7 AM in the Healing
Garden at church for an Easter
Sunrise Service on 4/9.

Staying Afloat by Jennifer Miller



What is your anchor? What keeps you stabilized amid adversity? What keeps you balanced and focused, moving in the right direction? Your foundation. Large sailboats must have more weight below the water line than above. It's called ballast, which is simply a counterweight, but without it the boat would roll over and capsize.

And how do you keep your heart right and your head straight in the midst of adversity? What enables you to successfully execute down the stretch when the game is on the line? Your focus. Even though Goliath was nine feet tall and a champion warrior, David never called him a giant. To David, Goliath was just a Philistine who was defying God (1 Samuel 17:26).

David relied on God for the victory. As a young shepherd, David had miraculously killed a lion and a bear to protect his flock. When it came time to fight Goliath, he remembered it was about God's power to deliver him (1 Samuel 17:37). David's purpose for fighting Goliath was not personal glory, but God's glory (1 Samuel 17:45-46).

David was able to stay "right-side up" even in the face of death because he kept his foundation and focus on the Lord's presence, power and promises, not the adversity in front of him. Your foundation and your focus will determine whether you stay afloat or capsize in rough seas.

Births IN THE CHURCH FAMILY



Madeleine Claire Tomasevic
born to Dario & Angeline
January 8, 2023 @ 5:10PM
6lbs, 13oz, 19" long



Cooper Reed Duehring
born to Douglas & Skylar
February 22, 2023 @ 9:32PM
7lbs, 7oz, 21" long



Eliana Jubilee Lump
born to Gabe & Whitney
February 23, 2023 @ 2:34PM
7lbs, 7oz, 20" long

CONGRATULATIONS!

Is there something you
would like to see in the
Lamplighter?
Please let me know!
secretary@fbclaplata.org



OCC Spiritual Impact Story

~~There is a village that follows another religion and is totally closed to the gospel. Any attempt to enter it always proves futile. On several occasions, evangelists and pastors who dared to announce the Good News of the Kingdom there were confronted with an opposition— not welcomed and turned away with a roar.~~

But, a Pastor has learned that OCC is able to blaze a trail for the gospel in impossible places. He took part in a vision meeting and recommended a ministry team for training. The church received 200 gifts to evangelize the children of this village. Having spent time in fasting and prayer, the pastor and his team received approval from the village leaders to distribute the boxes to the children. It was the first time that a servant of God was accepted in this village. It was a surprise to anyone who knows the mentality and wickedness of this village that swears by another religion. On the day of the evangelistic event, children and adults came out in large numbers to listen to the message from the church. The gospel presentation poster was used boldly and the message of salvation presented with wisdom and clarity by the team leader. Many children received Jesus as their parents watched and showed no opposition. It is as if the Spirit of God had tied the tongues of the parents to keep them silent. What joy when the children received their boxes!! Almost the whole village was stirred up. At the request of the pastor, the church was allowed to meet with the children to teach the *The Greatest Journey* (TGJ) lessons.

A child named Moussa who is enrolled in the TGJ was fervently interested in it. He regularly received and shared the Bible stories to his brothers using the Bible verse given to him by the teacher. He succeeded in drawing his brothers into the TGJ course, and they in turn received Jesus into their lives. Gradually, the children dragged their parents to church. Because they have seen the transformation of their children, the father and mother have become members of the church and travel several kilometers to commune with the brethren. What is still surprising is that the other villagers did not oppose the conversion of this family. This was unacceptable a few months ago. Like nothing else, OCC is a power that irresistibly penetrates the depths of the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Quote from RLT member: "With OCC, God upsets social habits, overturns traditions and customs, and acquires a people for Himself. With OCC, the village of Gongonbili is visited by God who breaks the norms. With OCC ministry, the impossible becomes possible by virtue of God. May Jesus continue to occupy the land."

*names have been changed



Birthdays



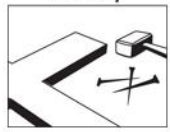



01 – Gloria Schneider
 02 – Joseph Windsor
 03 – Nita Elder
 08 - Janet King
 10 - Olive Perry
 10 -- Billie Justice
 11 – Ryder Mattingly
 14 – Jessica Miller
 14 – Ellen Nupson
 15 – Dale Gordon
 17 – Andy Gibson
 18 – Saverio Adamo
 20 – Abby Pankhurst
 22 – Carolyn Burgess
 22 – Dawn Burgess
 22 - Buddy Sanders
 27 - Jill Hancock
 29- Janet Doyle



Anniversaries

12—Jamie & Amanda Hepner
 12--Pastor Wendell & Brenda Stokes
 19 – Kevin & Heather Guiffre
 23 - Ruth & Bill Miller
 28 – Darrell & Nan Linville

April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Brotherhood Fellowship @ 9 AM 
2 Palm Sunday 	3	4 *Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM *ROMEO's @ 11:30 AM--Foster's Grille *Deacon's meeting @ 7 PM	5 FREE Food Distribution 5:00-6:30 PM	6 Women on Mission (WOM) @ 9:45 AM Connect-Ladies' Bible Study @ 6	7 GOOD Friday 	8
9  No PM service	10	11 Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM	12 FREE Food Distribution 5-6:30 PM	13	14	15 
16 <i>Messiah in the Passover</i> Presentation @ 6:30 PM	17	18 Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM	19 FREE Food Distribution 5:00-6:30 PM	20 Connect-Ladies' Bible Study @ 6 PM	21 Widow's Support Group @ 12 PM	22 
23 Easter egg hunt @ 4:00 PM & Dinner @ 5:00 PM 30	24	25 Ladies of the Light Bible Study @ 10 AM	26 FREE Food Distribution 5:00-6:30 PM	27 Visitation Ministry begins @ 9 AM	28	29 Franklin Graham in La Plata @ 6:30 PM <i>God Loves You Tour</i>