

**Faith is Not Always about Certainty. Faith is about *Trust* in the Face of Uncertainty.**

"Frederick Buechner posed a question some years ago when he asked: 'Why doesn't God send us a sign to dispel all our doubts, such as a message in the sky, written by the re-arrangement of the universe, with suns and moons to dot the "i's" and cross the "t's", so that the night sky would read, "I Am God! I Really Do Exist!"' "

So began the sermon by the Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander Sunday, about Thomas' delayed confession of the risen Jesus as Lord and God, because of Thomas' absence when Jesus earlier appeared to the other disciples.

This text is not a condemnation of Thomas for his asking for the same evidence the other disciples had been given; instead, Pastor Thelander said, this text isn't primarily about Thomas, but is instead "a pronouncement of blessing for those (like us) who believe without" our seeing the physical evidence first hand. "Ultimately, this text is not about Thomas; it's about us!" Pastor Thelander said.

"Many of you this morning may be here and you may be facing something in your lives where it would be wonderful if God would just give you a 'sign'. . . . But faith, dear ones, is not always about certainty; faith is about *trust* in the fact of uncertainty. 'Blessed are those who have not seen, and believe anyway.'

"If you are here today and you are hankering after some sort of 'sign' from God that will provide you with absolute certainty, I want to offer you this challenge: I want you to look at the lack of certainty in your life not as a hindrance, but as an invitation to blessing. Look on it as an opportunity to learn to *believe* what you have not yet been allowed to *see*.

"This is not easy. It requires courage, and grace, but on the other side of the experience you just may find yourself gasping for breath and saying, 'My Lord, and my God!' As we come to the Lord's Table . . . the bread and the wine are . . . Jesus' reminder to us that 'blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believed.'"



"The Conversion of Saul" by Buonarroti Michelangelo (1475-1564), Cappella Paolina, Palazzi Pontifici, Vatican, © Web Gallery of Art, is the subject of this Sunday's Acts reading about Saul's being struck down by a light from heaven. The highlight on the head of Saul and on the horse's head may symbolize the grace through which fallen man (here, Saul fallen from his horse) leaves the dim awareness of his natural state and is awakened to light and truth.

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Sundays

10:00 a.m.: Word & Table service

11:30 a.m.: Refreshments, conversation

11:45 a.m.: Post-service discussion.

6:00 p.m.: (First Sundays only) Evensong, tea, refreshments.

Thursdays: 5:30 p.m.: Evening Prayers. 6:00 p.m.: Singing & discussing hymns.

**Readings, 4/22:** Acts 9:1-19; Ps. 33:1-11; Rev. 5:6-14; John 21:1-14. **4/29:** Acts 13:15-33; Ps. 100; Rev. 7:9-17; John 10:22-30.

**Prayer Emphases:** Cameroon; Christian Reformed Church; Church of the Good Shepherd (APA), Orillia, ON, and the Rev. Ralph Wood, Vicar; Work and Witness programs; parishioners on Bruins Avenue.

**For the poor:** ground beef, chicken, bacon, fresh produce, canned fruits and vegetables, dairy products, cooking oil, pancake mix, syrup, spices, diapers, baby wipes, toilet paper, personal care items (soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream).

**From *The Romance of Orthodoxy*, by Fr. Homer F. Rogers, edited by Mary P. Tuck (www.RomanceOfOrthodoxy.com), a compilation of lectures given by Fr. Rogers to prepare persons for confirmation: "(T)he only way we can make saints is by developing in the person the idea that the most important thing in his life is the worship of God." (p. 342) "One of the most terrifying things about God is that He really does give us what we want." (p. 364) Do we want Him, so much so that the worship of God is the most important thing in life to us? "Man was made to go to God's party! You're all invited." (p. 116)**

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