



APRIL NEWSLETTER 2026 NEW SCANDINAVIA LUTHERAN CHURCH

“Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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.’” John 20:24-25

We all know that person; the one whose words don’t always come out as intended. The one who usually comes back with an “I’m sorry. That’s not what I meant.” Can you picture the person? They aren’t bad people. Sometimes they are spot-on in their words and sometimes they might wish they would have said something else.

Thomas was a disciple of great faith. He was the one that always seemed to want to know more and understand more deeply.

Jesus said “..... ‘you know the way to the place where I am going.’ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’” (John 14:4-5).

Thomas, Didymus being the Greek equivalent, was a loyal follower.

[Upon hearing of the death of Lazarus] “Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with him.’” (John 11:14)

But that’s not who we usually think of when we hear Thomas mentioned in the Bible. We label him “the doubter” because of one act; an act that I would consider a desire to understand deeper and one of a loyal follower. Thomas wants to know more, understand more, and have the same experience the others had. And what’s so wrong with that? Is it really fair to look on one experience as the defining factor in the life of Thomas?

Tradition has it that after the resurrection, Thomas traveled east, preaching the Gospel to the people in what is now India and later established The Church in upper Mesopotamia, what is now Turkey. This work couldn’t have been done by a doubter but one who is strong in faith.

I think about the people we tend to label, based on their words or their actions. I think about kids who are bullied based on a bad/mean joke or the shirt that doesn't match or whatever makes that child stand out. I think about the people I encounter at the grocery store or hardware store, and who I quickly determine who they are and create my own story, based on a look or how they react to me. We do that with people from other cultures, other faith backgrounds, other understandings. Truth be told, I found myself "judging" another person's faith a few weeks ago because I didn't think they had what it took to claim the title of "Christian." Do I really hold the power to decide who is and who isn't? No. And why should that bother me? My faith should not hinge on another's, should it? And yet, the human me finds the need to live within labels. It's not something I am proud of, but I am willing to say my truth.

Every year, on the Second Sunday of Easter, we hear the story of Thomas and his one stance that permanently labeled him a doubter, and I wonder why the men gathered to pick our text for each week felt it was important for us to hear this story every year. John tells his friends that he must touch Jesus in order to believe, but the truth is, the author of John never says that Thomas had to touch Jesus to proclaim, "My Lord and my God!" So, was his faith there the whole while? Did Thomas just want to have the same experience his friends had? Would you also like to have that chance? Does that make you a doubter?

Pastor Sara