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as the hands and feet of Christ*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

March 30 – April 1

“The First Importance”

By Rev. Keith Herron

What Is This?

This brief guide is intended for use individually, or in small groups. It's your chance to dive deeper into the issues raised in the weekend sermon and to connect a Biblical story with your daily life.

Revisit the Text

I Corinthians 15:1-11; <https://bit.ly/2Har1vR>

Big Ideas Raised

- The Easter story is told as if we're insiders who already know the ending as we hear the story. We hear the story of Jesus' arrest, trial, and execution already knowing about Easter morning. We know the stone will be in place for 3 days then it will be rolled away and Jesus will emerge.
- Just a few weeks prior to these events, Jesus arrived too late to save Lazarus from death. He arrived to visit Mary and Martha (Lazarus' sisters) three days after Lazarus had died. Lazarus had been in the tomb for 3 days when Jesus arrived. Jesus wept when he arrived, then asked a rhetorical question, "Do you believe this?" meaning, "Do you believe I can raise him from the dead?" No matter because Jesus called into the tomb for Lazarus to come forward.
- This is a foreshadowing story as it illumines Jesus' own experience in the tomb. Everything about Lazarus is true about Jesus.

Questions Meant to Dig Deeper

- Death is a big enough mystery. How about the resurrection? For 21st c. believers, how are we to come to terms with resurrection?
- While most everyone we know goes to the grave after death and does not escape death to return to us, is there something about Jesus' conquering of death that gives us hope? Other New Testament writers spoke of Jesus as "the first fruits," suggesting that there is a great mystery in death and beyond, perhaps there's an even greater mystery about conquering death.
- We hold this story with conviction and with questions. What do you believe about this? What would you wish to know in more detail?

Revisit the Sermon

For a recording or a manuscript of this weekend's sermon, please visit:

<https://www.stlucasucc.org/sermons-resources>