



## All Services Study Guide | April 19th

*This document contains a study guide for each of our services from this weekend*

**9am Classic: Suanne Camfield and  
10:45am Contemporary Services: Rev. Pete Stearns**  
(Matthew 27, Matthew 28)

### **9am Classic Service • Suanne Camfield, Director of Women's Ministries**

#### **Opener:**

- Following Suanne's prompting and reminder, "We wait for good things and we wait for terrifying things and we wait for uncertain things." What are some of the key things you are currently waiting for?
- How well do you wait? What would your family say?

**Narrative Thread of Scripture:** You might say we as people of faith are a waiting people, as is evidenced throughout the Scriptures. Suanne reminded us how we encounter individuals throughout the Scriptures who are either...

- Waiting for something to happen,
- Waiting for their circumstances to change OR
- They are very intentionally waiting on God to DO something in their lives.
- Think of these ways of waiting, what biblical stories come mind? What do those stories teach and remind you of for a life turned towards God in your waiting?
- Which way of waiting best describes you right now?

**How & In Whom:** Suanne shared, "I wonder if the difference between those that recognized Jesus and those that didn't was not the reality of what they were waiting for, but rather in HOW they chose to wait and in WHOM they chose to put their hope in WHILE they waited."

- How would you put this idea in your own words?
- What goes through your mind and heart when you reflect on this idea?

**Nehemiah's Way of Waiting:** Read Nehemiah 1. Suanne shares with us that when faced with some difficult circumstances about his home and beloved city of Jerusalem Nehemiah:

- Grieves what has been lost.
- Prays, fasts, worships, and confesses his sin.
- Confesses the sin of the nation and community of people.
- Takes time to remember God's promises and God's faithfulness throughout the generations.
- Comes up with an intentional plan on what to do with this burden God has put on his heart.
- Asks for God's provision in a very specific way, "grant me favor in the eyes of the King."
- How would you describe Nehemiah's waiting?
- Where was his focus? Highlight all the action words and what do you realize?
- How does your waiting compare?



**New Testament Church's Way of Waiting:** Read Matthew 28:19-20. Generations of people who have been called to WAIT on the Lord to return have not been people who have waited without hope. In fact the word WAIT in Scripture is often translated – to hope or to trust. It's this kind of waiting that is filled with hope and longing and expectation not because the generations were convinced that their circumstances would change, but because they had put their confidence and trust in the One who would NEVER change.

- What goes through your mind or heart hearing these transformative truths?
- How is your current waiting shaping you?
- How are you actively engaged in your waiting in the way Nehemiah or the early church was engaged in waiting?
- What is hindering you to wait, hope or trust like Nehemiah or the early disciples?

**Memorize one of the following this week:**

Psalm 130:5 • Lamentations 3:22-26 • Isaiah 40:28-31



## **10:45am Contemporary Service • Rev. Pete Stearns, Pastor of Family Ministries**

**Desperate “Holy Men”:** Read Matthew 27:57-66. Jesus is buried in a “borrowed” tomb. Then the chief priests and Pharisees get worried. “The last fraud will be worst than the first” (vs. 64).

- What drives these leader’s behavior?
- Have you ever been so desperate or fearful for an outcome that you have thought about forsaking your deepest beliefs? What happened?

**The Guards:** Let’s pretend we are like detectives. A seal is set to document movement of the stone if it occurs. Guards are put in place to witness any foul play and report it (in court if necessary). The guards were either temple guards or Roman soldiers, but whichever, they were fully aware of recent events. They were following orders but they knew the characters and the stakes.

- What were the guards thinking about this assignment? Go back and read vs. 45-46.
- Were they just doing another detail for the Captain, were they apprehensive that something might happen....what do you think their mindset was?
- Jesus had just been crucified; He was dead. Do you think anyone was concerned about the tomb?

**A Different Response:** Read Matthew 28:1-15. Compare the response of the guards to that of the women.

- We live cautiously in our measured world. Have you ever experienced something you could not explain? Did it inspire fear, or awe, or confusion—talk about how you felt.
- What part of this description of the guards resonates with you?
- What emotions did they both experience?
- How did they each respond to that emotion? Why?
- If the guards were the first to experience the Resurrection, then why is their story seemingly a footnote?

**How Can I Explain:** Read Matt 28:11-15. The guard was apparently more than a couple men. Some went to report “all that had taken place.” Notice the roles greed and fear played in the guards reactions and reporting.

- How do we report our encounters with God? Do we explain them away or admit to the mystery and accept it?
- Where in our world do we see the testimony of Christ being suppressed by greed?
- Where do you choose the treasure of the world over the gift of the resurrection?
- How do you see fear tampering with the reality of Christ’s gospel in this world?
- Where have you allowed fear to overwhelm your witness?



**Surely What You Meant to Say:** Our culture can be like the Chief Priests. “Let me tell you a better way to say that” more PC, more scientific, more believable. We don’t get offered money from culture as much as acceptance and credibility, but those can lead to money and cultural success.

- Do you constrain your narrative about your faith? What constrains you?
- Are you aware of pressures to conform that compromise what you want to say? Talk about it with the group and share your experiences.
- Pray with each other for wisdom about speaking with integrity and truth about the empty tomb.

**Choose Joy:** The message to the women at the tomb was “fear not,” “He is alive,” “go tell the others.” Mary and the other women were also afraid, but they chose to suppress their fear rather than their joy.

- When is a time that you have felt both fear and joy in the same moment?
- What did you choose to dwell on? How did that impact your experience?
- Where in your life do you allow fear to overwhelm your identity in Christ?
- In light of scripture, how can we choose to live in the Joy of resurrection rather than the fear of death and sin?

**We’d love to hear from you!**

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you or your small group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these study guides in your lives.

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