

Variety in the Gospels

The New Testament contains the earliest Christian writings, penned long before modern fact-checking and other saving amenities, in much different circumstances. The Gospels were likely written decades after Jesus' death, intended to grip their audiences, best experienced by straight-out listening. But it is remarkable just how much variety permeates them.

What were his final words on the cross? Mark evokes despair with Jesus, abandoned and alone, crying out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me", taken from Psalm 22. Matthew copies Mark's story. But Luke, who also often borrows from Mark, changes things to "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit!", having told the thief beside him, "today you will be with me in Paradise". John has Jesus say, "It is finished", shortly after he says "Behold, your mother!" to the "disciple he loved" below him. Each narrative is spellbinding, but such variation!



After the Resurrection, while Mark has Jesus say, "meet me in Galilee", earlier manuscripts end abruptly with the three women fleeing the empty tomb, "and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid". In an appended ending Jesus ascends to heaven immediately after telling the apostles in Jerusalem to "go into all the world and preach". Matthew makes sure Jesus does meet his disciples in Galilee, on a tall mountain, from which he ascends to heaven after telling them: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...I am with you always, to the close of the world." Luke drops the Galilee references altogether. He has Jesus appear to them only in Jerusalem and shortly after ascending to heaven near Bethany. In Acts the very same author says Jesus remains for 40 days, presenting "himself alive, with many convincing proofs", before rising to heaven "in a cloud". John has Jesus appear both in Jerusalem and afterward by the Sea of Galilee, never mentioning an ascension. Here he performs a last miracle from the shore, providing a haul of exactly 153 fish for a despondent fishing crew led by Simon Peter. Luke offers a similar story, but at the *beginning* of Jesus' mission, with Jesus being in Simon Peter's boat and invoking a miraculous catch. He then says to Simon and the others, "henceforth you will be catching men". How remarkable that an ending and a beginning should share so similar a story and be told by only these two writers. Perhaps Mark was right. Jesus did die alone. Others preferred to create their own narratives.

John uniquely captures Jesus' sentiment shortly before his ordeal: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you...By this all men will know that you are my disciples".

The followers of the Way never looked back as they took on the world.

A message from Emma Seamone

CLIMATE CHANGE PETITION

THINK CANADA IS A CLIMATE LEADER? A MAJORITY THINK SO..... BUT.... ACTUALLY, CANADA RANKS 58TH OUT OF 61 COUNTRIES THAT PRODUCE 90% OF EMISSIONS!

Everyone concerned about the climate crisis is invited to **sign a petition** urging the federal government to increase its emissions reduction targets and to be guided by an Advisory Group of scientists in planning its climate actions. The government is currently rolling out its emissions targets, its action plans for each sector of the economy, and its legislation (Bill C-12 “Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act”). These plans fall far short of meeting the level set by the IPCC in Paris in 2015. You can access more background information at:

<https://crednb.ca/2021/03/12/why-getting-to-paris-with-trudeau-doesnt-cut-it/> and you can access and sign the petition at: <https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-3221>

You will receive a follow up ‘No Reply’ email from the House of Commons. Open that email and click the link to confirm that it was you who ‘signed’ the petition. Jenica Atwin, MP for Fredericton NB, will present the petition in the House of Commons.

Please WATCH FOR AN EMAIL FOR the Home Worship Service and ZOOM Service– also on the website

<https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/>

Events:

Please visit our website for the bulletins for our ZOOM services and our At Home Worship along with any other virtual or in person gatherings <https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/>

Thursday, 15th April 7:30 pm Jane on Facebook Live

Friday, 16th April 10–11 am Zoom Coffee Break with Jane

Please email Wesley for ZOOM link; wesleyunitedstandrews@gmail.com

Sunday, 18th April 10 am ZOOM Sunday Worship

Please email Wesley for ZOOM link; wesleyunitedstandrews@gmail.com

Sunday, 18th April Home Worship

A Home Worship service provided as an alternative to In Person Worship on our website

<https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/>

Tuesday, 20th April 4–8 pm Highland Dance

Thursday, 22nd April 7:30 pm Jane on Facebook Live

Friday, 23rd April 10–11 am Zoom Coffee Break with Jane

Please email Wesley for ZOOM link; wesleyunitedstandrews@gmail.com

Sunday, 25th April 9:30 am Wesley United Church - In Person Worship

Sunday, 25th April 11:30 am St James Worship at Oak Hill Hall

Followed by Oak Hill Congregational Meeting

Sunday, 25th April Home Worship

A Home Worship service provided as an alternative to In Person Worship on our website

<https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/>

A Home Worship service provided as an alternative to In Person Worship [provided by email](#) or please see our website for at Home Worship and other virtual gatherings <https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/>

Please check our calendar on our website for any upcoming events or changes to events

<https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/events/>

Dedications are most welcome remembering, honouring, celebrating a special person, event or season! Please email wesleyunitedstandrews@gmail.com with your request. Thanks!

Photos or any other requests to go with dedications – favourite flower or season etc.....

Please send all announcements to: WesleyUnitedStAndrews@gmail.com State if you wish them to go on the Bulletin, the COOP, Facebook page, Website, or all four! (photos can be placed on all but the bulletin) Thank you!

PRAYER REQUESTS: may be given to our Prayer Circle by

1. contacting Barb King davebarbking@gmail.com
2. contacting Sharon Hannan retired@xplornet.ca or phone 466-1435
3. by asking any of us from Wesley/St James community to pass on a request

Sent to you by

Wesley United Church, 77 William St, St Andrews NB E5B1W8 and
St James Pastoral Charge, 731 Route 745, Oak Hill, NB E5A3C7

In case of pastoral emergency, contact Rev. Jane Doull

call 529-3474 text 467-1494 email jvdoull@gmail.com

Any other matters please contact Barb Sheen, Chair of the Worship Committee on 469-4631.

Office email: WesleyUnitedStAndrews@gmail.com **Website:** <https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Wesley-and-St-James-United-St-AndrewsOak-HillScotch-Ridge>