



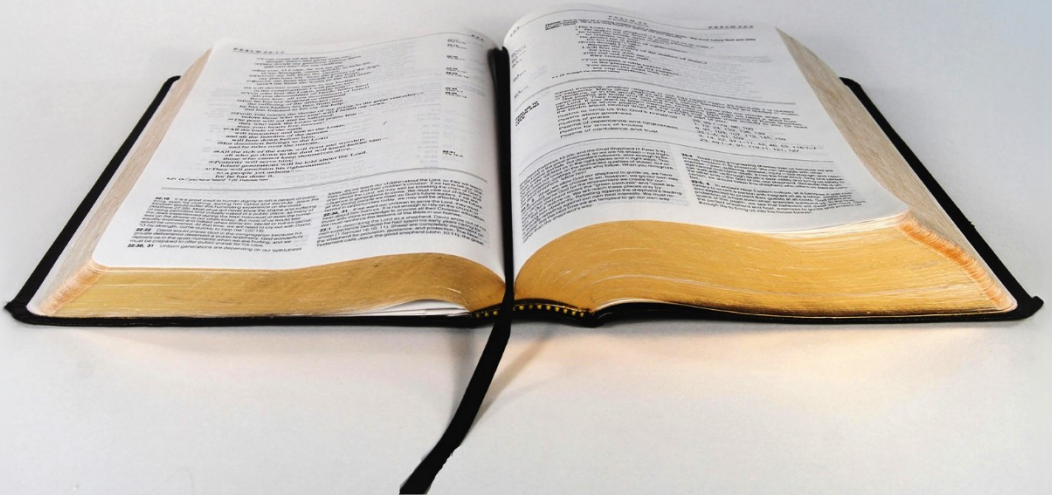
SanctuaryFirst

WILD JESUS
**CONNECT
GROUPS**

SanctuaryFirst

Ready to start
Your Daily Walk with God?

Let's dive into the Bible!



Download our App



What is a Connect Group?

A Connect Group is a small group who meet regularly to explore faith and Godly responses to life issues, growing in the things of God together as we go.

Anyone can host one using these materials and contact us for support and guidance. Online or in-person, our heart is that they offer a relaxed space for faith, friendship and fun.

We hope the resources and discussion points encourage, inspire, and invigorate you on your walk with God.



It might be the conversation follows the discussion as laid out or heads in a different direction, both are wonderful, and we hope the outline we offer here is flexible and supportive to engage with the Bible and our faith in fresh and vibrant ways as we make our way in the world as 21st century disciples exploring the wonders of life with Jesus!

What is involved?

Each week begins with an introduction and a 'seed to sow' conversation starter. These are open-ended prompts to inspire creative responses to the themes. Perhaps they will inspire you to write a song or a poem, or to paint, draw, move or explore! We imagine the material for each week would work for 90-minute sessions but feel free to adapt to your group!

Additional Resources



This booklet includes a poem and prayer that explore the wildness of Jesus to reflect upon.

On each page you will find a QR code that will take you to the online questions and accompanying introductory videos.

Enjoyed this material? Why not dive in further? There are more songs, videos, podcasts and blogs linked to this theme on the Sanctuary First website and App, have fun exploring it all!



Broken Seeds Aren't Broken

*Just a handful of broken seeds
buried deep
below the surface
wanting only a trickle
a little heat
just a glimmer
to break open and climb
in the meagre soil
that is a moment of your time*

*Broken seeds
lain undisturbed neath dead leaves
wanting only a drop
to surface
a kernel of truth
let loose
unbundling all that is within it
that is, if you've got a minute*

*For seeds need only a short message,
a look of recognition
a quick nod
an open door
to prevail...*

*From their vantage point
in the scattered tatters of past battles
quietly and from a safe distance
these seeds know
that a saving grace only takes an instant*

*Because in a little sunlight labour's pain mellows
and in the shadows these broken seeds dream of meadows.*

James Cathcart, Sanctuary First



The Theme:

Wild Jesus

Jesus defied expectations in the first century - refusing to be boxed in. His family, his friends, the establishment, the ruling regime, his loyal followers - all attempted to set limits on Jesus. And, this uncanny storyteller, teacher, and lover of food sidestepped all their attempts. In the 21st century people still try to box Jesus in and - just like in the first century - it's sometimes his most devoted followers that are doing it.

Sometimes we try to put Jesus in a box and only take him out every Sunday to wrap him up again afterwards...

But you can't box Jesus. You can't box God. The love at the heart of universe doesn't come with packaging. There is no gift-wrap option. We are on an adventure to discover and rediscover the real Jesus. The wild Jesus. The Jesus who helps people see potential in themselves and their world that they thought was written off.

Jesus brings transformation and new life - like many wild things in the world: the wild sea, and the wild wind, the wild roots and wildflowers - untamed and unchained from worldly ways and wild. This is Jesus who re-wilds our hearts!



Weekly overview:

- Week 1** Reliving the wonder of resurrection — our uncontainable, unlimited saviour's return.
- Week 2** Taking a walk with Jesus joining Cleopas and his friend as they head to Emmaus, and unexpected revelation.
- Week 3** Eating with Jesus on the beach, reflecting on what it means to catch on to his mission while we munch!
- Week 4** Contemplating all the different ways Jesus meets with us.
- Week 5 Turning our eyes to wild heaven as Jesus blesses us.



Prayer

Jesus,

We dare to believe in the things you spoke about:

Your love for us

Your love for those around us

The hope of eternity.

We dare to believe in heaven on earth

In the light breaking through

In justice made new

In your love for us.

You take us and meet us where we are able and us to have honest and open conversations with you.

You already know what bothers us, where we need reassurance, our wrestlings don't put you off us.

Instead, you draw us closer to you, holding us in your love and power, give us faith to understand.

Help us put away the mindset that we understand in order to believe.

Rewild us to honesty before you.

Amen.



**Rev Ruth Kennedy, Minister Sanctuary First,
Digital Ministries Advisor, Church of Scotland**



Week One: Wild Jesus

Wild Jesus! Beyond expectations, outside limits, without constraints!

We begin our theme talking to Jesus as we relive the wonder of resurrection — our uncontainable, unlimited saviour's return. What are our questions for Jesus about this wild story? And how can this wildness of the resurrection — of a love so wild even the tomb couldn't hold it — inspire us to live today?

Seeds to Sow

How can we be part of new life and re-wilding this week?

Read Luke 24: 1-12

Wild Jesus, Uncontainable!

The disciples dismissed the tale as wild gossip. But this wild gossip was true!

What questions do you have for Jesus about this moment?

Read John 20: 18-23

Wild Jesus, Unlimited!

Locked doors, and nerves rattling with fear, are not able to hold Jesus back.

What situations this week could we invite Jesus and his words of peace into?

Read Matthew 8: 18-22

Wild Messiah!

What does it mean to us that we have such a wild messiah? One who back then couldn't be contained by a building, and who still can't be constrained by walls or a roof today!

Jesus, we want to know what your wild life means for ours!

How wild is our faith?

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Week Two: Wild Walking

This week we will take a walk with Jesus, joining Cleopas and his friend as they head to Emmaus... and unexpected revelation.

There are things that we learn from talking to Jesus, to coming to Jesus in prayer, and there are other things we learn as we journey beside Jesus — going somewhere together. If last week we were face to face with Jesus, here we are side by side looking out at the wild open road ahead together.

Seeds to Sow

What walks could you have with Jesus this week?

Read Luke 24: 13-27

A Wild Saviour by our side

This story catches us off guard, what is Jesus up to, why is he holding back?

Jesus's first action here is simply to fall into step with the disciples in their grief and confusion and walk with them in that. And then he throws Cleopas and his pal a curveball. The takeaway: walks with Jesus can get wild...

What do you notice in this story? What's been your experience of Jesus walking along the road with you?



Read Isaiah 61

A Wild Saviour, bringing transformation.

Here we interrupt the walk to hear a reference from Isaiah, perhaps part of the Scripture Jesus was discussing on the road to Emmaus.

Righteousness and praise springing up like wild flowers!

Looking at our world and the societies, and communities we live in — what dusty dry roads do you see the world travelling in? Where do we see places in need of renewal and transformation?

What would it look like for Jesus to transform arid, parched land (both literally and figuratively) in our neighbourhoods, into meadows of wild flowers? Vibrant praise springing up!

You could stop and pray about it as a group just now.

Read Luke 24: 28-32

A Wild Moment!

After all the words on the road, it is an ordinary action, a simple gesture — which opens their eyes in a sudden wild moment of revelation. Are there certain revelations of Jesus that are only possible to glimpse when we have walked a little way with him?

Jesus, we want to know what your wild life means for ours!

How wild is our faith?



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Week Three: Wild Eating

This week we are eating with Jesus on the beach, reflecting on what it means to catch on to his mission while we munch!

Food is not incidental to life with Jesus, it's a hugely important part of it!

Seeds to Sow

How can we eat with Jesus today?

Read John 21: 1-14

Catching on!

If you were on that boat, how would you feel? You've been out all night and some distant figure on the shore suggests you just try the other side!

How do you respond to Jesus offering you breakfast on the beach?

And also it's important to remember that sometimes in life we don't catch a thing.

Imagine this chapter ended at verse 3. Sometimes a given chapter in our lives ends at verse 3. Before rushing on to the miraculous catch let's remember the empty nets and weary arms hauling them. Let's remember empty cupboards and empty shelves. Jesus joins us in our eating, but also in our hunger, knowing himself keenly what it is to hunger and thirst.

How can we remember those with empty nets and empty cupboards this week?



Read John 21: 15-19

Catching a break!

You could say Peter catches a break. Three times he denied Jesus and now he gets three times to return to him. And note, all this happens *after* breakfast.

Jesus ate with Peter and the rest before this encounter. Jesus cares about feeding us body and soul.

Jesus used food here intentionally. How could you use food to bless others this week?

Read Isaiah 55: 1-7

Catching a bargain...

Free food! Eating is not simply a metaphor in the Bible — it is a central part of restoration and revival. Our Wild Jesus wants to eat with us — for nourishment is at the heart of the central message of God's grace!

What's the good news here you would share with others?



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Week Four: Wild Encounters

Meeting with Jesus 2,000 years ago — and meeting with him today— can lead to wild outcomes!

Jesus crossed social boundaries and brought disparate people together. Jesus bust out of all the boxes people tried to put him in. And while we might feel smug, feeling like we know Jesus better, are we not sometimes guilty of putting Jesus in a box too? Of limiting who we think Jesus meets with, and how they meet? Are we only comfortable with a Jesus on our terms, who never surprises us or stretches us? Or are we up for meeting the real Jesus, the wild Jesus, who loves so compassionately and deeply?

Seeds to Sow

Are there any ways we have been surprised by Jesus in our lives?

Read Matthew 9: 10-13

Wild Dining!

Here we see those on the margins able to get comfy while those in the establishment start feeling uncomfortable.

What do we learn from God here? What do we see God doing? How comfortable are we sitting alongside those on the margins?



Read Luke 5: 12-26

Wild Healing.

Jesus's acts of compassionate healing — helping others physically and spiritually — caused consternation and uproar.

What's your thoughts about the healing in this passage?



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Read Luke 19: 1-10

Wild Hospitality.

Jesus breaks protocol! He invites himself round to the house of an unpopular and unloved citizen — and in that very gesture Zacchaeus's life is transformed.

As a church we are called to be disrupters and stand up for those who are excluded. How do we find our voice challenging unfair and ungodly systems?



Week Five: Wild Blessing



In this our final week we conclude by looking up to the glorious wildness of heaven and asking Jesus for his blessing.

His blessing to appreciate this life and this world given to us. His blessing to know him and grow with him — like the irrepressible wild flowers we are called to be.

Seeds to Sow

How can the wildness of Jesus's generous, selfless love re-wild our souls with compassion for the world around us?

Read Luke 24: 50-53

Wild Blessing!

"...he lifted up his hands and blessed them." The wildness of Jesus is not the wildness of chaos, or whirlwind or wreckage. It is the wildness at the heart of real vibrant, peace and blessing.

Our Wild Jesus is not volatile, or erratic, or unstable. He is wild like a tree is wild — constant, steady, providing nourishment and shelter for others.

So, let's unpack this moment. How come the disciples are praising God when Jesus has just left them? What does this tell us about the blessing of Jesus?

Read Acts 1: 1-11

Go wild!

“What you hanging around here for!? Why are you looking at where Jesus has *been*, rather than where Jesus is *now*?”

Do we sometimes need the same nudge? Are we sometimes inclined to look to where we last saw Jesus rather than to the new place Jesus might be calling us? If so, how can we ‘re-wild’ our imaginations to see where Jesus is leading us next?



Read Acts 1: 12-14

Wild party!

What does it mean to us that we have such a wild messiah? One who back then couldn't be contained by a building, and who still can't be constrained by walls or a roof today!

Jesus, we want to know what your wild life means for ours!

How wild is our faith?

A new type of community forms around Wild Jesus! People of different backgrounds drawn together through his wild legacy. You can bet there was food and partying as the ragtag bunch set about changing the world.

How can we rediscover this spirit of Godly and gentle wildness?



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SanctuaryFirst

Your Daily Walk with God

Sanctuary First is a vibrant, online worshipping community of the Church of Scotland. We are passionate about exploring new ways for people to connect with God, the spirit, and one another as a digital church.

In a busy, overwhelming digital world, we want to give you the opportunity to pause and draw breath - to take a moment...

We are excited to explore creative ways of using the internet to wrestle with and grow in our faith — to learn, celebrate, and find solace.

We aim to be a resource for the wider church and a fresh way to engage with Christianity for those who are unfamiliar or unused to church.

Everybody is welcome. Whoever you are, wherever you have come from, we hope you can find a little sanctuary here.

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