



**Theme Resource Pack**  
**Easter/April 2024**  
**(31 March - 4 May)**

## Introduction

This month we will be talking to, walking with, eating, meeting, and being blessed by Jesus our Wild Messiah! 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. So this Easter, having leapt after God, leaping with one another and 4 Bible leapers, we want to land our leap next to Jesus. The real Jesus. The wild Jesus. The Jesus who helps people see potential in themselves and their world that they thought was written off.

Like many wild things in the world — the wild sea, and the wild wind, the wild roots and wild flowers — Jesus brings transformation and new life.

Let's meet the real Jesus. The Jesus that re-wilds our hearts!

## Overview

Our theme is divided into five weeks. Each one focuses on a different way we interact with Jesus. In the first we will be talking to Jesus as we relive the wonder of resurrection — our uncontainable, unlimited saviour's return. In the second week we will take a walk with Jesus joining Cleopas and his friend as they head to Emmaus, and unexpected revelation. In the third week we are eating with Jesus on the beach, reflecting on what it means to catch on to his mission while we munch! The fourth week has us contemplating all the different ways Jesus meets with us and in the final week we turn our eyes to wild heaven as Jesus blesses us.

## Format

Every month we have a God-given theme delving into different aspects and areas of faith. Over the course of 2024 these themes connect and take us on a faith journey out into the wonders of life with Jesus. Our themes shape our Daily Worship, Sunday Live streams and all sorts of other creative things we get up to! It is broken into four sections that focus on a different topic each week. The weeks run Sunday - Saturday and each has a series of daily Bible readings and prompts for reflection.

## Wild Jesus! (Week 1, 31 March)

**Introduction:** 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?

**Setting the scene:** The stone rolled away, new flowers growing in the garden of resurrection.

**Seeds to sow:** How can we be part of new life and re-wilding this week?

- 1. 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?
- 2. 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?
- 3. John 20: 24-29 Wild Jesus, Sensible Thomas** Most of us have had conversations like this with Jesus, "No, I'm not willing to make the leap." How do we talk about our doubts with Jesus?
- 4. John 20:30 Wild Jesus, Tip of the Iceberg** Even the Bible can't contain Jesus! What questions do you have for Jesus about the untold stories? And what untold stories is Jesus part of today?
- 5. Genesis 1: 26-27 Wild Legacy I** So, let's rewind, not just to John 1 but to Genesis 1! To this plural here: in *our* image... God talking to God — God talking to Jesus! Today let's talk to Jesus about the wildness of the Trinity.
- 6. Revelation 22: 12-14 Wild Legacy II** Alpha to Omega. Now let's talk to Jesus about the breadth and depth of his love that transcends time and space.
- 7. Matthew 8: 18-22 Wild Messiah** What does it mean to us that we have such a wild messiah? Who couldn't then and *still* can't be contained by a building, by walls, by a roof! Jesus, we want to know what your wild life means for ours.

## Wild Walking (Week 2, 7 April)

**Introduction:** 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.

**Setting the scene:** A long dusty road.

**Seeds to sow:** What walks could you take Jesus on this week?

- 1. Luke 24: 13-16 A Wild Saviour by our side.** 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.
- 2. Luke 24: 17-27 A Wild Saviour asking questions.** This story catches us off guard, what is Jesus up to, why is he holding back? And then he catches Cleopas and pal off guard too! The takeaway: walks with Jesus can get wild!
- 3. Isaiah 53 A Wild Saviour, able to bear our burdens.** Here we interrupt the story with two references from Isaiah, perhaps parts of the Scripture Jesus was discussing on the road to Emmaus.
- 4. Isaiah 61 A Wild Saviour, bringing transformation.** Righteousness and praising springing up like wild flowers!
- 5. Luke 24: 28-29 A Wild Invitation!** "...as if he were going farther." And in that moment, suspended in time, Cleopas (or his pal) blurt out the invitation! Now, are we inviting Jesus to journey with us and rest with us in our lives?
- 6. Luke 24: 30-32 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?
- 7. Luke 24: 33-35 A Wild Discovery!** It's growing late and they have walked a way and yet immediately they got back up on their feet! They've made a wild discovery. What wild discoveries have we made about Jesus and where have they led us?

## Wild Eating (Week 3, 14 April)

**Introduction:** 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!

**Setting the scene:** A beach campfire.

**Seeds to sow:** How can we eat with Jesus today?

- 1. John 21: 1-3 Catching nothing.** Sometimes 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.
- 2. John 21: 4-6 Catching fish.** How would you feel if you'd been fishing all night and some distant figure on the shore asked if you've tried the other side of the boat? It's a wild suggestion! You might well be feeling *hangry!* (hungry + angry!)
- 3. John 21: 7-9 Catching on.** The lightbulb moment. Simon Peter catches on and there's zero hesitation, all the fish in the world aren't worth the few that are sizzling on that campfire.
- 4. John 21: 10-14 Catching a bite.** We could imagine Jesus saying these words, "Come and have breakfast" to us each morning, inviting us to start the day with him.
- 5. John 21: 15-19 Catching a break.** 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 renewal. Jesus cares about feeding us body and soul.
- 6. John 21: 25 Catching the uncatchable.** We can begin to catch on, but Jesus is too wonderful to be 'caught' by our limited understanding. Even the Bible can't contain Jesus. Instead the Spirit invites us to delve ever deeper and ever wider with our Wild Jesus
- 7. Isaiah 55: 1-7 Catch a bargain...** Free food! Eating is not simply a metaphor in the Bible — it is a central component 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!

## Wild Encounters (Week 4, 21 April)

**Introduction:** 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?

**Setting the scene:** A noisy table full of guests.

**Seeds to sow:** Are there any ways we have been surprised by Jesus in our lives?

- 1. Matthew 9: 10-13 Wild Dining!** Here we see those on the margins able to get comfy and those in the establishment feeling uncomfortable.
- 2. Luke 5: 12-26 Wild Healing.** Jesus's acts of compassionate healing — helping others physically and spiritually — caused consternation and uproar.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Matthew 17: 1-13 Wild Mountainside.** It's a wild moment for sure, but Jesus says to his disciples "Don't be afraid."
- 5. Matthew 26: 6-13 Wild Worship.** Wild? Wasteful? Wacky? Wonderful?
- 6. Romans 11: 16-18 Wild Shoots!** Wild shoots still need deep roots!
- 7. Matthew 28: 16-20 Wild expectations!** A wild mission begins...

## Wild Blessing (Week 5, 28 April)

**Introduction:** 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.

**Setting the scene:** A meadow wild with vibrant colours.

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

- 1. 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 — the vitality of life and love itself.
- 2. Acts 1: 1-5 'Previously on Wild Jesus...'** The Book of Acts acts as a sequel to Luke. It begins almost like the pre-title sequence of a drama you've been binge watching. Weaving through the Bible are threads of continuity, the wildness of Jesus is not the wildness of something volatile and erratic and unstable. Jesus is not wild in the sense of being inconsistent or unreliable. He is wild, because he can't be tamed.
- 3. Acts 1: 6-8 Wild not tame.** We can't put Jesus on the clock. Jesus is not limited by space and time!
- 4. Acts 1: 9-11 Go wild!** What you waiting for? Why are you looking at where Jesus has *been*, rather than where Jesus is *now*?
- 5. Acts 1: 12-14 Wild party!** 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 gentle wildness?
- 6. Ephesians 3: 14-21 Wild hearts.** May Jesus re-wild our hearts!
- 7. Revelation 22: 16-17 The wild water of life!** Let the thirsty come.