

Weekly Newsletter

5th May 2026



Holyrood
Church

Reflection: Being questioned

By Lorna Ferguson

“He asked her, ‘Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?’” (John 20:15a)

I am something of an information junkie. I love discovering new facts and hearing different perspectives on things, so I tend to ask a lot of questions. When I was in leadership on the Japan Field, I often had occasion to listen to people who were struggling, and at times had to look into difficult situations. One time, I was speaking with a short-term missionary about something that had happened, and she told me she had been warned by a senior missionary, “Lorna asks lots of questions!”

Asking questions is, of course, a good way to find out information and to understand a situation better. These days, if we want a quick answer, some of us might turn to AI—although its answers are not always reliable.

Last month, I was teaching the Sunday School children about the events of Easter Sunday following Jesus’ resurrection. As I read the accounts in Luke and John, I was struck by something I hadn’t noticed before: on each occasion where Jesus meets people after his resurrection, one of the first things he does is ask them a question. Let’s look at three of those encounters.

We find the first one in John 20:14–18, when Mary meets the risen Lord Jesus outside the tomb. The first thing he says to her is, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” These questions seem rather surprising. Mary is standing outside the tomb where Jesus’ body had been laid. She is not only grieving but is also confused, because his body is no longer there. Jesus, of course, understands exactly why Mary is weeping. He knows who she is looking for. So why does he ask her these questions?

The second encounter takes place later that same day, when Jesus meets two disciples on the road to Emmaus, as recorded in Luke 24:13–32. When Jesus joins them, the first thing he does is ask, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?” When they express surprise that he does not seem to know what has happened, Jesus follows up with another question: “What things?” Of course, Jesus knows exactly what they are talking about. Indeed, he understands better than anyone what happened in Jerusalem. So why does he ask these questions of the two disciples?

The third occasion takes place later that evening, recorded in Luke 24:33–53. The two disciples have returned to Jerusalem to tell the eleven that they have seen the risen Jesus. While they are still talking, Jesus himself stands among them. After giving a greeting of peace, he asks, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your minds?” Once again, Jesus knows the answers better than the disciples themselves. In this case, they do not even respond—at least, not out loud.

What can we learn from these three encounters? It is clear that Jesus is not asking questions because he needs information, nor because he is trying to understand the situation better. Rather, on each of





these occasions, he asks questions to help people reflect on what they have experienced and on what they are feeling. As he speaks with them, he does not simply accept their surface-level reactions. Instead, he invites them to go deeper, drawing out what is in their hearts and, at times, helping them to recognise their own misunderstanding or lack of faith. His questions are designed to help them be honest about what they are thinking and feeling, before gently redirecting them from a place of doubt and confusion towards faith and hope in him.

What are you going through at the moment? How are you feeling? Perhaps some of you are passing through a trial. Maybe some of you are feeling disappointed, frustrated, or even angry. We often think that we have questions for God, things we would like him to answer to help us to understand things better. But what if we paused and imagined Jesus drawing alongside, as he did in those Easter day encounters? What questions might he ask us? “Why are you sad?” “What has made you angry?” “What were you hoping for?”

If we allow Jesus to question us, we may find that he is helping us to be honest—not only with him, but also with ourselves. We may not get immediate answers, but as we spend time with him, as we take time to listen, we can trust that he is gently guiding us towards a deeper faith in him.

Perhaps this week, we might take time to sit with one of Jesus’ questions. What might he be asking you? And how will you answer?

Prayer Meeting – this Wednesday

We’re looking forward to hearing from Ryan and Kelly Akers at our prayer meeting **this Wednesday** from 7-8pm. The Akers serve with Campus Outreach in partnership with St Columba’s Free Church.

There will not be a meal before the prayer meeting because the church is being used as a polling station the following day. We’ll be meeting in the downstairs hall and refreshments will be served from 6.45pm.

Men’s Event – this Saturday



Our next men’s social event will be **this Saturday**. We plan to meet at Silverknowes Beach at 8am and walk along the beach front. There might also be a running group if anyone is keen!

Then we’ll have alfresco breakfast rolls, pastries and coffee/tea to finish. We will be finished by 10 - 10.30am. This event will be weather dependant.





Soup and Sandwich Lunch – this Sunday

We are looking forward to having a simple soup and sandwich lunch together after the morning service **this Sunday**. Please stay behind after the service and enjoy food and fellowship together. Contact liz@holyroodchurch.org if you have any dietary requirements.

Jim Aitken

We were saddened to hear of Jim's passing on Sunday 19th April while he has in Malawi. A Thanksgiving Service for Jim's life will take place in Holyrood on **Wednesday 13th May** at 12.30pm followed by light refreshments. Everyone is warmly welcome.

Women's Discipleship at Holyrood

We're excited to be getting together as women to study God's word and encourage one another. There are two options starting in May and both will run for a six week block -

- **Our Bible reading plan:** starts again on **Monday 11th May** and will be continuing with *Reading Between the Lines* by Glen Scrivener. We will be doing daily readings on our own and communicating in small WhatsApp groups throughout the weeks. New women are very welcome, you do not need to have been part of the reading plan before. For those who need a copy of *Reading Between the Lines* (the church will provide one) or if you have any questions, please contact annabarnard@gmail.com
- **Our in person studies:** will start again on **Thursday 14th May** in the church from 10.30am – 11.30am. We're going to be studying the book of Revelation (please don't let that put you off!) and will be using Nancy Guthrie's book *Blessed* as the basis of our study. There's no need to buy the book or do any homework, just come as you are and we'll enjoy time together in God's word. Coffee and scones will be provided! Please contact liz@holyroodchurch.org if you have any questions.

Missionary Update

We're looking forward to having the opportunity to hear from our missionaries and pray for them on Saturday 23rd May at 9am (on Zoom). Please keep that date free and come along! Zoom codes will be sent out nearer the time.





Cross Training Ministries – Men's Weekend in Keswick

Come and join us in Keswick from **29th – 31st May** as we hear about the urgency, the opportunity and the challenge of pursuing God together.

There will be excellent teaching, great singing, good fellowship, relevant seminars and some beautiful walks in the Lake District. Accommodation, which is a mixture of single and shared, is in the Skiddaw Centre run by Keswick Ministries. There is some capacity for day visitors so please get in touch.

The cost is £120 but if you book before 1st May 2026 there is an early bird discount of 10% using the code 'CT12'. Sign up here - <https://events.humanitix.com/https-www-xtrainingministries-com-cross-training-men-s-weekend>



Church Calendar

This week for your info and prayers:

- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting from 7-8pm (with refreshments from 6.45pm) and online.
- Saturday: Men's Event at Silverknowes Beach 8am -10am
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am – Joe Barnard preaching (live streamed)
 - Soup and sandwich lunch after the morning service
 - Evening Service at 6pm – Jon Gemmell preaching
- Monday: Baby and Toddler Group from 10am – 11.30am

