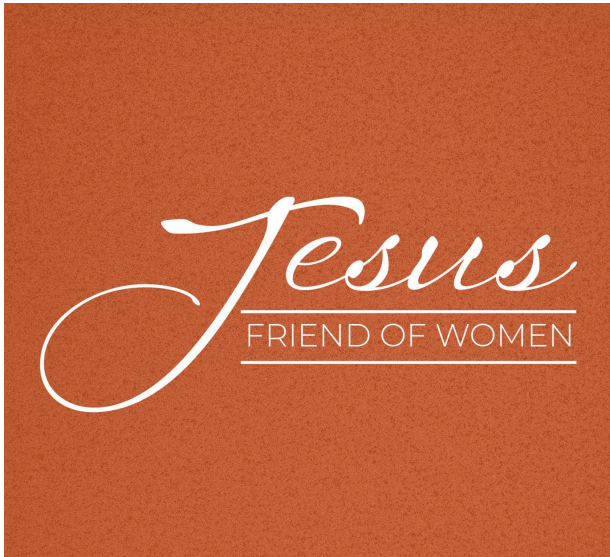


JESUS, FRIEND OF WOMEN

May 10, 2026

Preaching: Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



Luke 8:1-3

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him,² as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,³ and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

Mark 14:3-9

While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the

ointment on his head.⁴ But some were there who said to one another in anger, 'Why was the ointment wasted in this way?'⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.' And they scolded her.⁶ But Jesus said, 'Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me.'⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me.⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial.⁹ Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.

Matthew 27:55-56

⁵⁵ Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him.⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

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REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Women played a significant role in the gospels and in Jesus' ministry. We learn of faithful women, including those who supported and sustained the ministry with their resources, who not only traveled and ministered with Jesus, but also stuck around at his crucifixion when others fled.
 - a. What women have impacted your life, ministered to you, or inspired your faith?
 - b. Who and how have women supported and sustained you?
 - c. Are there any women from the bible or Christian history that inspire you?
3. The church has not always been a place of refuge, empowerment, or respect for women.
 - a. What have you experienced or observed about how the church has treated women?
 - b. How can the church, in the Spirit of Christ, be a "friend of women" in this day and age?
4. In Mark's gospel, on the brink of his arrest and crucifixion, Jesus

lifts up the audacious and generous faith of a woman who breaks open costly oil for Jesus. Though sadly un-named, Jesus proclaims she will be remembered for what she has done.

- a. What is it about her faith and action that Jesus commends?
- b. Do you find yourselves in agreement with the disciples and their concern for the poor?
- c. How do you reconcile that tension between the time, energy and resources it takes to worship God in Christ and also serve those in need?
- d. The disciples seem to think those are mutually exclusive endeavors—what do you think? In what ways could they be mutually reinforcing?