Good evening welcome, as we said at the beginning of the service that Lord, you have been our “dwelling place” in all generations to dwell together with you in God's presence. Well, this evening we're going to be in John chapter 4. And actually, we're going to be in John chapter 14 for the next few weeks. And it's a passage that starts with one verse. And this one verse here at the beginning of the passage is a very profound statement that Jesus gives. And it's going to be profound. It's going to frame what we look at for the next few days. And it's Jesus offering us these words.

He says to the disciples, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

Now, of course, we can read from the context that Jesus is speaking to his disciples and their hearts were troubled. He's speaking to them there in the middle of the upper room. Jesus had just told his disciples, he had just spoken to them and said, "I am going to leave you." And so their hearts were extremely troubled. Not just troubled because Jesus was saying that he was going to leave them, but that would be hard in any circumstances, but this was a time where everything was sort of coming to a head. So they were walking with Jesus for three years and Jesus was doing miracles and teaching and it seemed like his popularity was finally taking off. His reels were going viral. Everything he did was getting super popular. Everybody was starting to follow him. And it seemed like Jesse was or Jesse Jesus was about to come into his own. And so he was just rising. It was like Jesus was ready to just take his rightful seat there.

And also what was rising was the tension around his name. It said in a few chapters before in the book of Johns, found that the Jews then and there had plotted to kill him. And so this plot was thickening and this tension around him was thickening and he had just made the Sadducees which were the rich influential people really angry. So it seemed like all of this was coming to a head and they went to this Passover meal ready to have time with Jesus. Finally we can focus together and make our plans to take this kingdom. And it's right in that moment that Jesus says to them, I am going to leave you. And so you can just imagine the feeling that the disciples had in this room here when Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Now, whether you can identify with this feeling of the disciples, with this same level of intensity right now or not, I think we all know the feeling that they felt.

I think we all know what it means to feel loss and anxiety for the future, to feel like the world and the ground underneath your feet is shifting. Now, we weren't meaning to, but the other day I was hanging out with some friends And we got to talking and as dads in their mid-40s do sometimes we're talking about the economy and we were talking about AI and talking about cheery topic of layoffs and then we got into an even cheerier topic of socioeconomic struggles and how world leaders were responding and you could just feel the sense of the room start to go downhill a little bit and you say Jesse invite me to that party next time with you. Then of course I as a pastor said something about trusting and God, you know, it's going to be okay. We lean in on him, which was the right thing to say. But I truly wish that I had this passage open with me there as we had that conversation. John 14, let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.

This is more than just a trite feel-good statement. Ah, don't worry about it. It's all going to be okay. God's got it under control. But this is an invitation to face uncertainty and anxiety with this deep sense of peace and not just a deep sense of peace, but this deep sense of invitational peace where you can invite others into this peace that God has for you. And so whether you're here today and you're in that place right now where you feel really anxious about the future or your present, if you've ever felt that way in your past, if you're ever going to feel that way in your future, in other words, if you are human, then this series, this miniseries is for you. Jesus starts by saying, Let not your hearts be troubled. Then he gives them three reasons that they can have hope. The one that we're going to look at today is he says because I prepared a home for you. Next week we're going to say that because I am the way.

And in two weeks we're going to hear that I have given you a purpose and work to do. But for this week we're going to just look at this idea. Let not your hearts be troubled because I go to prepare a place for you.

So let me pray for us and then we'll open John chapter 14 together. *Heavenly Father, again let us echo these words. You have been our dwelling place. Let us dwell together with you. Let our souls and our hearts and our minds find a home together with you that transcends all the challenges and the movement of the world around us. Let us find ourselves fully in you. And in that may you grant us your peace. We know that only you can give this to us. So we pray that you grant us your peace and show us the truth from your word today. Amen.*

So again, we're in John chapter 14. And the first thing that Jesus points to for comfort when he says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." He says this in this next verse: "In my father's house are many rooms, dwelling places, and abodes." In the King James version, it says, "Many mansions. In my father's house are many mansions." How do you have mansions in a house? I don't know. Ask King James. If it were not so, would I have told you that I would go to prepare a place for you? That's the comfort that Jesus says, he says, "I will come again to come and take you there to be with myself." So the comfort that Jesus offers to trouble's hearts is Jesus starts by saying, "This world that you see, all of the tensions that you're feeling right now, the the politics and this this plot to kill me, disciples, and all of this excitement that you might feel about this kingdom here and now, this world that you see is not all that there is. In fact, this world that you see around you is not your final home. but I will take you to your real home and dwell there together with you.

And what Jesus is doing here is he's subtly pointing out to the disciples and to us the wiring of our souls. It's like he's opening up their souls and saying, "Look, I want to show you how exactly you are wired." And that is that you are all programmed to long for a true and eternal home. You're all programmed in your souls to long for a place that has ultimate peace and ultimate rest and ultimate flourishing and ultimate joy and ultimate life. Now for the disciples, part of their plan and part of the excuse me, part of the pain for their confusion was that they had a plan for Jesus. You can see from the conversation that they had that they were planning again for Jesus to take his place on the throne and to establish a home for them. In fact, they wanted to live in the palace with Jesus and sit at his right hand and his left hand.

And their confusion was in the fact that hey Jesus I thought you were going to establish home here and now for us and now you just said to us that you're leaving and so the pain that they felt was their expectations being shattered. Now of course they weren't wrong to expect this. In fact if you read through the whole Old Testament that there's huge themes that arise that the people of Israel really wanted a place to be a people together with the presence of God. And so and so you can look through the books of the Bible and see that there's this constant call to be a people in a place with God's presence. And so they weren't wrong for them to expect Jesus to do that for them. And they just wanted Jesus to do that right there in their right time. And what this is pointing to again throughout the whole Old Testament is that everybody is wired for this eternal home. Now, it's not just Israelites. It's not just the people of Israel that are wired for this home.

We are all wired for this home. We all have this longing within us for this place that provides us rest and peace in a place that we can finally dwell. I love how C.S. Lewis, he always puts it in a more eloquent way than I would. He calls it an inconsolable longing. As he talks about this inconsolable longing, he's drawing from different philosophers on this concept, this German word that you can impress your friends with called “Sehnsucht”, which is a sense of inconsolable longing. He says a stab of desire for something that you can't name that is triggered by beauty or memory or music or a particular quality of light. And he argued that this longing is not an accident and it's not even a cruelty, but this longing is actually a signpost that we would not long for the home that we were not made for. And so this ache that people feel in this zoo is actually an ache that points towards this answer that we have an eternal home that is different from this place.

Now, when you talk about home, of course, it's a complicated subject for me and my family. I was born in Zambia. I was raised in the DC area. I got to live in Cambodia for eight years. We have lived in Colorado now for six years, which we love very much. I spent a couple years in Mexico. I was having tacos with my wife at this place over here, Tia's Takaria, the other day, and there's just an authentic ingredient that they had that when I tasted it, I said, "Ah, in Mexico, I just felt like I was back back in Mexico and and my wife and I will talk about our longing sometimes to be in Cambodia , we loved our people and our friends and the place in Cambodia and how much we love DC and how much we love all of you and here in Colorado and there's this longing and sometimes this joyful heartache that we can't sort of have all three places in the same time at the same place. They're just not there.

And if you're ever somebody that can build your favorite home in your favorite place with the favorite people around you, you know that the world around you is constantly changing. And so you might establish it for a little while, but then kids grow up and they move away and maybe they can't afford to move back. Your neighborhood changes, the world around you changes. And if you ever want to rile up a bunch of Coloradoans, you can say something like this. Man, Colorado of 2006 was so much better than Colorado of 2026. Am I right? Yeah. In this world, we're grasping for this idea and this longing of home. This thing that we try to reach for and grab, but we can never seem to have for eternity where we finally arrive and we finally have our home, finally have our place. So Jesus is again uncovering for the disciples and for us

“Sehnsucht”, this idea that we were built for a different place and this lack that we sometimes feel, this pain that we might feel, this anxiety about trying to establish home but never being able to really grab a hold of It is actually our souls signaling for this home that God wants to bring us into. It's actually a signpost and a compass for us. And for clarity's sake, just very quickly, the home Jesus is pointing to is not us wearing robes like this and sitting on a cloud and playing harps, you know, and just sort of watching things float by. But it's the ultimate new heaven and new earth that he will remake. It's a dwelling of permanent goodness.

It's where it's where if you were to take the best that this world has to offer, the best experience you can remember, it's but a foretaste of what this home is. And so, if you can remember your most joyful moment that you've had in the last five years, this is just but a taste of what the Lord is offering you in your final and true home. If you can think of the most beautiful sunset that you've had or the feeling of when you've seen true restorative justice happen, happen or a moment that you've had with friends or family where you just sort of Have you ever had a moment where you just sort of want to capture it and not let the world change. You just want to live in that moment. That's just but a taste of the home that God is going to prepare for us. We were built for that home. Our souls long for that home.

The Book of Romans says that we groan together with creation for our adoption as sons, the redemption of the world together with the world around us because we were built for that home. This is what Jesus promises to go and prepare a place for us all to dwell in together with him. This is home sa. Now all this is true and good. This is really good and I hope we can take this and meditate on it. But what does this mean for us when we wake up on Monday morning or Tuesday morning and we go back into life and all of the things are pulling upon our hearts and our souls and our minds? What does it look like to take this idea that we were built for another home and use it to navigate this complex world around us? And Jesse, what about the statement in Jeremiah that you said we embrace at this church where Jeremiah tells the people, "While you're in the city, build homes, plant gardens, give yourselves in marriage, seek the good of the city." What about all that?

I want to offer you three points of focus for us as we take this idea of home, what we were made for, what our souls and our minds were made for, and we take it into the world together with us. As we build houses and plant gardens, and we work our jobs and we seek the good of the city, how can we take this holy longing, this “Sehnsucht”, how can we combine it with God's calling for us to be here and live in the real world? Three points of focus.

First is this. Let this idea of home, this idea that we're longing for home, give you a deep sense of security in a very liquid world. There is a sociologist and philosopher named Ziggmund Bowman, which I encourage you to look up on Google images because he is the epitome of it's almost like AI drew a philosopher with just giant white hair.

But he always had this commentary talking about the world in terms of what he called “liquid modernity”. That is this idea that nowadays nothing holds its shape, that jobs change, that job categories change, that neighborhoods change, that even identities feel like they're melting,

which of course you can see around us as you look at the world around us. Everything feels liquid. But the word that Jesus uses here, dwelling place, which the King James verse version uses mansions or abodes, is this word “*Monae*”. It means dwelling place. place. It's the same concept that the Psalm 90 that we read earlier says that God is your you are our dwelling place from before the mountains were created. You are our dwelling place. So this place that Jesus is calling us to focus our hearts and our minds on is this eternal dwelling place. It's a place of forever abiding and staying together with him. And it's a promise as to where we're headed.

And so that we can take this sense of this promise that Jesus gave us and use it to live in this world with a non- anxious presence and a sense of security where we can just sort of float through all the challenges in the world with us. Now, I remember going to my friend's house as they were doing a massive remodel and they live sort of like we used to live in Cambodia. There was dust everywhere and they had these big sheets up for this giant remodel and and they decided to stay in the house even though they were doing this giant remodel and they had this little heating pad or like to cook all their food which is like something that we used to use and they told me that Jesse we can stay in this house. We can put up with all of this mess. We can use this metal heating pad all because we know that we saw the drawings from the architect. We know what this house is going to be. And so for this meantime, we can live through it. We can live through all of these challenges.

Now, they were able to do that for a year and a half and a temporary. Just move out, guys. Anyways, they were able to do that for a year and a half. Just for a temporary house in a neighborhood that would change in a world and in a culture and a society that would change eventually. They were able to put up with all of that for that time in their house because they knew where they were going. They knew what their house would look like that would last just maybe a few decades at best. Imagine then the endurance and the peace that Jesus offers when he offers us an eternal home designed by the architect of all of life. We are a non- anxious presence in this world because we know our real home.

And so if you're here today and if mortgage rates are preventing you from buying your dream home and you feel anxiety about that or you just feel like the world is changing too fast and the community you established yourself in is so different than it was 10 or 15 or 20 years ago or even three years ago. If you feel like everything just feels so unsettled that it's dusty and I'm using a metaphorical hot plate to cut to cook all my food. It's okay to let those things bother you. By the way, it's not spiritual to just pretend there's nothing that bothers you. It's okay to let them bother you, but we don't let these things have control over our souls because we have a home. We have a dwelling. We have a promise. We have a place that we are going to. We live with hope and promise of a true home. And so, we can be a non- anxious presence while everybody else around us is anxious. We can sit with peace. to know that God has a promise for us.

Second, this promise of home, it helps us to shape our roles here and now. Our role in this life, our role in this life is not to build the most comfortable, the most perfect, the most utopian version of our own lives for our own gain. That's not our calling. That is not our role in this life. This is not a Christian goal. for us. Now, it's not wrong to build a comfortable house. It's not

wrong to seek to establish a place where your friends and family are living. It's not wrong to do all these things. These are good things to embrace the gifts that God has given us. But this is not our chief end. This is not why we are here. God has given us a greater and deeper vision for our roles in this world. Our role in this life is to be a window from the future from our future home into this present world to take all that is true in God's version of eternity and to be a window that shines through to that truth here in this reality.

The Apostle Paul put it this way. He said, "We are ambassadors for Christ as though God were making his appeal through us." More on this in two weeks and our purpose, but this gives us a sense of our role. Our role is to be a window into that next world, but to be present in this world here and now. So all the things that are true about this eternal home, justice and peace and goodness and kindness and generosity and joy and being able to embrace the beauty of the world, that's all true. It should be true shining through us because of God's presence and his promise in us. This is our role here on this earth. So again, feel free to seek comfort. Feel free to have fun. Go on vac. Live your lives. Embrace it. Live to the fullest. But know that this is not our primary call. calling in this world. Don't get lost in all the good things that this world has to offer and lose sight of our primary role that God has called us to to shine a light for his kingdom to be his ambassadors.

Final thought is this. This promise that Jesus gives us changes how we view this inconsolable longing, this “Sehnsucht” that C.S. Lewis was talking about. Now, I don't know about you, but our natural reaction when we feel this pang, this sort of uncomfortable feeling that we just want something more or better is that we sort of rush to fix it. For me, my rush to fix it is to just add another distraction, you know, scroll my phone a little bit more or just read something more or start a conversation about something else and sort of distract myself from this pang. For some people, it's a vacation. For some people, it's like, I just got to have this different house or I just got to have this different place. And again, it's not wrong to go on vacation and to have a different house. These are good things. But if Jesus is right. This restlessness isn't a problem to be solved in and of itself.

This “Sehnsucht” is actually something good because it's a signpost that points us to what we were created for, how our souls were ultimately programmed. So, I want to suggest to all of us that next time you feel this pang, and I would imagine all of us do at different times in our lives, next time you feel this pang, don't rush to cover it immediately. Don't rush to solve it right away, but actually meditate on it. Ask the Lord, Lord, what is this pointing to in my life? Ask the Lord to give you a purity of heart to seek the things that are above and not earthly things. So that we develop a depth of soul that is uniquely attracted to this world. Take the pangs you feel and offer them up to the Lord and have him show you what they're pointing to. in your own life. Now, I just want to end with this for all of us. Notice that Jesus doesn't say, "Stop being troubled. I order you not to be troubled."

But he says, "Let not your hearts be troubled." It's an invitation to let go of this frantic grasping for the home that we can try to control. And it's an invitation to trust him that his promises are truly better than anything that we can ever imagine. If it were not so, he says, what I have told

you is that I go to prepare a place for you. The one who makes this promise, Jesus, here in the upper room is the same one that a few hours later would go to trial and then a few hours later than that go to the cross to die for our sins so that we could be forgiven and so that we could have access to this eternal home that he does offer us the remade heavens and the remade earth. And so build houses, buy houses, plant gardens, love your neighbor. neighbors. Live near your friends. Live near your family. Seek the goodness of this world with everything you have. But don't do so with a desperate need to try to control to try to create your best life.

But do so in trusting God that he will provide all things for you. And as we do that, we can do so without desperate grasping and with a deep generosity towards others and seeking their best and the best for the world. Because we know we already have a true f. We already have a true home and the one who promises it to us is the one that is good and faithful. It will come to pass because Christ has promised this to us.

Let me pray for us. *Lord, we thank you that you meet us in our anxieties and our uncertainties and you don't tell us just get over it. But you invite us to trust you and you give us many promises among which is this idea that we do have a deep and eternal home together with you. That you are in fact our eternal dwelling place from the beginning to the end. So let our hearts find rest in you. Guide us as we seek you, as we seek to honor you in all things. Give us a heart to see those around us. Help us to live with this sight of eternity in our lives. Let that give us a peace that lets us walk through any challenges and anxieties we may have. Be close to us. We pray in your great and holy name. Amen.*