



## **The Third Sunday of Easter – The Emmaus Road Recognising Jesus**

We take a breath and come intentionally into God's presence

The Lord be with you: **And also with you.**

Holy Spirit draw us close and minister your grace to us. May we recognise you in our presence. **Amen**

### **Bible Reading: Luke 24:13-35**

Now on that two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

Then Jesus said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should

suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

For the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God**

### **Personal Reflection**

What spoke to you about this text?

When did you recognise Jesus in your life?

### **Address - Recognising Jesus**

The Emmaus road story is familiar to many of us, it is a feel good, heart-warming tale. We cherish that moment of recognition when they realise it is the risen Christ who has been walking with them.

But before this moment, we understand they must have been feeling grief stricken and confused, with their hopes torn away. They were on a sad walk home – possibly with Jesus' last words "it is finished" ringing in their ears.

Most of us I am sure, especially in these current circumstances, can identify with feelings of helplessness, when hopes and dreams seem shattered. Things have not worked out as we had hoped and planned. "We had hoped, we had hoped", the disciples lament.

And it is in that misery that Jesus joins them. He walks with them, journeys all the way with them. And then we watch with joy, as their hearts go from being broken, to being set on fire. And don't we find from this a deep spiritual awakening and amazing comfort of our own? Knowing that whatever road we are travelling on, Christ travels with us. Wow!

I wonder how Jesus' appearance had altered, as no one seems at first to recognise him. I am reminded of when my son was about six, he loved his first bike but had managed to shear off the handle bars from all his stunts and as it was his birthday we sent him into the shed to 'get the toolbox'. He came back and said he couldn't find it, three times we sent him back in to look for it until he finally saw his brand new blue bike which had been standing in the entrance!! (Strangely this unseeing also happens when I ask my husband to pass the scissors from a drawer, but that's another story!!).

It may have been change, unexpectedness or the sheer impossibility of it all that they do not recognise him ...you can imagine their heads and shoulders are down as they continue on. They are not looking or searching for him. He is gone.

And Jesus listens to them, I love that bit, he just listens and lets them talk. He then offers them words of comfort from scripture, encouraging them to make the connections, as Jesus unpacks for them the full message of salvation. But at that moment they are still too weary to really hear it, let alone believe it.

However it seems there is something attractive, comforting about this stranger, they do not want him to go and they invite him to stay with them. He stays and sits with them. And it is in the breaking of the bread that they finally recognise Jesus. With a joy we can palpably feel, they know! They know! This is Jesus. Their Jesus. Our Jesus. The risen Christ! And they turn to each other faces I imagine aglow, 'Didn't we know, weren't our hearts burning?!' They are filled with excitement, with faith and hope again for the future. We too with burning hearts filled with the knowledge of God from the Holy Spirit testifying within us, can sing out about God's salvation, about God's life giving wholeness to the world. On the Emmaus road we find God is not distant but journeys recognised or unrecognised with us. God shares in our human experience and offers hope and transformation, often in unexpected ways. May we always recognise Jesus journeying with us. Amen

### **Music**

Bind us Together -Lucy Gibson ([link within body of email](#))

Blessed be Your Name - Matt Redman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnWKehtOXu8>

To God be the Glory - From the Royal Albert Hall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-15v9iworAU>

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Almighty God, we thank-you that you are with us always. We thank-you for the good weather we have enjoyed. The pause that is bringing healing to mother nature and all the beauty that surrounds us.

Loving God, you see the pain of our world and we ask for your healing, for the destruction of the virus.

We pray for those on the frontlines who are exhausted. We remember those who have sacrificed so much in their care of others.

May good supply lines be created, so all may have what they need to be safe.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for wisdom for world leaders, scientists and all in positions of power.

For those in need that food, supplies and support reach them.

We pray for those affected by the devastating events in Nova Scotia, and for peace and safety within all homes and communities.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are struggling in body, mind and spirit. We name before you those for whom we pray.....

Help us with the uncertainty and fear, and speak peace into our hearts.

We commend to you the recently departed and all whom we have loved....

We thank-you for the power of your resurrection and through it reunited life eternal.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you and those whom you love always. † **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: In the name of Christ **Amen.**