



## 3rd Sunday of Easter

26 April 2020

When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight] They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

Luke 24:30-32

### Call to Worship

Join us on our journey, Living God;  
The anxious questions penetrate into our hearts and minds  
Walk with us on our journey, Compassionate God;

**All: There, nearer even than any human touch, is the Christ who walks on our human paths**

Divine life will join us here, unafraid of our human realities and frailties. Let us place our feet on the Emmaus Road today. Reveal yourself to us on the journey, Surprising God;

**All: Enter the conversations within our hearts and souls and minds and transform them with your ultimate truths.**

Strengthen us for our own particular journeys, Ever-Present God;

**All: Come, Holy Spirit, come; we now have Christ's work to do in our troubled and tragic world.**

### Hymn 381

**This joyful Eastertide  
away with sin and sorrow;  
my love the crucified,  
has sprung to life this morrow:  
*had Christ that once was slain,  
ne'er burst his three-day prison,  
our faith would be in vain,  
but now has Christ arisen,  
arisen, arisen, arisen*  
**Death's flood has lost its chill  
since Jesus crossed the river.  
Lover of souls, from ill  
my passing soul deliver:****

### Opening Prayer

Your eternal presence, O God, takes our breath away.  
Author of time, Creator of galaxies and Mother Earth, Creator  
of each child who is born;

**All: your creation is vast and breathtaking, yet you sent Jesus,  
human and vulnerable, Jesus who died on a cross.**

In the death of Jesus, evil was confronted and defeated,  
but the very friends of Jesus turned away;

**All: The first Easter brought transformation. Death was defeated,  
Jesus rose to change humanity for good,  
and the disciples got their confidence back.**

The risen spirit of Jesus, alive for ever and now in today's faith communities,  
It brings hope to the despairing, support to  
the challenged and life in all its fulness to all Creation.

**All: For the living influence of Jesus, we praise and worship you, O God!**

**The scope of Christian service, the joy of those who follow the way of Christ, and your love at  
the center of it all, takes our breath away. Amen.**

### **Prayer of Confession**

Yes, you surprise us along the highways of life, O God.

**All: You make clear where human ways are so often destructive,  
our attitudes harm relationships, and words and actions offend.**

You surprise us as citizens of a small planet, O God.

**All: You make clear practices that destroy fertile land and pure air,  
you identify the carelessness that favors polluters, and the selfishness that favours the  
"haves" over the "have-nots."**

You surprise us as members of the Christian family, O God.

**All: You make clear those aspects of our common life that dishonor  
the name of Jesus Christ, the risen One; our lack of vision, our narrow-mindedness, our apathy.  
You call on us to show the big-heartedness of Jesus.**

*Time of silent reflection...*

### **Words of Assurance**

God will yet again break into our patterns of living.

**All: God will infiltrate our most hardened ways, our most  
grooved attitudes, our most habitual and unhelpful responses.**

Trust God, for change is inevitable; trust God,  
and we will be enabled to start afresh.

**All: We are ready for a new phase of life now!**

Pardon and peace are ours if we will but embrace them.

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### **Scripture      Luke 24 :13-35**

**It is amazing how quickly the change-around does come if Christ is known to be among us!**

### **Reflection on the Gospel and its truth for us**

It is when we are talking and thinking about the nature of truth and facing the hard questions that the risen Christ comes near to us. For this is the One who has embraced the hardest questions of all in a life which never settled for simplistic notions of what life's journey would or could be like. We do not have to protect this Christ even from the things that most challenge us, even that would upend our lives themselves. Faith will not allow a fence between us and our world's reality – a fence that could separate us from other people whose world vision is very different from ours but who may now be ready to walk and talk with us because we now walk and talk with a risen Christ unlocked from the prison of mere mythology and freed for encounters with realities yet to be fully grasped. We will never know what Jesus actually said to the two on the Emmaus Road. But what we **do** know is that resurrection was their new reality too; they rejoined their shell-shocked and shaken faith community inspired by the risen life of God and ready to make that the new reality henceforth, come what may.

**All:** The followers are inspired again,  
the faith community comes together,  
the Word is preached,  
the needs of mind and body are met,  
the downhearted are filled with hope,  
the powerful are cut down to size.

### **Commissioning**

You travel along life's highway, and often it seems humdrum  
and ordinary, even discouraging at times.

**All:** But then, God meets us along the road, and we feel the power and  
the joy of God's presence.

We experience God's love, and we come to share God's love with family, friends,  
and all those we encounter day by day.

**All:** We feel our spirits restored, our purpose clarified,  
and our faith in Jesus Christ affirmed.

<b>Doxology 768</b>	<b>Christ is the head and cornerstone, Christ's name is Love, his Way is known, God raised our Christ to glorious light, our Easter joy affirms God's might. Amen</b>
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