

## **Sermon April 19, 2026**

Sometimes we don't see Jesus right away.

Sometimes we don't feel God close.

Sometimes we're sad or confused or worried.

But the Emmaus story tells us something important:

Jesus walks with us even when we don't notice.

Jesus listens to us.

Jesus shows up in kindness, in sharing, in meals, in friends, in strangers.

And every time we welcome someone,

every time we share our food,

every time we help someone who feels alone—

we are doing what the Emmaus friends did.

We are making space for Jesus to be seen.

### **Closing Prayer**

Let's pray together:

Dear God,

Thank you for walking with us,

even when we don't see you.

Help us welcome others,

share what we have,

### **Luke 24:13–35**

Now on that same day two of them 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 he 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.

### **Resurrection Breaking Forth**

Two disciples walk away from Jerusalem — away from the trauma and the disappointment, away from the place where hope seemed to have died. They are not running toward resurrection; they are limping away from heartbreak.

And resurrection love comes for them anyway.

Love comes, not announced by trumpets and angels. Love comes with the quiet insistence that something is shifting. Something is breaking open. Something is trying to get free. Too often, we don't recognize the sacred presence until much later. Love comes on the road to Emmaus... the road to Trinity... whatever road we travel on.

As they walk, they talk. They cover the story of their pain and try to make sense of what cannot be understood.

"We hoped..." they say.

Those three words are the funeral dirge of every disappointed heart. We hoped that the diagnosis would be different. We hoped that the violence would stop. We hoped that this time would be different. *We hoped that our faith would hold.*

They are walking with their grief, and a stranger joins them. "What are you talking about?" he asks and the men poured out the grief of their hearts and the memories of all that had come before. Healings and hope born again in people's lives, and now the dreams were crushed Jesus is dead. And on top of that, his body is missing from his tomb! What good was it for them to dream again? What good was it for them to hope? Who would redeem Israel? The future looked very dark without the light that Jesus brought.

We know the shared grief these men feel. All of us have had losses that weigh our hearts down and bring darkness in our souls. I know some of your losses, others are hidden deep down, where I cannot see them. But the grief is there, and it hurts. And sometimes, when we least expect it, we find someone who listens to us... hears our memories, shares our grief... even if it is just for a moment.

The stranger joins them and listens, but they do not recognize him as Jesus. Because disappointment can make resurrection unthinkable. Because sometimes the risen Christ looks like a stranger on the road.

Resurrection is breaking forth, but they cannot see it yet.

As they walk, this stranger that we know is Jesus opens the scriptures up for them. He opens the story of their hopes... a story they thought they already knew. He shows them a God who suffers with the world, not above it. A God who refuses to abandon humanity even when humanity abandons God. The hope of resurrection is breaking forth in the stories of a God who keeps showing up in the places we least expect.

When they reach Emmaus, they still do not know who he is. But they do not want the moment to end. They realize that they cannot let this stranger walk on alone. They offer hospitality — the sacred practice offering an extravagant welcome.

Here is the moment resurrection breaks forth in full.

At the table.

In the breaking of bread.

In the ordinary act of feeding one another.

Jesus becomes known in the shared meal.

Resurrection is not an idea to understand; it is a presence to encounter... A community to join... A table to widen.

The moment they recognize him, he vanishes. Jesus has offered the love, support and knowledge that they need. He leaves because he has and they are commissioned to continue his ministry. At the table, they receive everything they need! The resurrection is not meant to be hoarded... It is meant to be carried.

We see the resurrection carried today. Whenever disaster strikes— wildfires, floods, ICE agents in the streets, human rights threatened —ordinary people gather. Neighbors cooking meals, sharing supplies, checking on vulnerable neighbors, delivering groceries to strangers. These groups often arise long before official systems respond. Like the disciples on the road, people today often find Jesus not in the halls of power but in the neighbor who knocks on the door with a bag of groceries.

This is our Emmaus: People walking in confusion and fear, and then discovering that hope shows up in the form of a stranger who walks beside them. Resurrection breaking forth in casseroles, car rides, and porch drop-offs.

After meeting the Risen Christ, the same disciples who were walking away from Jerusalem now run back toward it. This is what resurrection does: It turns retreat into return. It turns “we had hoped” into “the Lord is risen indeed.”

They go back to the place of pain — not because the pain is gone, but because hope has broken forth inside them. Resurrection does not erase the wounds of the world. It gives us the courage to face them again.

The road to Emmaus teaches us that the resurrection continues... it breaks forth in places others overlook. Resurrected love comes to communities dismissed by the powerful. Resurrected Hope is found in movements for justice that refuse to die. Resurrected Faith is seen in the quiet resilience of people who keep showing up for one another.

Where is Resurrection breaking forth today? In the tables where strangers become neighbors. In the stories we share that keep our faith strong. In the insistence that we all bear the image of God. In the refusal to let violence, hatred, or despair have the final word. Resurrection is breaking forth — not only in the empty tomb, but in every place where love refuses to stay buried.

Amen

### **Sending Forth**

Your strength may fail but God's hand never will!

One: Go now with hearts that burn for justice,  
with eyes open to the holy in every face,  
and with feet ready to carry resurrection into the world.

Christ walks with you.

Christ goes before you.

Christ meets you on every road.

**All: Alleluia! Amen.**