

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
April 11, 2021

Greetings brothers and sisters in Christ.

**HE IS RISEN!! HE IS RISEN INDEED!! ALLELUIA!!**

We are planning to begin OUTSIDE in-person worship on the parking lot on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:30 a.m. (weather permitting). Masks and social distancing will be required. Bring your lawn chair.

The witness committee will be selling pinwheels to benefit Family Promise in May. This is a partnership with Thrivent Financial. The pinwheels will cost \$2.00 with \$1.00 going to support the cost of housing for families currently being supported by the Family Promise ministry.

If you have prayer requests, please send them to me so that I can include them in my weekly newsletters.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Denise

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## Luke 24: 13-35

A reading from the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter of Luke beginning at the 13<sup>th</sup> verse.

<sup>13-16</sup> That same day two of them were walking to the village Emmaus, about seven miles out of Jerusalem. They were deep in conversation, going over all these things that had happened. In the middle of their talk and questions, Jesus came up and walked along with them. But they were not able to recognize who he was.

<sup>17-18</sup> He asked, “What’s this you’re discussing so intently as you walk along?”

They just stood there, long-faced, like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them, his name was Cleopas, said, “Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard what’s happened during the last few days?”

<sup>19-24</sup> He said, “What has happened?”

They said, “The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet,

dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death, and crucified him.

And we had our hopes up that he was the One, the One about to deliver Israel. And it is now the third day since it happened. But now some of our women have completely confused us. Early this morning they were at the tomb and couldn’t find his body. They came back with the story that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive.

Some of our friends went off to the tomb to check and found it empty just as the women said, but they didn’t see Jesus.”

<sup>25-27</sup> Then he said to them, “So thick-headed! So slow-hearted! Why can’t you simply believe all that the prophets said? Don’t you see that

these things had to happen, that the Messiah had to suffer and only then enter into his glory?”

Then he started at the beginning, with the Books of Moses, and went on through all the Prophets, pointing out everything in the Scriptures that referred to him.

<sup>28-31</sup> They came to the edge of the village where they were headed. He acted as if he were going on but they pressed him: “Stay and have supper with us. It’s nearly evening; the day is done.”

So, he went in with them. And here is what happened: He sat down at the table with them. Taking the bread, he blessed and broke and gave it to them. At that moment, open-eyed, wide-eyed, they

recognized him. And then he disappeared.

<sup>32</sup> Back and forth they talked.

“Didn’t we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?”

<sup>33-34</sup> They didn’t waste a minute.

They were up and on their way back to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and their friends gathered together, talking away: “It’s really happened! The Master has been raised up—Simon saw him!”

<sup>35</sup> Then the two went over everything that happened on the road and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

## Luke 24:13-35

Let us pray:

Mysterious and Divine Presence,  
Too often our hearts burn within  
us because our bodies know  
before our minds that you are  
here working in us and through  
us in this world. Open our eyes  
and help us to recognize you in  
all places and in all people, for  
the sake of the one whose  
presence is never far, Jesus  
Christ. Amen.

Grace and Peace to you from God  
our Father and Jesus Christ our  
Lord and Savior. AMEN

They are on the road again. They  
had traveled to Jerusalem  
earlier in the week and now they  
are on their way back home to  
Emmaus.

When they had left for  
Jerusalem, they were full of hope  
that things were going to get  
better. Jesus was going to come

into his glory, and they would be  
restored to new life. And they  
envisioned life like it was in  
“good old days.”

But today, these two faithful  
Jews who had come to be  
disciples of Jesus have had all  
their hopes and dreams crushed  
as the one who they had come to  
believe had been sent by God to  
restore their nation had been  
killed.

They were so stuck in their own  
despair and grief that they could  
not come to believe what the  
women had told them. That is  
that Jesus had been raised from  
the dead.

As so both deflated and fearful  
for their lives, they headed  
home. They continued to talk  
with one another trying to make  
some sense of what had  
happened in Jerusalem. While

they were walking and talking, a stranger walked up to them and started walking with them.

After a little while, the stranger asked them, “What’s this you’re discussing so intently as you walk along?”

They stopped and stood there looking like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them said, “Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard what’s happened during the last few days?”

The stranger asked them, “What has happened?”

And they replied, “The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet, dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death, and crucified him.”

We had hoped that he would be the one to restore our nation?

We had hoped

How many time have we used that phrase in this past year?

We had hoped our community would not be affected by the pandemic.

We had hoped that we could get together with our friends and families

We had hoped that things would go back to normal.

We had hoped that we could worship in-person on Easter 2020, Christmas 2020, Easter 2021.

We had hoped!!!

We have lived in the despair and uncertainty of the pandemic for the past year. So, this time as we are reading this passage, we may have a new appreciation for what it means to be facing uncertainty

about what will or will not happen tomorrow. That day in and day out mix of fear and grief and despair.

These two travelers who had just a few days ago walked to Jerusalem with high hopes of what was in store for their future were now walking home facing the uncertainty of what would happen next.

And in their darkest and most desperate hour, Jesus appears (seemingly out of nowhere) and walks with them.

And it is unclear as to whether it was their grief of the loss of their beloved friend, or whether it was their fear of what would happen next or whether it was simply divine intervention, but they were not able to recognize that it was indeed the risen Christ who was walking by their side.

But Jesus walked with them anyway and reminded them of

what the prophets had foretold them about the coming of the Messiah and the necessity for the Messiah to suffer for the sake of the world.

When the travelers reached their destination, they invited the stranger to share a meal with them. And as they gather around the table, the stranger took the bread, blessed, broke it and gave it to them just as he did at the last supper.

And it was in the breaking and blessing of the bread that they were now able to recognize that the risen Christ has been in their presence all along. And just as mysteriously as he appeared along the road, he now mysteriously vanished.

Their hearts were burning with words that he had shared with them along the road. In spite of the late hour, they gather their things and got back on the road headed to Jerusalem and to testify to the others the good

news that they had encountered the risen Christ.

It was in their brokenness, in their grief, in their darkest hour that Jesus entered their lives,

But, Jesus didn't enter their lives and undo what had just happened. Jesus didn't change the reality of what had caused their despair and the reality that their future would never be what they had hoped for and dreamed about. Jesus didn't try to find the silver lining in what had just happened.

Jesus walked with them and in acknowledging the reality of what had just happened prepared them for what God was going to do through them and for them next.

For, those same followers who had spent their time listening and following Jesus have now been entrusted with the truth of what God had done for them.

The truth that changed everything. The truth that would energize, empower and embolden them to lead God's new mission of creating communities of faithful disciples throughout the world. SO that the truth of what God has done for us may be told over and over again.

These communities will be bound together by God's word and God's sacraments. So that those who have never seen the risen Christ will get to know Christ and will get to experience Christ's presence in the bread and the wine that we share each week.

And through the word and meal we have been, are and will in the future be transformed to take on new roles and responsibilities, as we like the two men in the story gather our things and go out on the road to both meet Christ in the stranger and be the body of Christ for those who are grieving, for those who have been taken advantage of, and for those who have lost hope.

For Christ was the one, who they  
had hoped for.

Christ's faithfulness, God indeed  
changed everything for everyone  
for every more.

And Christ is the one they got.

Christ is Risen!! Hallelujah!!!

And through their encounter  
with the risen Christ, they have  
come to know that through

AMEN

***Blessing***

May  
The love of God,  
The light of Christ,  
And the joy of the Holy Spirit  
Abide with you on this day  
and forever more.

**AMEN**