

**THIS IS AVAILABLE AS A VIDEO [HERE](#)**

**PART 1 – OPENING PRAYERS**

**GREETING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Christ is risen, alleluia

**He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

**SENTENCE OF SCRIPTURE**

‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation,’ says the Lord.

Mark 16.15

*Let us pray*

**God of everlasting mercy,**

**each year in this season of Easter**

**you enliven the faith of your holy people.**

**Increase in us the grace you have already bestowed,**

**that we may understand more fully in whose font we have been washed,**

**in whose Spirit we have been reborn,**

**and in whose blood we have found redemption.**

**We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,**

**who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

**STATEMENT OF FORGIVENESS**

In the Easter season, we celebrate that forgiveness is already ours. Therefore our confession is more of a statement.

Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life.

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins.

Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you feed us with the living bread. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

In the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus has commissioned us to announce the forgiveness of sins.

Sisters and Brothers, our sins are forgiven;

let us be at peace. Alleluia! **Amen.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God,

your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread:

open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work;

who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

**Christ died for our sins  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he was buried;  
he was raised to life on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
afterwards he appeared to his followers,  
and to all the apostles:  
this we have received,  
and this we believe. Amen.**

Based on 1 Corinthians 15:3-7

### **PAUSE VIDEO**

**PART 2** CHILDREN'S STORY BY Rev Jennie AND DOWNLOADABLE MATERIAL [HERE](#)

**PART 3** LOOK UP AND READ THROUGH THE READINGS, LISTEN TO THE SERMON PODCAST (READ ALONG IF YOU WISH) AND PRAY THE INTERCESSIONS.

### READINGS

PSALM 116:1-4, 11-18

GOSPEL READING - Luke 24:13-35

## Sermon by Samantha White (Family Minister)

[Available as an audio download](#)

Let us pray,

Lord open our ears to hear and our eyes to see, but mostly, open our hearts to you. Amen.

Last week's reading and sermon was all about seeing and then believing. This week, the reading concentrates on the act of walking. When I was a child there was a gospel song that I would sometimes hear called *Just a closer walk with thee*. It has been recorded by many artists and has some beautiful lyrics asking Jesus for the privilege of walking close to him, *Just a closer walk with thee, grant it, Jesus, is my plea, daily walking close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be*.

In the gospel reading today we encounter two disciples walking away from Jerusalem on Easter Sunday afternoon. They were not two of the eleven main disciples left, but they were a part of the larger group of followers of Jesus who were still together, three days after Jesus' crucifixion. For some reason, and we don't know why – theologians have put forward many ideas but that's all they are, just ideas – for some reason, the two were travelling on the road to Emmaus, some 11 kilometres from Jerusalem. The gospel tells us nothing more about them except for the name of one of them, Cleopas. They might have been a husband and wife, they might have been friends, they might have been brothers, we just don't know. This not knowing can be difficult in our faith journey: human beings like certainty, we like to be in possession of all the facts, it makes us feel safe and in control. Not knowing is an uncomfortable space to sit in.

Perhaps that's why the two disciples were travelling back to Emmaus, the not knowing of the previous 3 days had proven too hard to sit in any longer. Even though that morning they had heard from the women that the tomb was empty and Jesus was not there, they could no longer sit in that space. They needed to move on. They needed to take control of their situation in some way, even if just by walking away from it. But even in this uncomfortable space, God is still actively at work. The phrase "*their eyes were kept from seeing him*" is used. Jesus isn't in disguise. There is no fake moustache and dark glasses here. It's just that God stopped the disciples from recognising Jesus at that moment. And so, we, along with Jesus, meet them on the road to Emmaus. Jesus appears walking alongside them as they discuss what had happened and he asks a question:

*"What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?"* The disciples stood still, looking sad, and then, they launch into a speech that explains the key ideas of their faith.

Luke, who wrote this gospel account, uses the opportunity to summarise the main aspects of Jesus' life and works as he sees it:

- *"The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,"* ... notice the past tense of "was" they don't believe that he still is – they believe he is dead and gone;
- *"our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him."* Nice attempt to pin all the blame on the leaders, missing out that the whole crowd had in fact demanded Jesus' death and asked for a bandit (Barabbas) to be released rather than Jesus be released.

The disciple's account continues:

- *"we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel"* ...had, past tense again, they no longer hope. The hope has turned to hopelessness.

Then they say:

- *“it is now the third day since these things took place.”* The irony is that, although each passing day has deepened their despair, Luke’s readers know that Jesus predicted his resurrection on the third day (9:22; 13:32; 18:33; 24:7). The mention of the third day is itself full of hope to those who know how the story ends;
- *“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.”* It might be useful for us to remember that women had no legal standing at that time so they could not be called as witnesses in a court of law – their seeing Jesus could not be trusted as truth. So, what did the disciples do when they heard what the women said?
- *“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.”* The blokes went to have a look for themselves, but they didn’t see Jesus.
- *“Then Jesus said to the disciples “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.*

Oh, wouldn’t we love to know exactly what Jesus said to them at that point? Which scriptures did he choose? What did he say? Some possibilities include:

- Deuteronomy 18:15: *“But instead he will choose one of your own people to be a prophet just like me and you must do what that prophet says.”*
- Psalm 2:7: *“I will tell about the promise that the Lord made to me; you are my son, because today I have become your father.”*
- Psalm 16:10: *“I am your chosen one, you won’t leave me in the grave or let my body decay.”*
- Psalm 118:22-23: *“the stone that the builders tossed aside has now become the most important stone. The Lord has done this and it is amazing to us.”*
- The whole of Isaiah chapter 53; you can read that one for yourselves!
- Perhaps Daniel 7:13-14: *“I saw what looked like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven and he was presented to the Eternal God. He was crowned king and given power and glory so that all people of every nation and race would serve him. He will rule for ever and his kingdom is eternal, never to be destroyed.”*
- Or maybe Hosea 6:2: *“in two or three days he will heal us and restore our strength so that we may live with him.”*

Whatever scripture Jesus revealed to them, it is clear, later on in the reading, that it really resonated with the disciples – they describe it as *“our hearts burning within us.”* Jesus took the time to walk them through what the scriptures meant and how they applied to the messiah.

As the three of them approach the place in Emmaus where they plan to stay they notice Jesus appearing to keep on the road and invite him to stay with them, the day is almost over, they need to rest and eat and it would have been impolite not to ask their fellow traveler to stop and stay with them. They had enjoyed his company thus far and would like to enjoy his company a little longer... *just a closer walk with thee.*

Once the meal is prepared and they sit down to eat, Luke sets the scene for the big reveal (remember their eyes had been kept from seeing him.) Luke uses the setting of a meal to replay the final meal the disciples had shared with Jesus for Passover.

*“It happened, that when he had sat down at the table with them, (Jesus) took the bread and gave thanks. Breaking it, he gave to them”* (v. 30). These are almost exactly the words that Luke used to describe Jesus’ actions at the Last Supper (22:19). Note especially the four verbs: took, blessed, broke, and gave. Normally, the

host would perform these actions in a home and the celebrant would perform them in a worship service. Jesus, the guest, becomes both host and celebrant at this table. Jesus walks them through the blessing and at that moment *"Their eyes were opened, and they recognized him"* (v. 31a). Earlier, *"their eyes were kept from recognizing him"* (v. 16). Now their eyes are opened. It was God who veiled their eyes, and it is God who unveils them.

*"...and he vanished out of their sight"* (v. 31b). Now, when they recognize him, he vanishes from their sight.

So, what do they do with this revelation? *"That same hour"* they walk all the way back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples what they had seen. It turns out that Jesus had been seen by others that day too so now we have many people seeing Jesus alive on Easter Sunday, three days after the crucifixion.

Today's reading demonstrates that belief in Jesus as risen Lord was not self-evident to his earliest followers, even after his crucifixion and resurrection. The reason why people back then came to believe in him was that he appeared to them. In other words, it took divine revelation for them to believe. This was true for Peter (24:34), and it was true for the people who travelled on the road to Emmaus. Thomas demanded to see Jesus and place his hands in the wounds before he would believe. (John 20:25) Jesus' response to Thomas rings true for many of us today; *"Do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!"* (John 20:29)

How did you come to believe?

Church is where the faith of all can be sustained. It is a place where Jesus continues to reveal himself. The Christian faith can be born and nurtured where people share in worship through word, gesture, and things such as water, bread, wine, and tactile expressions of mutual care - the smile, singing together, holding hands, perhaps even a hug.

At the moment, we cannot experience church in these ways but, in these times of social distancing, we can be intentional about our walk with Jesus. We can be intentional about being "the body of Christ" about truly feeling that "his spirit is with us."

You have chosen to listen to or read this sermon today - you are looking for a closer walk. It's a choice isn't it, every day? It's our choice to walk with Jesus, to listen to his words and to live as his people.

*Just a closer walk with thee, grant it, Jesus, is my plea, daily walking close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be. Amen.*

## **INTERCESSIONS – by Alison Burgess**

Lord we thank you for the gift of this day and for your mercy and grace shown to us new every morning. In the quietness we bring before you the concerns of our hearts in the knowledge that you care deeply for us and each part of your creation.

We pray that your peace may be known throughout our world. As we remembered yesterday on Anzac Day the pain and suffering caused by hate and evil, along with the cost of our freedoms, we are grateful to all who faithfully served their country in time of war. Father, we ask you to protect all those who are refugees from war or persecution. Sustain them with faith and courage as they struggle to survive and inspire generosity in all nations to give freely to those in desperate need.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ, healer and friend, come and care for all of us through the danger and uncertainty of the coronavirus epidemic. To people who are sick, bring healing. To people who are displaced, isolated, or cut off from family, friends or work, bring comfort and companionship. Work with medical staff as they care for the sick, and protect them from harm. Give skill and fruitful research to scientists as they search for treatments, prevention and a cure. When communities are fearful, give a calm spirit, and kindness to neighbours and strangers. Through this testing time, and through all the risks we face together, teach us once again how we can love one another as you have loved us.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We ask your blessing for the leaders of our church – for Archbishop Philip, Bishop Paul, for Jennie, Sam and their families, for the wardens and parish council members. We pray for our parish as we journey through this difficult time. Keep us close to You and supportive of each other.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Father we give thanks that you are the God who brings mercy and wholeness. Comfort and heal, we pray, all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other trouble, especially those who are separated from family support. We bring before you those we have on our hearts.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, we praise you for all your servants whose lives have honoured Christ.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory, are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

## RESUME VIDEO FOR PART 4 – VIDEO OF HOLY COMMUNION

### GREETING OF PEACE [PRIEST]

Christ is risen. Alleluia!

The peace of the risen Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

### HOLY COMMUNION

*O loving God, in union with Christian people throughout the world and across the centuries gathered to make Thanksgiving, hearing your holy Word and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of your dear Son, we offer you praise and thanksgiving. Even though we are dispersed from tasting the Bread of Heaven and drinking the Cup of Salvation we pray that you will unite us with all the baptised and with your Son who gave his life for us.*

The Lord be with you,

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts;

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour, be yours now and always, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks for your son, Jesus,  
who you have made both Lord and Messiah.

Risen indeed, he is with us always;

and in the breaking of bread

and your living and enduring word,

our eyes are opened

and are hearts set on fire with love.

Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks.

He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died,  
Christ has risen,  
Christ will come again.**

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us: Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours forever and ever. Amen**

**THE BREAKING AND SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE**

As this broken bread was once many grains,  
which have been gathered together and made one bread:  
**so may your Church be gathered  
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Eternal God, giver of life,  
in the breaking of the bread we know the risen Lord.  
May we who celebrate this holy feast  
walk in his risen light  
and bring new life to all creation.

**Living God,  
make us apostles of the risen Christ.  
Give us joyful hearts, words of hope,  
and grace to recognize the Lord Jesus when he meets us,  
wherever we are on the road.**

**BLESSING**

Go now as witnesses of God's eternal presence.  
May Christ Jesus make himself known to you in all things;  
And may the Holy Spirit open your eyes and set your hearts on fire with love.  
**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

We go in peace of Christ. **Alleluia! Amen.**