

Morning Service 26th April 2020

Thank you for joining us for this morning service for the Third Sunday after Easter. Today and for the next few Sunday mornings we'll be focusing on people who encountered the risen Lord Jesus – today the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, next Sunday Jesus commissioning Peter.

The Greeting – *As the Easter Candle is lit*

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

He has given us new life and hope by raising Jesus from the dead!

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Come, walk with him.

Come, talk with him.

Come, feast with him.

Come, worship Jesus, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

Song

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,

The holy One, is here;

Come bow before him now

With reverence and fear

In him no sin is found

We stand on holy ground.

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,

The holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around;

He burns with holy fire,

With splendour he is crowned:

How awesome is the sight

Our radiant king of light!

Be still, for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place:

He comes to cleanse and heal,

To minister his grace -

No work too hard for him.

In faith receive from him.

Be still, for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place

Opening Prayer

Risen Saviour, risen Lord,
we come to you today.
We come to share in your story.
We come to feast with you.
We approach your throne with the knowledge
that you died for us and rose again.
Hallelujah, risen Lord Jesus.
Hallelujah. Amen.

Prayer of penitence

Risen Lord,
we are sorry
that we fail to recognise you in our midst,
that we are too preoccupied with ourselves.

We are sorry
that we let you down,
that we feast and don't invite others to share with us.

We are sorry
that we welcome friends but not always the stranger,
or anyone who makes us feel uncomfortable.

Forgive us, Lord.
Help us to be generous people,
our church, our homes – and our hearts –
always places of welcome. Amen.

May God who loved the world so much that He sent His Son to be our Saviour forgive us our sins and make us holy to serve Him in this world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer for Today

Living 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 all his redeeming work;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Bible Reading *Luke 24:13-35 (NIV)*

¹³ Now that same day two of the people who had been there when Jesus died were going home to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything

that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognising him.

¹⁷ He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?'

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?'

¹⁹ 'What things?' he asked.

'About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.'

²⁵ He said to them, 'How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?' ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going further. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?'

³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, 'It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognised by them when he broke the bread.

Talk

How are you getting on with your daily exercise? One of the great privileges of living where we do is the beauty of the countryside around us – particularly at the moment the wonderful bluebells. Even though our walks are framed within the confines of lockdown and the constraints that Covid19 has brought, we can still wonder and reflect on the beauty of the world around us. For some of us that might be on our own, for others with other members of our family. In our Bible reading we find a couple on a walk – a sad, strange walk – from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus, around 7 miles. It takes place on a Sunday, but not just any Sunday – it's Easter Day but this couple are confused and bewildered. As they walk along, they discuss everything they have seen and heard. They are puzzling about what they can't make sense of. Their friend Jesus' death on a cross; the confused reports about reports of some having seen Jesus alive again. Bemused and bewildered, they start the walk towards Emmaus. A long seven miles, a slow walk.

Luke tells us the name of one of them – Cleopas, and a fair assumption is that he's the husband of one of the Mary's who was there at the crucifixion. But then someone who appears to be a stranger joins them. Luke tells us who this is – it's Jesus who draws alongside them – no social distancing then – but emotional distance means they don't realise who this is, just as Mary Magdalen didn't realise it was Jesus she met by the garden tomb that same morning. The presence of this stranger to them, Jesus as we know, causes them to stop. And in a marvellous God-inspired encounter, Jesus lets them pour out all they are feeling and experiencing. It is a prayer, but as yet they don't realise it is. The sort of prayer we might need to pray at the moment. Simply to tell Jesus our fears, our bewilderment, our concerns and confusion. And just like our prayers, may be even more so in this quieter world, Jesus answers. He answers in his word and presence; he reminds them of Gospel truth in the midst of their despair. He does not deny or denigrate how they are feeling, but embraces them with himself – the eternal word coming from the father. Here we

see faith in action. We can come to God however we are, wherever we are, and the crucified risen Jesus encounters us there. He doesn't need a church building or service to meet us. Just like he gave his peace as he entered the locked doors where the disciples were as we thought about last week, so here his presence causes these two to reflect as we read his word – an important discipline still today. You might want to join in with our Wednesday evening bible study on zoom – email me for details and join us.

And then Jesus moves on - until they invite him in. In their words 'stay with us, because it's nearly evening.' They ask this person who has affected them and already changed them to stay – abide, remain. It's all too easy to call on Jesus in a crisis, and by his graciousness he meets there. Maybe you haven been challenged over these last few weeks to rediscover faith, if so, make the prayer of Cleopas and Mary your prayer too. Stay with me, Jesus – remain with me, abide with me. Invite Jesus into your life.

As well as Jesus meeting with these two on the road, opening up the words of scripture, Jesus stays with them. They offer him hospitality, and as the invited guest, Jesus takes, blesses, breaks and gives them bread. Suddenly they realise that this is the same Jesus who had broken bread a few nights before, and had transformed this simple act into a way of remembering his eternal life-giving death.

We are fasting from communion at the moment as a church, but each and every time we break bread – every time we eat, in other words, we can still remember the Lord's death until he comes. We don't need a service of Holy Communion to do that! He is still present; as you walk, reflect on the bible and Jesus life lived for you; as you pray, pour out your hearts to him and feel his loving response, let your hearts be warmed by him; as you break bread, remember him and give thanks that he died for you.

Finally, be ready to share that good news – for this couple it meant a 15k run back to the other disciples in Jerusalem – that might not be good for you to do – but pray for the opportunities, many as there are at the moment, to tell others that Jesus is alive and is ready to listen to their needs for eternal hope in the midst of despair.

Now I invite you, if you have a piece of bread (or any sort of food!) to pause for a moment and as we reflect on Jesus being made present to his friends as he broke bread, take and eat the piece of bread you have, savouring it, eat it slowly and enjoy it. Imagine the meal at the end of the journey to Emmaus:-

**Risen Lord Jesus, as we feast with you,
help us to recognise you in all people, places and situations.
Abide with us, Lord Jesus, warm our hearts with your word and your presence.
Amen.**

The Creed *based on 1 Cor 15:3-7*

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.**

Song

**Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.**

**Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.**

**I need Thy presence every passing hour.
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.**

**I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.**

**Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

The prayers

Let us pray to God,
who alone makes us dwell in safety:
For all who are affected by coronavirus,
through illness or isolation or anxiety,
that they may find relief and recovery:
Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who are guiding our nation at this time,
and shaping national policies,
that they may make wise decisions:
Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers,
that through their skill and insights
many will be restored to health:
Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

For the vulnerable and the fearful,
for the gravely ill and the dying,
that they may know your comfort and peace:
Lord, hear us,
Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.
Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen**

After a moment of silence for our own prayers, we join together as Jesus taught us to pray:

**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**

Closing prayer

Father, we thank you that you come out and meet us where we are.
We worship and adore you.

We thank you that you walk the road with us, that you treat us
as an equal even when we fail to recognise you.
We worship and adore you.

You always love us, always care for us, always want to eat
and drink with us – such is your love.
We worship and adore you.

Thank you, Lord, that you are not a stranger, but our friend.
We worship and adore you.

Alleluia, Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:
He has given us new life and hope by raising Jesus from the dead!

Alleluia, Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Blessing

Lord Jesus,
as you walked on the road to Emmaus,
walk with us on the roads we travel.
Help us to know your presence with us,
and to be your presence to others.
And, at the end of the day,
may we all enjoy your feast.
And may your blessing rest upon us, today and always.
Amen.

Thank you for following our service today and for Ed Hooson for playing the instrumental music before and afterwards.

*Details of our next services are found on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/PCDChurches/> where you can watch the service live or catch up later, and you'll find this week's notice sheet and other useful information on the church website pcd.org.uk. Please join us on Wednesday evening at 7.30pm for a bible study on this week's and last week's bible readings to see how the risen Lord Jesus appeared to his friends. John will send round some thoughts and questions beforehand, let him know if you'd like to receive them. To join in on the night, here are the zoom details:-
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84221664823?pwd=ZGtoMTI1U0dDL043akQ5OUY2SEc3UT09>*

*Meeting ID: 842 2166 4823
Password: 039315*

You don't need a computer set up with zoom – you can listen in by dialling from your mobile 02030512874,,84221664823#,,#039315# or just dial from your landline 0203 051 2874 and when prompted enter the Meeting ID: 842 2166 4823 and Password: 039315.

The prayers of intercession today are included on the Church of England website. You can find more prayers and daily reflective services at churchofengland.org

*Please also contact the Vicar, Rev John Musson if you need any help or just for a chat! vicar@pcd.org.uk
01959540012*