

**Jesus said, “For where two or three are gathered in my name,
there am I among them.” – Matthew 18:20**

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMC)
Springfield, GA
Home Worship Bulletin
April 26, 2020 – the 3rd Sunday of Easter**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all our sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. **O God, by the humiliation of your Son, you lifted up this fallen world, rescuing us from the hopelessness of death. Grant your faithful people a share in the joys that are**

eternal; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you the and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

+LITURGY OF THE WORD+

FIRST READING

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them:³⁶Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”³⁸And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”⁴⁰And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 116:1-14

- ¹ I love the LORD, because he has heard the voice of my supplication,
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.
- ² **The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me;
I came to grief and sorrow.**
- ³ Then I called upon the name of the LORD:
"O LORD, I pray you, save my life."
- ⁴ **Gracious is the LORD and righteous;
our God is full of compassion.**
- ⁵ The LORD watches over the innocent;
I was brought very low, and he helped me.
- ⁶ **Turn again to your rest, O my soul.
for the LORD has treated you well.**
- ⁷ For you have rescued my life from death,
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.
- ⁸ **I will walk in the presence of the LORD
in the land of the living.**
- ⁹ I believed, even when I said, "I have been brought very low."
In my distress I said, "No one can be trusted."
- ¹⁰ **How shall I repay the LORD
for all the good things he has done for me?**
- ¹¹ I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call upon the name of the LORD.
- ¹² **I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.**
- ¹³ Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his servants.
- ¹⁴ **O LORD, I am your servant;
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now, and will be forever. Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia!

SECOND READING

I Peter 1:17-25

¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. ²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever. And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 24:13-35

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹ 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 happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." ²⁵ And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. ²⁸ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³² 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?" ³³ And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord has risen indeed,

and has appeared to Simon!”³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

THE SERMON

Supper at Emmaus

Dr. James Cavanah

In our Gospel lesson today, Luke writes about two disciples on their way to Emmaus. It is the first day of the week. It is a Sunday, not just any Sunday. It is the very first Sunday following the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. One of the two disciples is revealed to us. His name is Cleopas (Luke 24:18) but who is the other disciple? Scripture does not say. There have many theories as to the identity of the unnamed disciple.

Solomon of Akhlat, a Syrian Bishop, in 1222 wrote that perhaps the unknown disciple was Luke himself. We know that only Luke recorded this event in the life of the risen Lord. Matthew, Mark, and John did not.

The New Testament scholar and Anglican Bishop, N. T. Wright, considers the detailed narration of the Emmaus journey one of the best sketches of a biblical scene in the Gospel of Luke. Roman Catholic priest Jan Lambrecht, citing D. P. Moessner, wrote: “the Emmaus story is one of Luke's 'most exquisite literary achievements'.”

Was Luke the unnamed disciple on the road to Emmaus? We don't know but in light of the author's attention to detail, maybe. It could be that Luke was just learning about Jesus. He was only a recent follower. He knew a little about Jesus but he really did not know Jesus very well personally. Have you ever met a person who knew a great deal about Jesus but, when it you got down to the nitty-gritty, he or she did not really know Jesus personally?

Joanne was raised in Christian family. She grew up in a traditional Anglican Church. As an adult, she left the Church of England and joined the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church. Joanne has experienced a true “rages to riches” life. She is best known as an author, film producer, television producer, screenwriter, and philanthropist. She was the world's first billionaire author but she lost her billionaire status after giving away a great deal of her money to charities.

Professionally, Joanne goes by her initials, J.K. Today, J.K. Rowling enjoys worldwide fame and fortune as the author of the Harry Potter series of books and films. You may know a little about J.K. Rowling. You probably didn't know she was an Anglican turned Presbyterian. You most likely didn't know she was the world's first billionaire author. You probably don't know that she is infatuated with art and paintings in particular. Her favorite painting was produced in 1601 by the Italian artist Caravaggio. The painting features Jesus revealing Himself to two of His followers. The painting is called “Supper at Emmaus”.

I don't know J.K. Rowling but I know a few facts about her. Perhaps this was Luke's experience at the time with Jesus. Maybe, he was a recent follower and after the crucifixion, he was ready to leave Jerusalem. Yet, Jesus knows all of His followers. We know this because He said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand” (John 10:27-29)

The question before us today is this, What is so important about the supper at Emmaus? It is only reasonable that we should ask.

The first thing we learn from our Gospel text is this: We need to know Jesus and not just know about Jesus. Look at Luke's words, “And he [Jesus] said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?’ ²⁷And beginning with Moses and

all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27).

It is one thing to know about a person. It is something else entirely to know that person. We all know about great men and women of history. We are familiar with the names Julius Caesar, George Washington, Betsy Ross, Queen Elizabeth, and others. We even know something about them but we really don't know them. We never met them. We never talked with them or had supper with them or lived with them. We only know about them.

Luke is underlining for us the fact that we need to know Jesus and not just know about Him. Dr. Karl Barth was one of the twentieth century's most famous theologians. Dr. Barth was known and respected around the world. He was also a resident of Basel, Switzerland. One day, a tourist to the city jumped onto a streetcar and just happened to sit down next to Dr. Barth. The two men began to talk with each other.

Dr. Barth asked, “Are you new to the city?” The tourist replied, “Yes, I am but I'm just visiting. I'm so excited to be here and to explore your wonderful city.” Dr. Barth asked, “Is there anything in particular that you would like to see while you are here in Basel?” The tourist said, “Yes, matter of fact there is. I would really love to meet the famous theologian Karl Barth. Do you know him?” Barth replied, “Matter of fact, I do know him and I shave him every morning.” The tourist was so excited that he jumped off the streetcar, ran back to his hotel, and told his wife, “You're not going to believe this, but I just met Karl Barth's barber.” The tourist was in the presence of the very person he most wanted to meet, but even with the most obvious clue, he failed to realize the very man he most admired.

The same thing was true of the two men walking with Jesus on the Road to Emmaus. They were talking about Jesus. They discussing all the events of Passion Week, the arrest and trial of Jesus, and even the crucifixion. They were talking about Jesus to Jesus. They knew about Him but they failed to recognize Him.

Luke is using this incident in the life of Jesus to teach his readers (and you and me) that we need to know Jesus. We need to completely embrace the message of the Gospel and the Christ of the Gospel in a personal way. We need to fall in love with Jesus Christ. We need to enter into a personal relationship with Him. Only in this way can we truly experience His love, mercy, grace, forgiveness, and acceptance. To be a follower of Jesus is not simply to know about Him but to know Him.

The second thing we learn from our Gospel text is this: We need to know Jesus and we need to share Jesus. Let's look at Luke's words, “When he [Jesus] was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³²They 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?’ ³³And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴saying, ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’” (Luke 24:30-34).

What is so important about the supper at Emmaus? Or, what can we learn from this Gospel passage? Luke reveals to us that Jesus opened the hearts and minds of these men to the Scriptures and immediately “they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem” (verse 33). In other words, the news of the living Christ, the resurrected Jesus, was too good to keep to themselves. These followers of Jesus had experienced Him for themselves. They knew Him and they had to make Him known to others! They had to share the news of the Risen Christ with others. The Holy Spirit compelled them to make Jesus known to others!

What is so important about the supper at Emmaus? This event challenges us as believers to imitate the actions of the earliest followers of Jesus, to know Him and to make Him known to others.

David Livingstone is the one of the most famous of the nineteenth-century missionaries. He was a missionary and an explorer. He was eager to travel into the uncharted lands of Central Africa for only one reason. He was compelled to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others.

On one occasion David Livingstone arrived at the edge of a large territory that was ruled by a tribal chieftain. He had been instructed by his guides to stop and wait for this particular chief to arrive and greet him. Livingstone could go forward only after there had been a meeting and an exchange of gifts. The chief would choose an item from Livingstone's personal property and in exchange, the chief would give Livingstone something of his own in return. This was the tradition and custom of the native people.

Now, David Livingstone had few possessions with him. When the chief arrived, Livingstone spread out of his possessions. Upon the ground were all of his clothes, his books, his watch, even a goat that provided him with milk. To Livingstone's dismay, the chief took the goat but in return, the chief gave David Livingstone a carved and decorated stick. To Livingstone, it was just a stick. It was a beautiful stick with its intricate and carved detail, but to Livingstone, it was just a stick.

Livingstone was extremely disappointed. He even asked God, "Why did you allow him to take my goat and leave me with this ordinary stick?" Then one of the natives explained, "That is no ordinary stick. It's the scepter of the king. It is the symbol of his authority, his rule and his power. With it you will find entrance to every village in our country. You will also be safe because you are under the protection of the king himself. You see, the king has given you the greatest gift he could give." The native was right. God opened Central Africa to David Livingstone and the message of the Gospel.

What is so important about the supper at Emmaus? The Holy Scriptures tell us what it is that God, the Almighty creator of heaven and earth, has given to us and to all who believe in His promise of the Gospel. He has given us His Son, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). He gave us His most prized gift to redeem us and to save us from our sins, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16-17).

Our Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, also gave us His promise and His commission. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Let us return to our question, what is so important about the supper at Emmaus? The importance of Luke's words can be seen in the two disciples. These two men were on the road to Emmaus about seven miles from Jerusalem. We don't really know why. It could be because that was their home. Maybe, they were disappointed, disillusioned, or distressed. Perhaps, they had concluded that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed dead. So, they were packing it all in. They were heading back home to live out the rest of their lives. Then, they met Jesus! The risen, living, victorious Lord.

Jesus comes to all kinds of people. He comes to those who are fresh out of hope. He comes to those living with doubt. He comes to those who need faith. He comes to the grieving, the hurt, the broken, the needy, the sinful, and He comes to you and me no matter our condition. Jesus comes into our homes and families, into our businesses and schools, into our neighborhoods, and into our lives.

As the followers of Jesus, He has called you and me to know Him and to make Him known in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Like those Jesus joined for supper in Emmaus, He reveals Himself to us and He sends us out to share "the good news" of His Gospel. Why is

supper at Emmaus so important? Because it reminds us that we are His. It also challenges us to know Him and to make Him known. Thanks be to God!

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth,

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,

And born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Amen!

THE PRAYERS

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, You raised Jesus Christ from the dead and proclaimed Him Saviour, Lord, and King forever more! Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ, empower us to know Him who gave Himself for us and grant to us the boldness of make Him known to others. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Holy Spirit, bless the Church. Fill us with Your presence and wisdom; give us to a love for the church, the Gospel, and the world, Conform us to the image of Christ. May all our thoughts, words, and deeds reflect the hope and power of our new life in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, we pray for Your Holy Catholic (Universal) Church. We pray especially the LCMC, for our sister churches, pastors and congregations. We pray for our partners in the work of the Gospel: World Mission Prayer League, Mission on the Move, Treutlen House, Family Promise, Habitat for Humanity, God's Mission House, Tartu Theological Academy, St. Paul Lutheran Seminary, and all who faithfully serve You in proclamation of Your One True Gospel. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty Father, we pray for our nation and all of our elected and appointed officials and who serve in our courts. We pray for our nation's military and especially all who are deployed. Holy Father watch over and protect all of our First Responders, and all our medical workers as they labour against the Covid-19 virus and all other disease and sickness. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray those out of work and have families to support according to Your riches in glory. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Be with all our students and teachers and those who work in our educational institutions. Give to them diligence, wisdom, understanding, and motivation to complete their studies. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we pray for so many in need: for our members Carol, Elizabeth & Fulton, Loretta, Mary Will, Charles, Margaret, Brenda & Carl, Patricia, Doris, Harper, Preston, Angie, Debbie, and Dawn; for our extended family and friends Becky, Darwin, Pr. Robert, Merry, Elizabeth, Bobby, Raymond, Steve, Christopher, Tracy, Alice, Shirley, Jim, Monteen, and Charlene; for our homebound Betty Jo, Linda, Eva Belle; and for those serving in the military, Dustin and Marcus. Lord in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, hear our prayers and receive them for the sake of the crucified and risen one, your Son our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us we are bold to prayer: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

GREETING OF PEACE

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

BLESSING

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favor + and give us peace. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Let us go in peace to serve the Risen Lord. Hallelujah!