

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH

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THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 19, 2026

Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Psalm 116:1-3, 10-17; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Saint Luke 24:13-35

In nomine Jesu!

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

The events of Easter – “the first day of the week [beginning] at early dawn...” is so important for us that it has taken us, and nearly everyone in Christ’s Church, three Sundays to relate that day’s events. Today’s Gospel is the final episode of that one day’s story. It also launches us into five more Easter Sundays – through to Pentecost to hear and celebrate, name and claim all the gifts Christ’s resurrection impels God to give. This is what creates Easter’s Fifty Days during which “Alleluia! Christ is risen! **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**” is our nearly constant shout.

But wait! There’s more! More than fifty days! This episode establishes another big thing for us and, by extension, for the whole world. Because of the implications in this episode, Christ Church celebrates every Sunday every year as Easter; a day each week on which, whatever else is going on, we celebrate Christ’s dying, rising, living, and presence with us; and name and claim the resurrection gifts we need, and which God gives, so we can live resurrection-bound, not deathward-drifting lives.

About twenty years ago, two great, but admittedly controversial biblical scholars, Marcus Borg and Dominic Crossan, referencing this very story, coined a pithy phrase to express all this. They wrote:

Emmaus didn’t happen. Emmaus *a/ways* happens.

Allow me to unpack that. Look at the flow of this story. Overwhelmed by current events; fed up by the company of their equally overwhelmed, equally despairing comrades who, paralyzed by all that happened were unable to talk about anything else and what its dire implications meant for them, two disciples abandoned that company to get away to somewhere quiet where they wouldn’t have to think about, hear about or talk about such matters, at least for a little while. Doesn’t that sound a bit familiar? To come to church and gather in a sanctuary away from the chaos? To not have to hear about, think about, or be confronted with all that’s happening *out there*? Maybe to hear an erudite professional give an educational lecture about old stories, interesting but unrelated to us?

But Jesus shows up. Jesus *always* shows up. That's the point of this and every Scripture story: Jesus shows up to give us "heartburn;" that is, to show us that those ancient stories are about him *and* also about us. To help us see our thoroughly engaged and oft-suffering God in every event and among everyone then -- *and now*. This story demands that I be crystal clear here: whenever we read Scripture or, for that matter, a newspaper, post, or podcast - however we get information - Jesus *always* shows up! We may not recognize this - those disciples didn't - but Jesus *always* shows up for us to interpret *everything* in the light of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. *Everything*, without exception.

Jesus showed up; but these two didn't recognize him. More than that, they didn't recognize that Christ was with them every moment of their worry-filled journey. Even more than that, they didn't recognize *themselves* in the old, old stories Jesus told them about himself and about God's promises as they walked along the way.

When they came to Emmaus, Jesus stayed with them. Took the bread. Gave thanks for the bread. And broke the bread. Then they could see. And what did they see?

They saw Jesus, crucified, dead, and raised, there, with and for them. Luke tells us that plainly "their eyes were opened, and they recognized him." They also recognized themselves; they even recognized each other; and they knew that they were just as much a part of the old, old stories Jesus was explaining to them as he was. They couldn't wait to go back to those they had abandoned and share all this with them too. What do you know? Those they abandoned had the same risen Christ experience too!

I asked you earlier to look at the flow of this story. If you think about it, it is the same flow as every Sunday liturgy. We journey to **Gather**; and Jesus shows up. And because Jesus shows up, we hear the **Word** - the Scriptures - not on their own, but in, with, and through Jesus. We share the **Meal** as he breaks the bread among us and for us. We eat and drink and recognize and honor, not only Christ, but also one another. We go out, Jesus' **Sending** us to share the news.

One of the privileges of presiding at Christ's Table is that from our place at the table, we can see all this happen. Allow me to help you see what I see every time you allow me to stand at this Table. I take the bread, I lift the bread, and as I speak Jesus' words, "This is my Body," my eyes are opened and I see that the Body of Christ is the bread and each and all of you. And see that, I can't help but exclaim:

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