



April 6, 2008

**Focus scripture**  
**Luke 24:13–35**

Additional scriptures  
Acts 2:14a, 36–41  
Psalm 116:1–4, 12–19  
1 Peter 1:17–23

Stay with us, O God, for we long for the warming presence of your word. Open our hearts and our hands to extend love and grace, such as we have received, to those in need, following the example of Jesus, your Christ.  
Amen.

# Risen Indeed

“Christ is risen!” With this traditional profession of Easter faith, we open ourselves to new life in Christ. We share this truth with the disciples whose hearts were opened along the road to Emmaus. We share this truth with the disciples in Jerusalem who preached the good news. In our rituals and in our living each day, we declare, “Christ is risen indeed!”

**Focus Scripture: Luke 24:13–35**

The exact location of Emmaus is not known. Perhaps this uncertainty forms a commentary on the focus scripture. Emmaus may be anywhere. Hearts burning and eyes opening do not take place in only one place, either geographical or spiritual. Emmaus comes into sight wherever a path leads us toward communion with God and whenever we recognize the risen Christ among us.

On the day of Jesus’ resurrection, two disciples walk along the road to Emmaus with Jesus, informing this “stranger” about the events in Jerusalem over the past three days. The disciples know the details of the story, yet they do not understand the events they have witnessed. Jesus explains the scriptures and their hearts are burning, yet they still do not know why.

The disciples extend a gracious invitation to the “stranger” to stay and eat with them. The text tells that Jesus “walked ahead as if he were going on.” This response speaks on several levels. Custom held that such an invitation should only be accepted when made with insistence. Luke records that the disciples “urged him strongly” to stay. Jesus’ preparation to continue ahead hints at another truth. Jesus does not force himself upon others. God’s grace does not barge in where not wanted, but neither will it stand apart when invited in.

Jesus’ actions during the meal are described with four verbs: *take, bless, break, give*. These same four verbs are used to describe the feeding of the five thousand (Luke 9:16). Three of these verbs also occur in Luke’s account of the Last Supper in Luke 22:14–20, with “give thanks” replacing “bless.” While

the twelve disciples left that table not understanding fully, these two disciples leave the table at Emmaus with fresh understanding. They rush to declare, “Christ is risen indeed!”

On the Emmaus road, the hearts of the disciples burned as they listened to Jesus’ words. In **Acts 2:14a, 36–41**, Peter’s preaching on the Jerusalem streets, “cut to the heart” of those who listened. At Emmaus and in Jerusalem, the presence of God is revealed in Jesus the Christ. For those to whom such revelation is made, witnessing is the response.

In **Psalm 116:1–4, 12–19**, the psalmist speaks of the “cup of salvation.” There is also a sense of the psalmist crying out for “recognition” of his plight. This psalm shares with Peter’s sermon a strong witness to God as One who saves.

Exile and revelation in **1 Peter 1:17–23** parallel aspects of the Emmaus story. The closing words about “the living and enduring word of God” speak not only of the word that burned in the hearts of the two disciples, but also of the word that opened the hearts of the crowd in Acts. In both cases, the living word brings faith to life.



We do not always recognize God’s companionship on the road. We do not always sense “the living and enduring word of God” on our own. Jesus’ words and actions continue to call out to who we are and what we need. What encounters assure you of the presence of Christ? When you declare, “Christ is risen indeed!” what is your hope? How will you witness to this truth?

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