



# 'Worship at home'

## April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023

Do not be afraid,  
for Christ has risen:  
**Christ has risen indeed!**



**Light a candle** as a reminder that Christ has indeed risen, and continues to be with us always. We hear again the experience of Jesus' first followers of the presence of the risen Christ and reflect on the word of the Spirit in our own lives.

### Opening

Meet us, Lord, on the road to Emmaus,  
and in the journey of our lives.  
Guide us along our path, wherever it may take us,  
and renew our strength as we seek to walk with you.  
Open our eyes,  
that we perceive the signs of your presence around us;  
Open our hearts,  
that we may know your peace and love;  
and empower us to pass on to others  
the grace you have shared with us so freely. Amen.

- adapted from Rev. Frank Schaefer  
[Desperate Preacher](#)

**Reflect on the ways in which you experience  
Christ's presence with you.**

**What helps you to recognise this?**



*prayer      talking with others*  
*worship and praise*  
*sharing Communion*  
*spending time in nature*  
*reading Scripture      music*  
*walking or exercise*

## **Luke 24:13-27**

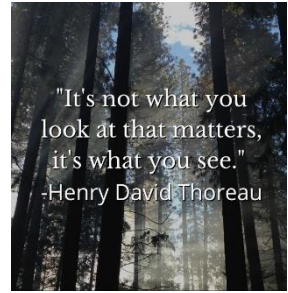
*That same day two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus himself suddenly came and began walking with them. But God kept them from recognising him. He asked them, "What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?" They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days." "What things?" Jesus asked. "The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth," they said. "He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him. We had hoped he was the Messiah*

*who had come to rescue Israel. This all happened three days ago. "Then some women from our group of his followers were at his tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report. They said his body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive! Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, his body was gone, just as the women had said." Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?" Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

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We can imagine that first Easter Jesus' followers being confused, afraid, questioning the events of the past few days, and unsure whether to believe the testimony of the women that they had experienced the presence of the risen Christ. As they walked along the road, reflecting on these events, they did not recognise who was with them. Sometimes what we perceive depends on what we are expecting.



### **Luke 24:28-35**

*By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. Jesus acted as if he were going on, but they begged him, "Stay the night with us, since it is getting late." So he went home with them. As they sat down to eat, he took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them. Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognised him. And at that moment he disappeared! They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as he talked*

*with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?" And within the hour they were on their way back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and the others who had gathered with them, who said, "The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Peter." Then the two from Emmaus told their story of how Jesus had appeared to them as they were walking along the road, and how they had recognised him as he was breaking the bread.*

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Sometimes we are so focussed on particular concerns that we can be distracted from seeing what is really going on. It can be easy to focus on the detail and not see the bigger picture, or alternatively, to be so intent

on the big things that we miss the significance of what is right in front of us.

Something in the act of hospitality, as they ate together, helped the disciples recognise the presence of Christ in their midst. Sometimes it is not until afterwards that we can look back at a situation and realise that Christ was with us, all along.

**Reflect on times in your life when you have faced difficulties.**

**Can you look back and see the presence of Christ  
with you in those times?**

### **Prayer**

O Jesus Christ,  
sometimes we are so busy talking  
that we fail to see you right beside us.  
We walk on, so focussed on our questions  
that we do not create the space  
which would allow you to speak with us  
and enlighten our journeying.



Stay with us, Jesus Christ.  
Reach out towards us  
and invite us to pause and meet with you, we pray.  
As we look at our lives and the world around us,  
we are sometimes too anxious to share  
our real questions or our doubts and fears.  
We keep them within us in troubled silence.

Stay with us, Jesus Christ.  
Reach out towards us  
and invite us to pause and meet with you, we pray.  
We call your name, O Christ,  
and know that you are with us, always. Amen.

- adapted from *Words for Worship* <http://pilgrimwr.unitingchurch.org.au/>

### **Closing**

Go now as those who have met with Christ  
in the morning of this day.  
Go now as those whose hearts have burned within them,  
as the Scriptures were explained.  
Go now as those who have been touched by resurrection.  
And may the blessing of God be yours always. Amen.

~ Ann Siddall <http://www.stillpointsa.org.au> 4