

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be reflections of your word to us today, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen

So I was hanging out at home the other day and an old familiar Shawn Colvin song came on – Sunny Came Home. I was singing along when we came to the lyric, “hold on tight, the world is burning down” . . . and I burst into tears. I played the words over again in my head and thought, ‘yes, it really does feel that way.’ Most moments I am just fine – I work on my garden, do housework, work work . . . I am not at a loss for things to do or people to talk to . . . and I’m struggling with the state of the world – I’m both.

I’m a bit envious of the disciples walking right next to each other on their way to Emmaus . . . I went for a walk with a friend on the beach the other day, staying at least 2 meters apart . . . it almost felt normal. But of course, the topic of conversation remains pretty focused on life during a pandemic: watching Bonnie Henry’s press briefings as self-care, keeping everyone in the house structured, occupied, getting enough exercise, what it’s like to be home together all the time, the economy, people going hungry and unable to self-isolate, and the death toll that’s rising. I wonder what it would have been like if the resurrected Jesus had seen us walking along,

2m apart, and walked between us, inquiring about what we were discussing. Would we have backed away, saying ‘are you the only person in BC who has not heard of the social distancing measures that are in place?’ Do you not know the world is burning down? What else would you tell Jesus about the state of your world, the state of your life? Let’s all take a moment and maybe close our eyes and imagine walking along with Jesus – what are the central things that he should know . . . pandemic and non-pandemic related. He talks on and on in response, and we’re drawn in, we hang on his next word and the ideas he speaks are nourishment to our weary selves.

It’s the end of the day, it’s been a long walk. With hearts burning with insight and resonance, perhaps we too welcome this familiar stranger into our homes, to the dinner table.

We love to tell the story of how they're at the table Jesus took bread and blessed it, broke it and gave it to them. When he did that, their eyes were opened and they remembered him. It was a chaotic time in their world, filled with fear and anxiety, and there in the home, they invited Jesus in and remembered him.

For us, in this season of diaspora, we, too, bring our faith practice into our homes. The Walk to Emmaus story is often read at Agape meals, like the one we did for Maundy Thursday – it's not a Eucharist, but it is a sacred meal with Jesus at the centre. Here in our homes, we too can sit down to a meal that includes bread, we can take it and offer it a blessing, and break open that blessing so that it may be received, so that we may receive that blessing into our bodies.

In this season of life that is many things for us . . . but is anything but normal, what is the blessing of the bread for you? The image is kind of perfect . . . what do you do when the world is in pieces? Grind them into flour and mix them with water for life, yeast for abundance and salt to bring out the flavour, and knead them into a dough. Set it aside to rise and as we take some time to breathe . . . then bake it in a hot oven. And those broken pieces emerge from the oven transformed into something nourishing for the body and the soul. One cannot live on flour and water . . . but bread is something completely different.

I commission us all to have bread with lunch today . . . or something bread-like. Give thanks for

that bread and offer it a blessing . . . like “May the presence Christ be revealed to all who eat this bread.” “May this bread feed the hunger of my body and the longing of my soul.” “May this bread lead me to the hunger of the world, that I may serve in Christ's name.” . . . whatever your blessing is.

I was re-watching an episode of Anne with an E recently, and I noticed Matthew's relationship with bread. He doesn't just grab it and take a bite, he takes it and rotates it around in his hand; it seems comforting to him when he has something on his mind, but can't find the words. It's the first thing he reaches for at the table; it's central and essential.

In order to receive the bread, we have to break the bread, break it open, where inside is the blessing that is offered in turn to us, for us to receive into our bodies.

Today, bless that bread with a word of life . . . and may Christ be revealed to us there at the table, showing all of us that even here, even now, Christ is alive in the world. Thanks be to God.