

3rd Sunday of Easter – April 19, 2026

Luke 24:13-35

I think we can all understand the feeling of disappointment. Expecting one thing and feeling let down when it doesn't turn out that way. This weekend, one of our colleagues organized an opportunity for continuing education for pastors out in Cumberland. So, a little bit of a drive, but she brought in a professor from Luther Seminary who is an excellent speaker. He does a weekly preaching podcast that pastors have depended on for almost 20 years. He's a well-known voice in not just the Lutheran world, but many of the mainline denominations. Many pastors have at some point been impacted by his insights. And so, for him to be local, it was a great opportunity. And cheaper than so many of our continuing education opportunities.

So, imagine my disappointment when there weren't even 50 people who showed up. This renowned speaker shows up, and yet so few of my colleagues prioritized their time to take advantage of the opportunity. I'm sure they all had their reasons. We're all busy in one way shape or form, so I'm not judging them, but I was super disappointed that more folks didn't come out for such an opportunity. And that's just my most recent disappointment.

Quite often, I feel let down by those around me. And I know I'm not perfect myself. I'm sure I have let others down as well. Things slip through the cracks. I don't handle a situation how others would expect of me. It's inheritably human to disappoint, and also to be disappointed. And so, I can understand the disciples' feelings on that road to Emmaus.

And their disappointment ran deep. Not only was it founded in their grief. But also, they felt let down by the one they believed was going to redeem the world. The one they had been following for years. Who had shown mighty in deeds and word. This man who seemed to be the one, but was killed. And now, his body was missing.

The story we heard today still took place on that 1st day of the resurrection. It was just that morning that the women went to the tomb. And the women... well, these guys didn't believe the women. They thought the women were telling some idle tale. Just some gossip to keep their hope alive. But the two on the road weren't falling for it. They were going home. Leaving Jerusalem to go back to where they were from. Disappointed in what had come of their lives. Having to go back to their family and friends embarrassed and with no answers.

Their disappointment was so palpable that even the random man who showed up on the road with them wanted to know what was going on. And yet, even after this random man heard what happened, seemingly chastised them for not seeing what was really happening, and gave them a lecture on what I'm sure they had heard before, the men still didn't see what was going on.

But, I was always impressed that despite their disappointment and grief, and despite this random man kind of insulting them on the road calling them foolish, they still showed hospitality to the stranger in the ways that Jesus taught them to. They still embodied the lesson of Jesus' last supper with them where he instructed them to love and serve their neighbor. So, they invited this stranger to stay. It was almost dark, and it was dangerous to be alone. So the random man accepted their gracious offer.

And then as they all sat down for a meal, it was in the breaking of the bread that it was revealed to the disciples that this stranger was in fact Jesus. We don't know why they didn't recognize him before. Whether this resurrected body was different. Whether they were spiritually blinded. Whether they were just so lost in their grief and disappointment that they couldn't even see what was going on right in front of them. Whatever the reason, it became clear in the breaking of the bread.

The same happens for us weekly as we come to the table. Whatever disappointments. Whatever grief. Whatever doubts or sorrows or pain we carry to the altar. We receive Christ's true presence when the bread is broken for us. Every week as we hold our hands out to receive the bread and wine, our hearts are opened and the true gift of life is revealed and shown to us.

For those two on the road to Emmaus, the breaking of the bread broke through all that blinded them, and they were able to see for themselves the truth of the resurrection. As we come to the table today and every Sunday, may that truth break through all that we bring as well. And then, as the two did as well, may we not let the news stay within us and stay stagnant. That same hour, the two who had just trekked to Emmaus from Jerusalem got up and made the trip back. Despite the fact that it had gotten dark and they just got back home. They had important news to share. They had a revelation to bring to the rest of the disciples.

Jesus would later appear to all of them so they could all witness the resurrected Jesus themselves. But these two had good news to share right that minute. They got to confirm the women's "idle tale." They got to proclaim that Jesus was in fact alive again. We have the same good news to share with people. May Jesus be revealed to you today through word

and through the meal so that you can be refreshed in the good news and ready to go proclaim that to the world, Amen.