

Luke 24:13-35 New International Version (NIV)

On the Road to Emmaus

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

"What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognised by them when he broke the bread.

We will finish by praying together the thoughtful prayer written by Deacon Jen and then saying together the Lord's Prayer.

Dear Loving God,
We come to you now as you come to us.
We have all travelled along roads that we couldn't possibly have imagined.
Our stories have completely changed.
We have travelled along the road both together and apart.
Jesus, thank you for travelling with us.

We may not have recognised you.
We may not have included you in our thoughts and conversations.
We may have been totally preoccupied with practicalities and so left you out.
We are sorry.
Jesus, thank you for always being there anyway.

We are so grateful that the story of lent was shared with this group.
We worshipped, we prayed, we listened and we talked.
We shared stories together.
We made a community from many churches in Watton.
Jesus, thank you for being in the centre at all times.

We pray for all those who fall ill during this time.
We pray for all people who are working in so many ways to help this country and community.
We pray for all people who no longer have work and so are in financial difficulties.
We pray for our loved ones and ourselves as we live in separate places.
Jesus, in our isolation we come to you, through the prayer that you taught us.

**Our Father who art in heaven
Hallowed be Thy name
Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
For ever and ever. Amen**

We end as we began, with the words from the hymn blessed assurance: This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Saviour all the day long.