

The Road to Emmaus Can Become the Road to Jerusalem, when Jesus Opens Our Eyes to *Who He Is*

"Cleopas and an unnamed disciple are making their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about seven miles away," the Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander said Sunday. "It's a hefty walk, but when you've just witnessed your hopes and dreams hoisted high on a cross and then taken down from that cross dead, it will require some time and distance to process it all.

"As they walk along," he continued, "Jesus suddenly appears among them and walks with them, but the disciples do not recognize him. . . . How is it possible that they do not recognize Jesus? Well, have you heard the old saying that 'you see what you are looking for'? It may be that these two men are still living the story of their own expectations and disappointments, and are unable to see outside of that story.

"This is a very human experience. We tend to see what we are looking for in life, and we often miss things we *aren't* looking for. . . . But these two men's rigid expectations may not be the only reason they don't recognize Jesus among them. The text tells us that they are hindered or kept from recognizing him—almost as if Luke is reminding us that God is not known according to *our* means and methods, but according to *God's* means and methods. We human beings don't get up in the morning and say, 'I think I'll hunt God down today and discover the divine.' Human beings cannot track God down or discover God. God is known by *revelation*. God approaches us in the ways and times of his own choosing. . . . Jesus is with them *incognito*.

"And the road to Emmaus is . . . a modern-day road as well, and each of us travels it at some point. You may be on that road today, or you may know someone who is on it. It's a road where disappointment fills one side of the ditch and disillusionment litters the other—a road where as you travel you could literally write a book, and every chapter would begin with the words, 'I had hoped . . .'

"I *had hoped* that this relationship was the one. I prayed and felt that God was leading in this relationship. And then it all just went up in flames, and I don't know where it all went wrong. *I had hoped* that the career I was in was the one for me, but nothing is going right, and I can't seem to figure out why. . . . *I had hoped* that my friend had received healing, and was growing stronger with each new day, but now his death has made me wonder what God's purpose is for a wife and two small children left behind. *I had hoped* that Jesus was the answer to my messed-up life, but my life still seems messed up, and I don't see Jesus anywhere.

"Emmaus is not merely a dusty trail from antiquity. Emmaus is a road that runs through (p. 2→)



"Once you were wandering like lost sheep. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls." 1 Peter 2:25, from the Epistle reading for Sunday, which will be Good Shepherd Sunday. Image credit: www.anglicangoodshepherd.org

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Sundays

10:00 a.m.: Word & Table service

11:30 a.m.: Refreshments, conversation

11:45 a.m.: Post-service discussion

6:00 p.m.: (First Sundays only) Evensong, then tea & refreshments

For the poor: Meat; fresh produce; canned fruits and vegetables; dairy products; peanut butter; cooking oil; pancake mix; syrup; spices; diapers; baby wipes; bathroom tissue; for personal care: soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream; new underwear (adults and children); cleaning supplies; bleach.

Readings, 4/13: Acts 6:1-6; Ps. 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10. **4/20:** Acts 17:1-15; Ps. 66:1-11; 1 Peter 2:1-10; John 14:1-14.

Prayer Emphases: The Netherlands; Orthodox Church in America; United Methodist Church, Wilmore, KY, and the Rev. Jamie Williams; Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, ID; parishioners on Fisk Lane.

(Sermon, conf'd.) your town and mine. We . . . struggle to discern Jesus' presence. God seems to elude us, and . . . disappoints us. Cleopas and his friend . . . invite the disguised Jesus into their home for the evening. . . and as the evening progresses, the stranger who is the *guest* of these two men somehow becomes their *host*. . . and in giving them bread, he gives them himself. . . . Disappointment turned to worship, and . . . two men cannot wait until morning to . . . launch out into the night air. For the road to Emmaus has now become the road to Jerusalem . . . the road of faith and the road of testimony. . . . At the table Jesus opens our eyes to *who he is* and what God is accomplishing."