

Luke 24:13-35

(Lectionary Year A Easter 3)
By Beth Barnett

Introducing and exploring the idea of “Joining in along the way” through the story of Jesus after the resurrection	
You will need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good clear copies of the text, both on screen and print copies for those who prefer that• Pre-arrange a few people who are confident readers of different ages ahead of time. Explain the ‘joining in’ process of reading, and provide them with the copies of the text with ‘early joining’ (see explanation below)
Time required:	10 minutes

Connect

It’s a few weeks since Easter Sunday, when we celebrated the amazing good news that Jesus is Risen.

Sometimes songs and stories of the resurrection of Jesus make it seem like it was all about winning a great battle, after which Jesus becomes a great king on a high throne.

If we have been paying attention to the way Jesus lived his life, and the way Jesus suffered through his arrest and trial and death, we would be very surprised if the story ended with a resurrection scene that was like a mighty triumph defeating enemies and claiming victory, being crowned as king.

It just wouldn’t fit the Jesus we have come to know in the gospels.

Context

Reading the gospels, the stories of Jesus resurrection, are just like the stories of Jesus life.

Across these weeks we have been hearing the stories of how, after Jesus was risen, he appears to his friends, talks with them, blesses them, prays for them, encourages them, helps them understand things and not be afraid, shares food with them, and speaks with them about continuing to live in the Good news he had brought them, and sharing it with others.

On a beach, in a room, out on the mountain, along the road, in the garden, at home.

Being with people in their lives with their questions and fears, and excitement.

That sounds like the Jesus we know.

Today's reading is another one of these times, the day his friends have heard that the tomb is empty, but having seen Jesus die, they are walking home to their own town, bewildered, unsure, sad.

Jesus joins them on the road, joins their wonderings, joins their conversation. So we are going to read this story like that too...with joining in.

Content

Instructions for facilitator:

This process will begin with one person reading, who is soon joined by a second, then a third, until by the end of the reading the entire congregation is reading together.

The reading should be led by a very strong and expressive reader who reads slowly and deliberately, setting the pace so that it is easy for others to join, and so even when the whole gathering is reading in unison, the reading is clear.

Ideally this can occur spontaneously and naturally, with your gathering members joining in reading as they wish, but some communities might be a little too shy and inhibited.

To help the process print enough copies of the text for one between two. This will deliberately draw people together.

Mark each copy of the text with highlighter at a different verse to indicate when the recipients of that copy the text join in reading.

Options:

Walking: Some of your gathering may prefer not to read at all – that's always ok. If there are some who would rather be movers than readers, make the invitation to provide the sound of feet walking, during the reading, either by walking on the spot, by using their hands to 'walk' by slapping on their knees, or just by actually walking unhurriedly around the gathering space.



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Consequence

Well done to us. We joined in with each other well. Jesus joined with his friends so they would know he is really risen, and then he asked them to help others join in knowing this too, and join in following his ways.

His friends were surprised to realize it was Jesus – fully alive and with them.

But we shouldn't be surprised.

This is what Jesus had always done, joined in with others, and then invited them to join in sharing with other others in his good ways of knowing God.

In fact it goes back further than that. Right through the Old Testament, God does this too. Joins in the journey of people, and then invites them to join in his good ways.

Even when it goes badly, like in the story of the humans who eat unwisely even in the good garden God has given and become appalled at themselves, even then, God comes walking, looking to join with them and sort it out.

The Jesus we join in to follow shows us God. Jesus of the incarnation, the Jesus of the crucifixion and the Jesus of the resurrection are all the same Jesus. All God with us. All real. All full-bodied God.



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24:13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,
24:14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.
24:15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them,
24:16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.
24:17 And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.
24:18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?"
24:19 He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,
24:20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.
24:21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.
24:22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,
24:23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.
24:24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."
24:25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!



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24:26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?"

24:27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

24:28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.

24:29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them.

24:30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

24:31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

24:32 They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

24:33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.

24:34 They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"

24:35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

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