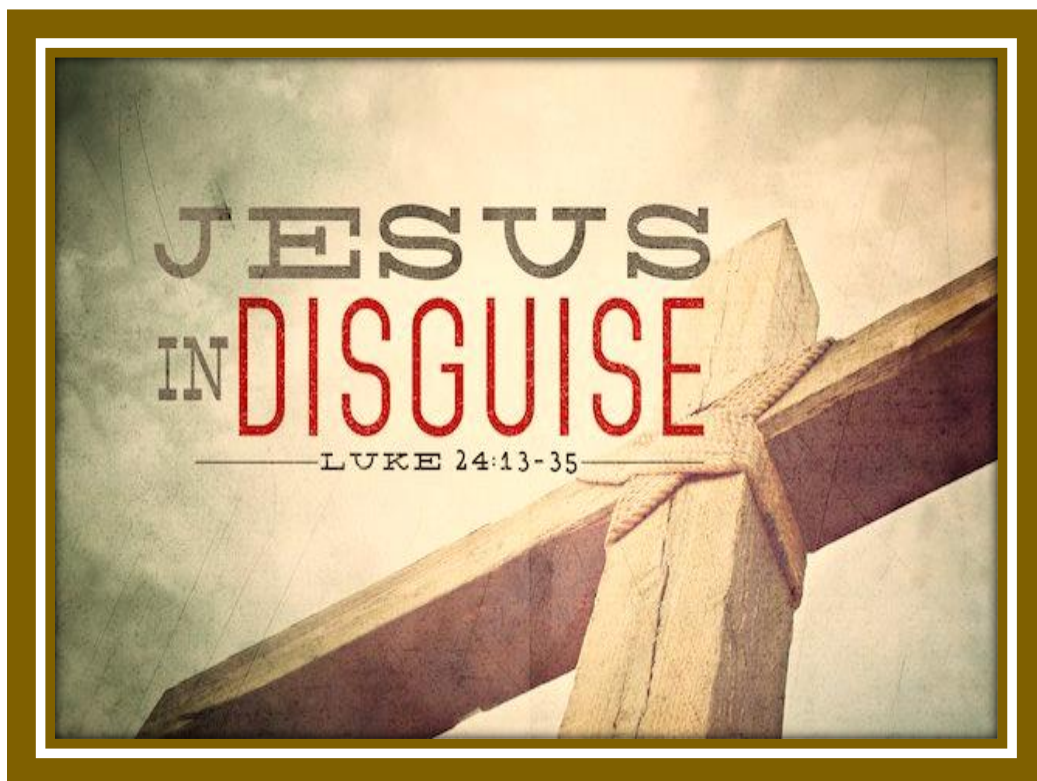


THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

*A Service of the Word
April 26, 2020 – Online*



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

85 E. Brandt Boulevard
Landisville, PA

*United in Christ,
we are called to love and serve.*

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A Service of the Word

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ELW refers to the red *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Book

BB refers to the *Blue Notebook* in the pew rack.

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S SERVICE

P: In the name of Christ, welcome to worship on the Third Sunday of Easter. Today we hear the familiar story of two disciples walking to Emmaus. These disciples are feeling sad, and lost, and disappointed. During the walk they encounter a stranger ... someone they think they don't know, but in reality they do. More on that in today's sermon. And now let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship as the prelude is played.

PRELUDE

Jesus, Stand Among Us

G. Kendrick

† THE GATHERING †

*The Holy Spirit gathers us in unity on the first day of the week,
the day of Christ's resurrection.*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: O God, you know us better than we know ourselves. And sometimes that scares us. You know what we try to hide and what we try to deny. You know that we mean well, but, when we dare to be honest, our intentions are not always in the best interests of others. Yet, however painful it may be, let us be open. Let us see the persecuted and oppressed in our community, the marginalized in our nation, and the exploited people in the world. Let us hear the words of Jesus and let those words pierce the hardness of our hearts. Let us see the face of Jesus in all the faces we don't want to see. By your grace, don't let us ignore your invitation to see you in places we can't even imagine.

Brief silence.

Brothers and Sister in Christ, God's grace and forgiveness are real, but so is accountability to the Word of God. God's grace and forgiveness are not excuses to avoid the kind of change that scripture requires of faithful disciples.

Let the assurance of God's grace and forgiveness provide us with the courage to keep moving forward knowing that God does not abandon us in good times or during times of struggle and uncertainty. That is the Good News of our Lord and Savior, the one through whom we are forgiven. Amen.

Morning has broken like the first morning;
 Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
 Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
 Praise for them, springing, fresh from the Word!!

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,
 Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
 Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
 Sprung in completeness, where God's feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning,
 Born of the one light Eden saw play!
 Praise with elation, praise every morning,
 God's re-creation of the new day!

GREETING

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
 He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Alleluia! Amen!!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. God, your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of bread and in encounters with others. Open our eyes so we may see Christ clearly working among us as he rescues us from sin and its consequences so we may wholly belong to him and live for him, the one who paid the price for our freedom through his death on the cross. Through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

† **THE WORD** †

God speaks to us in Scriptures read, sung, and preached.

FIRST READING

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

A: A reading from Act 2.

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]:
 “Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and be

baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

A: The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

1 Peter 1:17-23

A: A reading from 1 Peter.

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

A: The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 24:13-35

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 24th chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas [KLEE uh pus], answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” 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, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 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. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 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. 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.” Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 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. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 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?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Barbara Caruana

*Friends in Christ,
Grace and peace to you from
God our Father and our Risen Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.*

P: Have you ever been so engrossed in something that when someone comes up to you and says something or touches you on the shoulder you practically jump out of your skin and think, “Where did you come from?”

Cleopas and his unnamed friend in today’s Gospel story had some of those startling experiences. They didn’t jump out of their skin. They weren’t startled by the stranger’s appearance, BUT they were startled when the stranger asked them what they had been talking about. AND ... they were startled when he didn’t seem to know a thing about what had taken place taken place in Jerusalem. So, in a sense, Cleopas and his friend must have been thinking, “Where did you come from?”

So they began to tell the stranger all about the crucifixion of Jesus and how their hope had been crushed because they thought Jesus was the Messiah. But then ... they were even more startled when the stranger started telling them all about what the Scriptures taught concerning the Messiah. Time flew by. The seven-mile trek to Emmaus seemed to take only minutes, and before they knew it, they were home.

Since it was time for supper, they invited the stranger to stay and break bread with them. He agreed, and when it was time to give thanks and break bread, the stranger did the honors. And the minute Jesus broke the bread they knew who he was, and they were startled because when they looked up, Jesus was gone.

That's what happens every time we partake in the Lord's Supper. We meet Jesus in the bread and the wine. The simple act of breaking bread reminds us of the Last Supper and Christ's brokenness on the cross ... and we meet Jesus. But more importantly, we meet Jesus in everyday life ... in some of the most unlikely people and places, but we do meet him. And most of the time our response is one of startlement. And then, suddenly, we realize we've been in the presence of Jesus and maybe we begin to think, "Where did he come from?"

There was a little boy who really wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lives, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer. Then he started out on his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he got tired and sat down on a bench next to an older woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The little boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from of root beer when he noticed the older woman looked hungry, so he offered her a Twinkie.

She gratefully accepted it and smiled at him. Her smile was so pleasant that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered her a can of root beer.

Again, she smiled at him and he was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. When it started to get dark, the boy realized how tired he was, and he got up to leave. Before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the older woman, and gave her a big hug. Then he gave her his biggest smile eve.

When the boy opened door to his house a little while later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" "I had lunch with God," he said. And before his mother could

respond, he said, “You know what? She’s got the most beautiful smile I’ve ever seen!”

Meanwhile, the older woman returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and asked, “Mon, what did you do today that made you so happy?” I ate Twinkies in the park with God,” she said. And before her son had a chance to respond, she added, “You know, he’s much younger than I expected.

Both the boy and that woman sensed what Cleopas and his friend must have felt as they walked with Jesus. They were both filled with joy because of a chance encounter. We know we meet Jesus in the broken bread, but in a Twinkie! And yet, through Twinkies and root beer, that boy and woman both met Jesus. And at some point, they both had to be thinking, “Where did you come from?”

But we really know the answer to that question. We know that Jesus can show up anywhere, anytime, and in any form, not because he’s magic or a superhero, but simply because of who Jesus is ... the Son of God who gave his life for us on the cross.

Dr. Thomas Troeger recalls the time when he had to be away from his fiancée for over a month to take comprehensive exams. He was madly in love and having to be away from his fiancée made him very sad and depressed. When the bus he was traveling on stopped for a break at a Greyhound station, he sat at a U-shaped coffee counter and found himself sitting across from an old woman.

The old woman saw him and said, “Boy, honey, you sure look depressed.” Troeger said, “I am,” and he started crying. “What’s wrong, honey?” she asked. He told her about his fiancée and how he missed her.

The woman told him that she was been married to a traveling salesman who had passed away. They used to cry every time her husband had to go away. “Marriage was wonderful,” she told him. “You’re going to have a wonderful marriage. Everything will be just fine.”

She suggested he might feel better if he ate something, so she ordered the last donut that was under a scratchy plastic cover. The woman broke the donut and said, “Here, eat this.” Just then an announcement came on and the woman said, “That’s my bus. I’ve got to go.” Take care, honey. Troeger concluded his encounter by saying, “Just then my eyes were opened, and I recognized Christ was there in that bus station.”

You see, Christ makes himself know in broken bread, broken donuts, shared Twinkies, and in almost every aspect of life. There are times when the events of life confuse us and get us off course, but it's then that Jesus reaches out in some unexpected way or through some unexpected person to encourage and uplift and to remind us of his presence.

Maybe you'll be startled and think, "Where did you come from?" But then we remember that Jesus promised to "be with us always, even to the end of the age."

This morning I challenge you to look around you ... wherever you are. You just may find or see or feel the presence of Christ. You may even find yourself saying, "Where did you come from?" And then remember: The tomb is empty. Jesus is alive. The risen Christ is with us even in the midst of the pandemic and even when we're forced to abstain from Holy Communion ... and that makes all the difference in the world.

And to that I say, "Thanks be to God." Amen.

HYMN

Open Our Eyes, Lord

BB 72

Open our eyes, Lord; we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him, and say that we Love him.

Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.

Open our eyes, Lord; we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him, and say that we Love him.

Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.

APOSTLES' CREED

P: As children of God, open our eyes as we profess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS

A: Let us pray. Amazing God, like the disciples, we desire physical proof of your divinity, but you offer us a glimpse of your heavenly glory. Open our eyes to your resurrected presence at work in the world.

We give thanks that Christ is revealed to us in ordinary simple acts ... while walking, talking, by an unexpected smile from a stranger, and when we reach beyond ourselves to assist others. We would expect the appearances of Jesus to be spectacular. But then again, life is punctuated by the spectacular only once in a while. Most of the time, the events of our lives are quite ordinary, and that's where it seems you prefer to meet us.

In our world communities, we look for an end to warfare, especially as we fight against the coronavirus, but you offer us the gift of peace. Be with world leaders and their nation, all those who have died because of the pandemic.

In our church communities, we search for signs and miracles, but you offer us your body and blood and the Word made flesh. Lead us by your means of means of grace active in our lives, create a bold vision for Zion, and a new vision of our mission.

In our home and friendship communities, we long for physical healing in the lives of our loved ones, but you offer us wholeness of life in the presence of disease and health. Touch those who are ill with your loving hand and your healing presence as we remember the families who have lost loved ones to COVID-19 and all those we name in the silence of our hearts.

In our families, Lord, we often desire lives that will exist forever, but you offer us the gift of eternal life in your kingdom. Inspire us through the lives of all your saints, that we may seek the crown of glory in our lives.

These and all the prayers of our hearts we offer now in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray together saying ...

: **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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

† THE SENDING †

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

WORDS OF COMFORT DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

P: Friends in Christ: Psalm 46 says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble." If you feel fearful, meditate on God's Word, and encourage others to do the same. I've provided Biblical passages about God's protection, providence, peace, and presence to meditate upon when you feel anxious about the current situation we're facing. I suggest you take the time to read them.

God's Protection: **Psalm 91:1-6**
God's Providence: **Acts 11:27-30**
God's Peace: **Philippians 4:4-7**
God's Presence: **Psalm 46:1-11**

Remember, this is a time when our faith in God helps us to have bearing, to have wisdom, and to walk by faith. It is a time in our lives to put our fears, anxiety, frustration, boredom, and confusion at the foot of the cross. Let it be so.

BLESSING

P: And now may Christ, the wisdom and power of God, and the sources of our life together, keep us united in mind and spirit. May the blessing of almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you always. Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Abide with Me

ELW 629

Abide with me, fast fall the eventide,
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence ev-'ry passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me.



I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me!

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

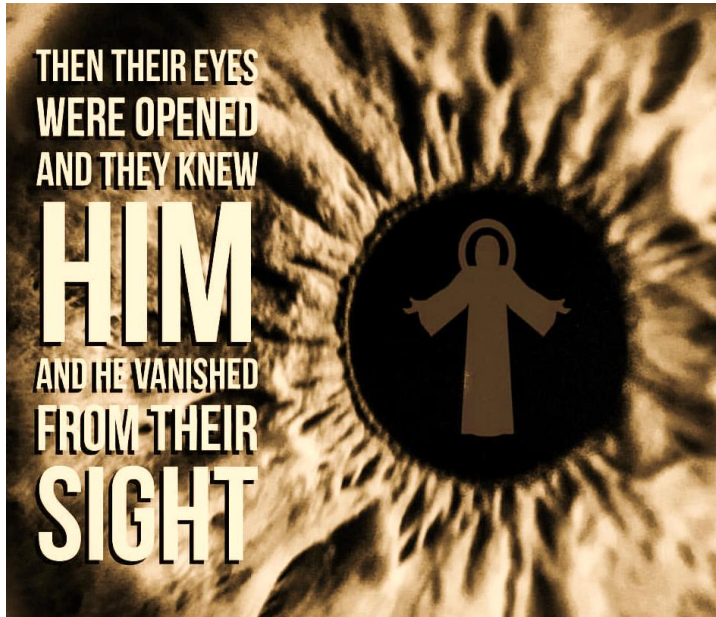
SERVICE ENDING

A: Live in peace and serve the Lord. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Open the Eyes of My Heart

P. Baloché



Open their Eyes, Lord

PRAYER LIST

FOR HEALING

Thelma Pearson	Judie Ingersoll	Lucy Davis
Bill Grove	Mary Grzybowski	Kay Crawford
Holly Hoover	Betty Stoner	Don Heartter
Janet & Harry Musselman		
Ron Sahn (Friend of Dave Wise)		
Wilson Pipkin (Father of Wilson Pipkin)		
Jessica Graham (Granddaughter of Janet & Harry Musselman)		
Loma Slike (Mother of Sue Wise)		
Mike LaFatta (Son-in-law of Bill & Julia Grove)		

FOR COMFORT, PEACE, STRENGTH, & SAFETY

Charlotte & George Potts	Marlin Zimmerman	Arlene Miller
Deb McCartney	Bette Geibel	Jennifer Thompson
Ted Symonds & Family		
Arlene Wise (Sister-in-law of Dave Wise)		
Vaun Hile (Father of Lynda Sherwood)		
Jennifer Kready (Daughter of Dave & Donna Dumeyer)		

FOR PROTECTION FOR MILITARY & FIRST RESPONDERS

Christopher Wright	Jonathan Hoover
Thom Whitesel	Ryan Stitzel
Doug Kautter	Justin Gorlaski
Chris Andrew	Corey Landis (Nephew of Jesse & Pat Landis)

Note: Please contact Anne Rankin in the church office by email adminzelc@comcast.net or phone (717) 945-4585 if anyone should be added or deleted from Zion's Prayer List.