



Call to worship:

I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together. Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. *Psalm 34: 2-3,8*

Opening Prayer

God of mystery and revelation, once again we seek your face as we journey through the realities of life. Lord, help us experience your presence in our journey, and reveal yourself to us. Open our eyes to recognise you, teach your Word to understand you, warm our hearts with your presence. Stay with us, Lord, and lead us into your truth and your peace, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn STF 294 - All you that seek the Lord who died

All you that seek the Lord who died,
your God for sinners crucified,
now, now let all your grief be o'er!
Believe, and you shall weep no more.

Haste then, you souls that first believe,
who dare the gospel word receive,
your faith with joyful hearts confess,
be bold, be Jesus' witnesses.

The Lord of life is risen indeed,
to death delivered in your stead;
his rise proclaims your sins forgiven,
and shows the living way to heaven.

Go, tell the followers of your Lord
their Jesus is to life restored;
he lives to quicken humankind;
he lives that all his life may find.

A prayer of adoration

Lord of the journey, we praise you that in you we find our destination. Lord of hospitality, we praise you for welcoming us and feeding our souls. Breaker of bread, your body broken for us, we worship and adore your holy name. Amen.

A prayer of confession

Lord, we confess that we live our lives distracted by so many things. So often this is when things aren't going the way we think they should, like the pair who trod the Emmaus road. Our feet carry us forward, but our thoughts go round in circles; and at such times, when you come to us, Lord, we often fail to recognise you. We are sorry and ask you to reveal yourself to us afresh. Amen.

Bible Reading : Luke 24: 13-35

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; 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 recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Hymn StF 308 - On our journey to Emmaus https://youtu.be/pJw0G90dHe0?si=Jy_bkEq6uBjuhoUd

On the journey to Emmaus with our hearts cold as stone --
the One who would save us had left us alone.
Then a stranger walks with us and, to our surprise,
he opens our stories and he opens our eyes.

And our hearts burned within us as we talked on
the way,
how all that was promised was ours on that day.
So we begged him, 'Stay with us and grant us your
word.'
We welcomed the stranger and we welcomed the
Lord.

And that evening at the table as he blessed and
broke bread,
we saw it was Jesus arisen from the dead;
though he vanished before us we knew he was near
--
the life in our dying and the hope in our fear.

On our journey to Emmaus, in our stories and feast,
with Jesus we claim that the greatest is least:
and his words burn within us -- let none be ignored
--
who welcomes the stranger shall welcome the Lord.

Message

There is a beautiful quote by the author and philosopher Albert Camus:

"Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend."

Dear friends, this expresses a deep desire of the human heart—the desire for companionship. We are not made to walk alone.

You might have heard about the meaning of the word companion. It comes from two simple words: com meaning "with," and panis meaning "bread." So a companion is someone with whom we share bread, someone who walks with us, sits with us, and shares life with us.

The story of the road to Emmaus is one of the most beautiful resurrection stories in the Gospel. It is full of sadness, surprise, Scripture, table fellowship, and new hope.

Two disciples are walking away from Jerusalem. They are leaving the place of pain, confusion, and broken hope. They are not expecting resurrection. They are not looking for Jesus. As far as they are concerned, the story is over.

And sometimes, this is also our story. There are moments in our lives when we feel like walking away. Walking away from hope. Walking away from dreams. Walking away from what we once believed.

What they were doing as they walked is very important. It was not just a casual conversation. Luke says they were discussing. This word means "to search together," "to examine deeply." "They were not just talking—they were searching. They were trying to understand their pain. They were trying to make sense of what had happened. And this is very human. When life is broken, we search. We ask questions. But the beauty on that journey is special. And it is exactly in that moment—when they are searching—that Jesus comes near and walks with them.

In this story, I want to reflect on two simple but powerful moments.

The first one is the prayer of the two disciples, “Stay with us.”

As evening comes, the disciples say to Jesus, Stay with us. It is a simple prayer. But such a deep prayer. Stay with us in our evening—when life feels dark. Stay with us in our uncertainty—when we don’t know the way. Stay with us when hope is fading. And the beautiful thing is—Jesus stays.

Dear friends, we all have many kinds of prayers. Long prayers, silent prayers, formal prayers.

But sometimes the most powerful prayer is the simplest one: “Stay with us.”

This prayer is not inviting a distant God. It is recognising a present God. It is a desire of heart. ” In hospital rooms...In lonely homes...In moments of fear... In times of failure...We can pray: “Stay with me, Lord. “And when we pray like this, something changes. Maybe not the situation immediately, but our heart changes. And again, this prayer led to bigger changes in life. Leads to new experiences and new direction. That’s what happened in this story of disciple.

Second moment in this story is the opening of eyes.

Luke says: “Their eyes were opened, and they recognised him.”

One of the things that attracts me in this story is that it echoes the Genesis story of Adam and Eve. It is quite interesting to see that, rather than using the more common Greek word for “open,” anoigo, the evangelist adopts the term used in the narrative of the Fall, which is the less commonly used dianoigo, meaning “to open fully” or “to break open.” This word choice brings Luke 24 into the same wording as Genesis 3: their eyes were opened—dianoigo—and they knew.

In the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve’s eyes were opened, when they ate and they saw shame. They saw fear. They saw separation from God. But here, in Luke, when the eyes are opened, they see Jesus. In the fall, the opening of eyes led to brokenness. But in the resurrection, the opening of eyes leads to restoration.

This is the good news.

What was broken in Eden is being restored in Christ. And notice, this happens at the table. In the breaking of bread. In a simple act of fellowship. Dear friends, even today, we recognise Jesus in simple moments— In prayer, In Scripture, In fellowship, In Holy Communion.

When Christ breaks the bread, he also breaks open our understanding. He opens our eyes to see his presence in our lives. This can become our prayer in every moment of life: “Lord, open our eyes. “In all our fellowships, in our worship, in our meetings, open our eyes to see you.

We live in a world where people often see only what they want to see, and sometimes even choose to close their eyes intentionally. But Christian discipleship calls us to something deeper. It calls us to a willingness to see— to see truth, to see Christ, to see people in need and to see God at work even in the ordinary moments of life.

Dear friends, let me conclude my thoughts today. At the beginning of the story, they are walking away from Jerusalem in sadness. At the end of the story, they run back with joy.

When Jesus walks with us, our direction changes. Our understanding changes. Our life changes. So today, let us hold on to this simple but powerful prayer, “Lord, stay with us and open our eyes.”

Stay with us in our journey. Stay with us in our struggles. Stay with us in our daily life. Open our eyes to see your presence. Open our eyes to recognise you in the ordinary moments. Open our eyes to see hope where we see none. And as Jesus stays with us and opens our eyes, our hearts will be renewed, our paths will be redirected, and our lives will be transformed.

So let this be our prayer today and always: “Lord, stay with us and open our eyes.” Amen.

Prayer of Intercession & Lord's Prayer

Lord, stay with us and open our eyes in our journeys of life. When we feel lost or uncertain, guide us.

Lord, stay with us and open our eyes in the struggles of humanity. Be near to those who suffer, who are sick, and who are alone.

Lord, stay with us and open our eyes to see your presence in our daily life and to care for one another with love.

Lord, stay with us and open our eyes in this hurting world. Make us instruments of your peace and hope.

Lord, stay with us and open our eyes in your Church and in our ministries. Guide us to serve with faith, humility, and love.

We gather all our prayers together in the words Jesus 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. And 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.

Hymn StF 141 - Abide with me

<https://youtu.be/PzmvagnGTY?si=anLLP3NuV--Eb7V->

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O 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 every passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?

Through cloud and sunshine, O 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.
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows
flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Closing Prayer & Blessing

God our co-sojourner and our life companion, we thank you for your presence in our worship and for your living Word among us. As we go to our daily responsibilities, help us to recognise you, not only in the familiar, but also in the unfamiliar moments of life. Keep us safe from every temptation and trial. Strengthen us by your Spirit and guide us in your truth. Abide with us, Lord, until that day when we meet you face to face on the other shore. Through your Son, we pray. Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which leads us into the divine presence, go with us.

May the love of the Father, which surrounds us in divine peace, fill our hearts.

May the Holy Spirit, our Companion, lead us into divine perfection and remain with us., now and always. Amen

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