

Traditional Home service Sunday 15th May

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

We come to God as one from whom no secrets are hidden, to ask for his forgiveness and peace:

*Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.*

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.
Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (*All Creatures of Our God and King*)

READINGS - Acts 11.1-18
Revelation 21.1-6
Luke 24:13-35

TALK

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 to the dead. 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 OF INTERCESSION

Spend some time praying for our nation, our community and our families.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

HYMN 2 (*O Thou Who Camest from Above*)

CONCLUSION

The Lord bless you and watch over you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

HYMNS TO USE

1 All creatures of our God and king
Lift up your voices and with us sing
Alleluia, alleluia
Thou burning with golden beam
Thou silver moon with softer gleam
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia,

2 Thou rushing wind that art so strong
Ye clouds that sail in heaven a long
Alleluia, alleluia
Thou rising morn in praise rejoice
Ye light of evening find a voice
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia,

3 Thou flowing water pure and clear
Make music for thy Lord to hear
Alleluia, alleluia
Thou fire so masterful and bright
That gives to man both warmth and
light
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia,

1 O thou who camest from above
the fire celestial to impart,
kindle a flame of sacred love
on the mean altar of my heart!

2 There let it for thy glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return
in humble prayer and fervent praise.

3 Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
to work, and speak, and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire,
and still stir up the gift in me.

4 Ready for all thy perfect will,
my acts of faith and love repeat;
till death thy endless mercies seal,
and make the sacrifice complete.

Sermon - Louise Morton
Open to Jesus... Luke 24:13-35

Tom Wright commentator and bishop ! Calls this story the finest scene Luke ever sketched!

Love that this potentially could of been a married couple! He and others sight John 19 25 at the cross was Mary wife of Clopas, possibly this couple Mary and Cleopas walking home together, that first Easter Day, confused and traumatised!

I also wondered, and another commentary wondered the same ! As Luke is the only one to record the story, was it given to him by Cleopas / Clopas himself? A first hand account ?

And even some commentators wonder was it Luke himself with Cleopas?
In short we don't know!

These two, maybe it was two chaps as in the movie! Any way, certainly they were confused and sad, bewildered, and they go walking, a seven mile stretch ...possibly going home? Seems likely...
It's still Easter Day.
They are in deep conversation....with sadness etched into their faces.

1. Jesus came up and walked with them.

It's like Jesus catches them up, he's going in the same direction away from Jerusalem, love how the cartoon gave him see through hands! He joins them on their journey.

He asks them what they are so intently talking about, basically asking them what's the story they are telling them selves.....
Jesus is tender, he's gentle! But he is not slow to challenge, we see this in the gospels many times, and it must be the same for us now!

Depending on which version, he calls them : foolish, senseless! thick headed, slow hearted, dull...

Why can't you simply believe? He urges
He is patient with us, but he will also challenge us, call us out of our slumbers, doubts and denials !

We need his version! We need Holy Spirit inspired understanding of His word and our story !

The two walkers had been seeing things the wrong way round!

They were waiting for God to redeem Israel from suffering, but instead he had redeemed Israel through suffering! It was the whole story Jesus was explaining..... not odd verses here and there.

2. Pointing out everything in the scriptures.

He shows them a more beautiful story....

He goes through with them the Books of Moses, the prophets,

I'm saddened when Christians don't invest in getting familiar with the Old Testament, it can be hard going, but it's treasure!

It gives us the context and understanding for the Gospels and beyond, Tom Wright would suggest it's only in this context of understanding the story of God and Israel that we can truly recognise who Jesus is.

Back in March at New wine leaders, heard a chap called Glenn Packiam from Colorado Springs, one of the things he said relating to this passage; we live in an age of anxiety because of the pressure of writing our own story, we need the relief of turning the pen over to God.

I know many times I have said this! 😊 about the relief of not seeing our lives as all about us! Of seeing our selves as contributing our little puzzle piece to His big picture.
It doesn't make us less beloved, it releases us from all sorts of traps ! Over importance, rebellion, anxiety.....it releases over us joy and freedom

3. He acted as if he was going on but they pressed him to stay.

Jesus would of gone away, without them pressing him to stay, if that had happened would they have always wondered, just who was that ! Would one day the penny of dropped !

With him he wants us to do our part, always two sides, right back to Adam and Eve, and Abraham! Because he is seeking relationship with us.

Recently been dwelling on psalm 18

It illustrates this wonderfully! Here are some verses:

God made my life complete, when I placed all the pieces before him.

When I got my act together, he gave me a fresh start.

God rewrote the text of my life, when I opened the book of my heart to his eyes.

So he comes in with them, and they sit down to eat, he was their guest, but he acts as the host!

He takes bread blesses it, and breaks it, traditionally bread was broken in thanks giving at the beginning of a meal;

when we welcome him in, He takes over!

And that's great because he's better at it than we are, he can make us a better us, than we can make !

Love how David Campbell always explained this at river camp! He'd say something like if we come across weird people there, we're seeing the better version, they'd been worse before they were Christians ! Being a Christian hadn't made them weird!

Back to this passage ! they now really see! And he vanishes! Did this as an assembly at Bozeat primary, actually had the young man who was Jesus, go back behind the curtains that cover the lunch tables! Special effects !

Tom Wright again! First meal in genesis the sharing of fruit that opens eyes, but into rebellion, death and going against God, this breaking of bread a first meal on that first Easter Day opens eyes to recognise Jesus! It has to be said! That's very beautiful symmetry!

Death defeated, the long curse, originally from Eden, broken, resurrected Jesus brimming with life joy and new possibility, has burst in on the world of sorrow and decay.

4.They were up and on their way back to Jerusalem.

Encounter can change our direction, give us different priorities....

Meal left, darkness and risks taken

(stumbling and robbers !) they wanted to share the good news!

I love how they look back on their day and recall their hearts burning! Within them, as he opened scripture to them!

Before the excitement of realising it was Jesus, they had felt the day was over it's getting late, now they're retracing their steps, regardless!

Another thing Glenn Packiam said : The best thing we have is the presence of God, the best thing we have to offer is the presence of God.

The two recognised him in the breaking of the bread, let's pray we recognise him in our lives, pray we can discern his presence with us.

Let's not settle for less !

So to sum up!

Let's have :

1.Lives open to Him joining in on the journey we're taking.

2.Lives open to his correction, and revelation.(let's value scripture ! All of it, even the lists !) let's want him to open scripture to us!

3.Lives open to doing our part in the relationship he offers.

4.Lives open to him changing our direction, messing with our priorities, lives open to wanting his presence.

5. Lives open to sharing the Good News about him with others.