

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Vision of Zion Lutheran Church and School is a Christ-centered, growing, spiritual home for ✠ Worshiping God ✠ Proclaiming the Gospel ✠ Nurturing faith ✠ Educating ✠ Loving and Caring for people



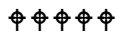
**THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER
APRIL 26, A.D. 2020**

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Dallas, Texas 75214

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AS WE GATHER— From “before the foundation of the world” until heaven and earth pass away, “the word of the Lord remains forever” (1 Peter 1:20, 25). This “living and abiding word of God” is the preaching of Christ Jesus, namely that God “raised him from the dead and gave him glory” (1 Peter 1:21, 23). By this living word, we “have been born again” to eternal life (1 Peter 1:23) and ransomed from our sinful and mortal life “with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18–19). This living word also calls us to repentance, to dying and rising in Holy Baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38). In this, we receive the Holy Spirit “for you and for your children and for all who are far off” (Acts 2:39). Through the preaching of His cross and resurrection, Jesus draws near to bring us “into his glory” (Luke 24:26). As He opens the Scriptures, He opens our minds to comprehend “the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27), and He brings us to know Him “in the breaking of the bread” (Luke 24:35).



COLLECT OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, through the humiliation of Your Son You raised up the fallen world. Grant to Your faithful people, rescued from the peril of everlasting death, perpetual gladness and eternal joys; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 2:14a, 36–41

Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them:

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy

Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

PSALM

Psalms 116:1–14; antiphon: v. 5

I love the Lord, because he has heard*
my voice and my pleas for mercy.
Because he inclined his ear to me,*
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;*
I suffered distress and anguish.
Then I called on the name of the Lord:*
"O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!"
Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;*
our God is merciful.
The Lord preserves the simple;*
when I was brought low, he saved me.
Return, O my soul, to your rest;*
for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.
For you have delivered my soul from death,*
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling;
I will walk before the Lord*
in the land of the living.
I believed, even when I spoke,*
"I am greatly afflicted";
I said in my alarm,*
"All mankind are liars."
What shall I render to the Lord*
for all his benefits to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation* and call on the name of the Lord,
I will pay my vows to the Lord* in the presence of all his people.

If you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for your sake, who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers, and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord remains forever."

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

ALLELUIA AND VERSE

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 24:13–35

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were

kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up 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 happened.

Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even 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 him they did not see." And he said to them,

"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and

broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

HOMILY

“When You Walk through a Storm’...Pandemically Thinking”

Text: Luke 24:13-17

Pastor Preece

Christ is Risen. He is Risen, Indeed. Alleluia.

Cristo ha Resucitado! En verdad ha Resucitado! Aleluya!

Christos tensiou! Bahake tensiou! Halleluia!

“That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad.”

From Rodgers and Hammerstein a bit altered:

When you walk through a storm – *an epidemic* –

Hold your head up high

And don't be afraid of the dark – *of disease, even death.*

At the end of a storm

Is a golden sky – *on a Texas summer day or in Heaven above* –

And the sweet, silver song of a lark – *or of a parish or an angelic choir.*

Walk on, through the wind, – *no telling where the Holy Spirit bloweth* –

Walk on, through the rain, – *remembering your Baptism* –

Though your dreams – *High Schoolers – College Students* – be tossed and blown.

Walk on, walk on with hope – *in Christ* – in your heart,

And you'll never walk alone,

You'll never walk alone.

He promised, “Lo, I am with you always.” (Matthew 28:20)

Those Emmaus disciples, one named Cleopas, the other unnamed, (Does he represent us?) had just been through a violent political storm. They were trying to walk away from it: The Roman Empire oppressing the Jewish folk, the very Children of God. Indeed, some Hebraists were protecting their own interests and

guarding with greed their sold-out position to Caesar and they got Jesus crucified. The storm was behind those packing-it-in-pedestrians, seven miles behind them, as they walked westbound from Jerusalem to Emmaus. But they knew another storm could soon roll in, if the Roman guards started rounding up Jesus' followers. In coming persecutions, they would.

But who shows up on the road to Emmaus? The Risen One. Who explains the Scriptures while walking the walk on the way? The Risen One. Who shows up while breaking the bread? The Risen One. None other than Jesus himself! He brought His calming, stilling, redeeming (Luke 24:21), saving presence and stilled their storm, convincing them that He lived and that their very breath and life was bound unto Him for eternal good.

Oh, but in our current pandemic crisis, a stormy storm, *mit sturm und drang*, we stagger; we stumble; we stop; our heads droop; we feel hopeless; and we fuss and fume at others, about others, toward others. Haven't you noticed? Stress causes sin and sin causes stress. Good Lord, forgive us. And He does! Help us to de-escalate and love our neighbor as ourselves. (Mark 12:21)

Walk on, walk on through the storms with Christ in His Word and Sacrament present.

Walk on. Walk on with Christ in the Church, the *Ecclesiae Militantes*, the noble Militant Church that marches on toward her holy objectives: Mercy-showing, Ministry and Mission. Walk on. Walk on. Walk on with Christ. Keep your head up...High!

Norwegian Lutheran, Kaspar J. Boye, in the mid-19th Century, profoundly summarized "The Emmaus Walk." He wrote powerfully, poignantly, and poetically:

Abide with us, the day is waning;
Thus prayed the two while on the way.
We read that Thou, O Lord, remaining,
Didst all their doubts and fears allay.
Incline Thine ear, Thou King of grace,
When, praying thus, we seek Thy face.

At eventide, Thy Spirit sending,
Help us, O Lord, our watch to keep,
In prayer devout, before Thee bending,
Ere our eyelids close in sleep,
Confessing sin in deed and word
With hope of mercy from the Lord.

When earthly help no more availeth,
To sup with us Thou wilt be nigh;
Thou givest strength that never faileth,
In Thee we grave and death defy.
While earth is fading from our sight,
Our eyes behold the realms of light.

In the Name of the Father, the Son +, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

