

A Easter 3 2017

Do you recognize these?

(Dried up palm, dying Easter lily)

It's been 2 weeks since Easter. I've been filing all of Holy week and Easter sermons, putting away butterflies, organizing copies of this year's bulletins.

All week I have been thinking that Easter this year was such a great series of services, 10 worship services in 8 days, really a wonderful celebrations, worship at its best and here we are— and though we still have the mobile and banners up we are missing the Easter garden, the trumpet, the special choir.

Business as usual. Worship as usual

Plain ordinary every Sunday worship.

For clergy there is a bit of a letdown after all of the excitement.

The followers of Jesus were also feeling let down.

They had an incredible week in Jerusalem.

It was a whirlwind of excitement, joy and disappointment and despair.

Hopes had never been higher, until they saw their friend Jesus, hanging dead, crucified on a cross.

It was finally over.

And they felt terribly let down.

They were so sad and in grief and the one person who might have comforted them was now buried in a tomb, provided at the last minute, by a stranger.

So they yearned for the Savior's presence, but all of the hope was gone.

It was time to return to everyday life.

And so today, in our Gospel lesson from Luke, we find two such followers, on Easter morning, unaware of the resurrection.

They are traveling the Emmaus road, which led down from Jerusalem to the little, ordinary village of Emmaus.

“They were walking down, down the road from their glorious holy city: down, down, down to their everyday ordinary life.” (source?)

Behind them was all of their hopes, their dreams and their joy.

Before them was life in Emmaus...without Jesus....

Or so they thought, but we know that in fact they are not alone.

Whether they recognize it or not, Jesus is with them.

He walks the road to Emmaus with them.

Can you imagine what that might have been like?

Have you ever thought about why these two faithful followers did not recognize their Lord?

I'm going to show you a short YouTube clip of how one youth group interpreted today's gospel lesson.

As you watch it I want you to consider why Jesus was not recognized by the very people who loved him so much.

And...maybe think about what gets in our way of recognizing the risen Jesus in our lives.

Show clip.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKRjOiuGD7I>

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Congregation discussion

So Jesus walked the road to Emmaus with his followers.

But they did not recognize him.

Why do you think that was? Anyone have an idea? Get a few answers from the congregation.

You know, what is amazing is that these followers knew everything about Jesus, except the one essential thing: Jesus Christ is Risen from the grave.

We are not so different. We too can travel the Emmaus Road.

There may be times in our lives when we feel all of the good times are behind us or that we travel through life, alone, without support.

However, it is exactly in those times when God is with us in the resurrected Jesus.

Jesus Christ goes with us into all of our life's circumstances.

Even when we don't have something to celebrate, or when we are in fact in grief or feeling hopeless, Jesus walks with us.

In in the hearing of scripture, Jesus is with us.

In the breaking of the bread, Jesus is with us.

In the splashing of the water, Jesus is with us.

In the anointing with oil, Jesus is with us.

In the trip from Easter celebrations back to our ordinary lives, Jesus is with us.

But you knew that all along didn't you!

Today there are no waving palms, or children's processions, or butterfly streamers, or trumpets and yet here you are.

On this very ordinary Sunday you are here to meet the risen Lord and to celebrate Christ's presence, extraordinary presence, in our ordinary lives.

Wherever we find ourselves on our own Emmaus roads, Jesus, the one risen from the grave, is with us. This is the good news of the gospel. Amen.