

Message for Sunday, April 19, 2026

Scripture: Luke 24: 13-35

Title: Recognition

## **Welcome**

**Announcements**: Giving Options... online, in the box, offering. Special offering for the month of April is UMCOR (video); We are in need of TP, canned peas, baked beans, chili and water at FOOD Pantry; United Women of Faith meeting about gardening on Tuesday, April 21 at 1PM Verde Hall. Learn to Knit/Crochet Class-Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 10AM in the Atrium.

## **Fellowship of Love**

### **Song**

### **Call to Worship**

L: Even if we feel abandoned and all alone,

**P: Christ meets us here.**

L: Even when we become lost and disoriented,

**P: Christ rescues us in our need.**

L: Even when our hearts are touched by the frost,

**P: Christ warms our spirits.**

L: Even when all light has faded to black,

**P: Christ illumines our Way.**

L: Here in this house of worship enter, rejoice and come home.

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## **Unison Prayer**

**Lover of our souls, you meet us on the road of life and lift us from our pain and grief.**

**Heal our hardness of heart, and open our minds to the subtle-ness of your ways and the grandeur of your kingdom.**

**During times of suffering and doubt, help us grow strong and true, through your enduring word.**

**Reveal your presence to us, as we show hospitality to strangers and break bread in your name. Amen.**

L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

## **Song-Special Music, Kevin, RJ and Dell**

### **Scripture: Luke 24:13-35 NRSVue**

<sup>13</sup> Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,

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<sup>14</sup> and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

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<sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them,

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<sup>16</sup> but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

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<sup>17</sup> And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.

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<sup>18</sup> Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?"

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<sup>19</sup> 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,

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<sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.

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<sup>21</sup> 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.

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<sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,

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<sup>23</sup> 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.

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<sup>24</sup> 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.”

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<sup>25</sup> Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!

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<sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?”

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<sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

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<sup>28</sup> As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.

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<sup>29</sup> 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.

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<sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

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<sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight.

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<sup>32</sup> 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?"

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<sup>33</sup> That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.

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<sup>34</sup> They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"

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<sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

### **Message: Recognition**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_Borle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Borle)

I have not told you guys this story at all. This is a story that I've had to repeat several times over the past month because it involves the musical Something Rotten, at least it did initially. When the kids were little we took them to their first Broadway show, we took them to see Something Rotten. Now we obviously couldn't just go to New York for just the show. We spent the day in New York. We went to Times Square and

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walked around and then we started making our way to see the show.

On the way to the show we go into Chipotle, the first and last time we ate at one. While we were there Katie noticed someone and she pointed him out to me. It turned out Broadway actor Christian Borle was in the restaurant eating. Borle played the part of Shakespear in the show we were seeing. We had also seen him on TV when they did a recording of Peter Pan, he was Smee. I didn't recognize him, in fact I didn't even notice him, it was Katie who did. That seems like a nice one-off experience, going to New York and seeing someone famous.

The story doesn't stop there though. The next time we were in New York we were walking down the street and who walks past us? Christian Borle. Of course, we didn't recognize him right away, so he was gone before we realized it. Two times! Exciting right? Again, the story isn't done. You see the next year we came back to see another Broadway show, at this point it was a running joke about seeing Christian Borle. It was a topic of conversation as we joked about it walking down the street headed to see our show. Right then a gentleman stepped out in front of me walking quickly to the side and past. Just as he passed me I saw his face, and who was it? Christian Borle. I won't tell you what I said in church.

We read the story of the disciples walking to Emmaus as if they were idiots. How couldn't they see it was Jesus they

were walking with? I think that's a lot easier than we might think. First we forget that this story is happening Easter Sunday. We've moved past Easter, what two weeks in the past now? This story, however, is on the same day. These disciples are walking and they've heard the report of the women at the tomb but are in their own grief.

I know from experience that it is easy not to recognize someone, even when you are being intentional in keeping an eye out for them. I know when I'm overwhelmed with grief and baggage that I don't often see what's right in front of me. So, I don't know about you, I get these disciples. Maybe they were on their way home because they have to work. Maybe they decided to "get out of Dodge" to be safe. Maybe they were emotionally or spiritually lost. I've been in all those situations, and will be again at some point. I get it.

What really stood out to me in this passage though is how they recognize Jesus and what it means. You see they recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread, and in the fellowship of the community. These are two areas that I feel we often neglect. Most theologians that I read this week were really intent on connecting the breaking of the bread to communion. I want to pull back from that. You see I think all of us get that and expect that type of thing. The passage itself is meant to call up to our minds the story of communion. I want to pull back though and remind you that this is a meal.

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You see it is in a meal where we are vulnerable with one another. It is then were we see eye to eye and share with one another. We neglect this area of our spiritual lives to much. One of the basic problems in our society and relationships today is that we do everything separately. I just read a report from a hostel worker, and they reported that travelers complain that there isn't any fun environment in hostels anymore. The worker remarked it was because everyone stares at their screens or seek privacy as opposed to community. This is a basic flaw in where we are today. I know we are all busy, but it is in the sharing of a meal that these disciples were able to see the risen savior.

The other aspect of this is experiencing Christ meant experiencing community. It was three people walking together. It was a shared meal. It was the disciples sharing their experience with the other disciples. The resurrection is about more than just you. It is about how you and I are called to be in community with one another. To share meals together but also to laugh and to cry together. Our communities, not just the church, are broken today. We spend more time dividing one another rather than helping one another. It's no wonder that there is a large segment of people who see empathy as a weakness. It is a weakness. It allows you to realize that there is no you without each other.

I want to encourage you this week to open yourself up to seeing Christ in the world around you. Christ is out there. Walking the roads. And most of our experiences are more like

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me seeing Christian Borle, we recognize Christ just a little too late to participate. However, if we go forth in community with one another than we will experience the fullness of all the resurrected savior has to offer. Amen.

**Pastoral Prayer/The Lord's Prayer**

**Song**

**Benediction**

**Song**

**Good bye**