



33B EASTER 3B - ONLINE SERVICE

Open Minds

Abstract

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

Luke 24:37-39 (NIV)

Jim de Jong
jim@dejongs.id.au

GOSPEL

Luke 24:36b–48

³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

⁴⁴ He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁱ

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Sunday, April 18, 2021 | Easter | Third Sunday of Easter | Year B

First Reading Acts 3:12–19
Psalm Psalm 4
New Testament 1 John 3:1–7
Gospel Luke 24:36b–48ⁱⁱ

The two disciples have returned to Jerusalem after their walk to Emmaus and back. Their conversation with Jesus on the Emmaus road has brought some comfort but may have raised yet more questions. Their maelstrom of emotions includes shock and grief at Jesus' death and confusion and disbelief at the disappearance of his body. However, as Jesus eats with them, these feelings give way to an expression of pure joy and, when Jesus explains the Scriptures to them, understanding of the truth about who he is.

Knowing that the disciples experienced times of anxiety in their journey of faith can be encouraging to us, and offers an opportunity to explore how we respond, emotionally, in different situations. What would help our minds to be open – when we are distressed – to know the peace of Christ, and to trust in his word?

This week we explore feelings in faith.

	Pre-Service
	Introit
	<p style="text-align: center;">Greeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and also with us</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">We Gather</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jesus says, 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In worship, let us come to the one who offers peace and rest</p> <p style="text-align: center;">acknowledgements</p>

	<p><i>Let us pray</i> Against the noise of the world, we cover our ears; at distressing sights, we close our eyes; to confusing thoughts, we close our minds; amid the clamour of distress we close our hearts.</p> <p>Loving God, your ears and eyes are ever open to our needs; help us to worship with open hearts and minds, that we may have open ears and eyes to see the work that you call us to do, and open hands to do it. Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/song</p>
	<p>Welcome</p> <p>My kids don't really like thunderstorms. They found that the loud noise and the lightning were a bit scary. Some kids are scared of the dark. Some need to have a night light and my kids used to take a piece of lambskin to bed.</p> <p>What helps you when you are afraid?</p> <p>When Jesus visited his friends after Easter – they were frightened. They thought he was a ghost. Jesus said, "Peace be with you", which is like saying, "It is OK – don't be scared." Then he showed them his hands and his feet, and he ate some fish with them. His friends were really happy then, and they weren't frightened anymore because Jesus was with them – (maybe a little bit different) but still the Jesus they knew and loved.</p> <p>iii</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i> Lord God, whose arms are always open to us, we come before you today with hearts and minds open to receive your teaching.</p> <p>Lead us to understand who you are and what you have done, and what you require of us as witnesses. In Jesus' name. Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/song/video</p>
	<p>We say Sorry God, we confess that when distress comes knocking at our door, all that we have learned and should know</p>

goes flying out of the window.

Our minds in disarray,
 we fail to turn to trusted sources of help.
 Forgive us for forgetting how to seek you.
 We forget your sustaining Word in Scripture,
 your presence when we turn to you in prayer,
 the calm that is to be found when we seek you in community.
 We are sorry for turning in on ourselves,
 our minds going round in circles.
 Come, risen Lord, break the cycle of our despair.
 Amen.

Words of Assurance

Our understanding is dark, clouded by dismay,
 fearful and lacking in faith,
 yet we know that you will understand, Lord.
 Shine your light on us
 and banish the dark thoughts that overwhelm us;
 forgive us the deeds committed
 while fearful and bewildered,
 and lead us forward in the light of your love.
Amen.

Readings

The Gospel reading for today is a well-known passage.
 Before it is read, invite the congregation to place themselves into the story...

Luke 24:36-48

respond

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Hymn/Song

Response

As you listen to what is likely to be a very familiar story,

 Imagine you are in the story.
 Imagine what it was like
 try to imagine what the disciples
 and other followers were feeling at that time
 be present in the room
 as we pick up the story where those on the road to Emmaus
 had come back to tell the others that they had broken bread with Jesus...

 Imagine the roller coaster
 that those first followers of Jesus had been on in that week
 the highs of entering Jerusalem;
 the solemnness of the Passover meal;

the fear of Jesus being arrested in the night;
the deep, deep sadness of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Imagine the joy in others

when they said they had seen the risen Jesus,
the confusion of still not really understanding what is going on,
the uncertainty of what might come next...

Into all of this, Jesus enters.

If it was hard to deal with the feelings before,
imagine what it would have been like at that point!

This is not a ghost – this is Jesus – flesh and bones – standing in front of you.
And he speaks: Peace be with you...

And with those four words – peace be with you
the turmoil and uncertainty of that week is gone.
There is a new peace – a peace that hasn't been known before.

There is no doubt we have had (or will have) times like this in our lives
those times where we feel like there is no way out.
But we can find peace in Christ,
even if the circumstances or the out- come doesn't change.
How we feel, how we react, how we keep going, all change.

Verse 41 reminds us that the disciples' heads,
had not caught up with their hearts yet.
They were overjoyed at seeing the risen Christ,
and yet this was not or couldn't be matched
by any under- standing in their heads.
Surely, there were more questions than answers.
And yet, there was still peace.

Have there been places or times in your life
where you have experienced uncertainty and doubt;
a time when there have been more questions than answers?

Have there been places or times in your life
where you have experienced the peace
of Christ in the midst of all that is going on?

As we continue to celebrate the risen Christ in this Easter season,
may you find a place in your life where you can hear Christ say to you,
"Peace be with you,"
as you allow him to fill your heart and life
with his peace that passes all understanding.

Amen

Hymn/song

Offering

	Notices
	<p>Prayers for all people Let us bring before God those who have never known the transformative power of love: those who live in fear of what others may do to them: those who have the strength to stand up to that which is wrong: those who have the courage and the opportunity to speak out against injustice: those who give of themselves to help those in need: those who work to make this world a better place: those known to us who need our prayers at this time: Amen.</p>
	Lord's Prayer
	Hymn/song
	<p>We are sent out Jesus said to his disciples, 'Peace be with you' – they responded with turmoil. Jesus said, 'Have you anything to eat?' – they served him fish. Jesus opened their minds – they became his witnesses. So, Lord, may we too find peace in your service, with opened minds and hearts on fire. Amen.</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	Benediction
	Thank you

ⁱ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

ⁱⁱ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

ⁱⁱⁱ Davis, Rev Leanne Lay Liturgies Lent-Easter pg. 82 © 2021 MediaCom Education