

Spring Series: “Emmaus: Walking with Jesus”

Sermon #4: “Sharing the Common Life”

Scriptures: Luke 24:33-43 (CEB)

33 They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. 34 They were saying to each other, “The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!” 35 Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as He broke the bread.

36 While they were saying these things, Jesus Himself stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” 37 They were terrified and afraid. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

38 He said to them, “Why are you startled? Why are doubts arising in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet. It’s really me! Touch me and see, for a ghost doesn’t have flesh and bones like you see I have.” 40 As He said this, He showed them His hands and feet. 41 Because they were wondering and questioning in the midst of their happiness, He said to them, “Do you have anything to eat?” 42 They gave Him a piece of baked fish. 43 Taking it, He ate it in front of them.

Text: “The second is like the first: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.” -Matt 22:39

Music Worship Leader: Amanda Lucas

Gathering Song: “Drops in the Ocean” Sanctify

Welcome - Pastor David

Welcome - Introductions, Welcome Center

New web site

Turn off cell phones but like us on Facebook first. Can from our website.

Songs: “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” - Sanctify

“My Savior Lives”

“How Beautiful”

Worship Prayer - Amanda

Kid’s Invited to Kid’s Church - Pastor David

Prayers - Pastor David

Texas - Biker gang shooting, weather/flooding deaths,

Baltimore - Suicide and homicides

Forest Lake - Armed robbery at Don Julio’s, and shooting

Prayers for our neighborhood

Invitation to individual prayers after worship

Introduction to Offering - Pastor David

QR Code for giving via mobile device

Offering: - Angie Prchal

Opening Video - For the sermon series “Emmaus: Walking with Jesus”

PP#1: Emmaus: Walking with Jesus.

“Sharing a Common Life.”

Matthew 22:39 “The second commandment is like the first: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.” -Matt 22:39

Emmaus: Walking with Jesus. “Sharing a Common Life.” Matthew 22:39 “The second commandment is like the first: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.” -Matt 22:39

Every Sunday morning some prayer partners and I gather for prayer at 8:30. If you would like to come and join in that, just show up. One of the pieces we pray about every Sunday is for the Holy Spirit to infuse the fellowship that happens throughout the morning. Part of the importance of gathering together in worship is the fellowship we have with other Christians. We need that. We need the expressions of love and care, of inclusion and importance. We need to connect with other Christians. Often throughout the week, we spend so much time with people who don’t have the same faith as we do, or the same beliefs. We look at things differently as Christians, and that often means we look different to others. But when we gather together as God’s people, we share the love and joy of being a part of the same family, of being like-minded, of that connection we have with our love for Jesus. Fellowship is a biblical principle for Christians. It is so crucial! The Bible says, “It is so pleasant when we gather together with others to enter God’s house.” (Psalm 55:14)

PP#2: Turn to your neighbor and tell them:

“Thank you for being here!”

“It’s important to me to see you!”

Turn to the person next to you and thank them for being here, and tell them it’s important to you to see them. Go ahead! [Pause.]

Christian fellowship is so important. Be sure you do lots of it.

Yet there is a difference between Christian fellowship and Christian community. Fellowship is being together and interacting. It’s having a good time together. But Christian community is something more.

This week I read a story about a pastor who was hosting a Brazilian seminary student. As they drove along, the pastor asked the student if he would like to stop for a cup of coffee. The student said, "I would be honored."

So he swung into a Starbucks, went through the drive-thru. Once on their way the pastor noticed the student was very quiet. He asked him what he was thinking about. The student responded, “When you asked me about stopping for coffee, I thought you were asking me to be your friend. I thought we were going to sit together and share life."

Living in Christian community is sharing life. It’s not polite conversation and catching up on what’s going on. It’s speaking of the deepest things of life.

PP#3: Emmaus: Walking with Jesus:

Sharing the Road

Sharing the Word

Sharing the Meal

Sharing a Common Life

We've been walking with Jesus. We've been walking on the road to Emmaus. And as we've explored this story of that first Easter, we've discovered what the Christian life is all about. Being a Christian means sharing the road. We are people on journeys, out in the roads of life, roads home and in our daily lives, living with Jesus. It means sharing the word, speaking words of life to those we meet along the way, helping them see a very different perspective. It means sharing the meal. It means sitting down with strangers, getting to know them, and building relationships with them. When we do, we meet Jesus. This is how Christians live.

And today, we see that it also means sharing the common life.

PP#4: Luke 24:28-32

28 When they came to Emmaus, He acted as if He was going on ahead. 29 But they urged Him, saying, "Stay with us. It's nearly evening, and the day is almost over." So He went in to stay with them. 30 After He took his seat at the table with them, He took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He disappeared from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Weren't our hearts on fire when He spoke to us along the road and when He explained the scriptures for us?"

On that first Easter, Jesus appeared to two disciples walking home to Emmaus. They were disheartened and defeated, for they believed that Jesus, whom they had been following, was dead. And then a stranger joined them as they walked. They talked, and this stranger spoke about how the Messiah, as prophesied by the Scriptures, had to suffer and die in order to be the Savior. Their hearts burned within them as He taught them.

Then, as they neared Emmaus, they invited this stranger home with them. And, as they were eating, they finally realized that this was no stranger: it was Jesus! Then, suddenly, He vanished.

They were amazed, and excited.

So, what did they do?

PP#5: Luke 24:33-38

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36 While they were saying these things, Jesus Himself stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 37 They were terrified and afraid. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

Reader: Luke 24

They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying to each other, "The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!" Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as He broke the bread.

While they were saying these things, Jesus Himself stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" They were terrified and afraid. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

When they realize it is Jesus, they immediately rush back to Jerusalem. You see, they had been in community with the disciples. They had been sharing life together. So, with such an important realization, they had to go share it with the others.

The 11 apostles and other disciples were talking about exciting news. Simon Peter had met the risen Jesus!

“Oh yeah? Well, so did we!”

“What?!”

“That’s right. He joined us as we walked to Emmaus. We didn’t recognize Him at first, but He explained to us again how the Scriptures said He had to die in order to be Savior. Then, as we were eating, He did the same thing He did the night before He died, and we recognized it was He! Then, He vanished! We just had to come and tell you!”

And just then, Jesus appears right there, in front of everyone.

“Peace to you!” He says. And evidently He needed to say that, because they didn’t react very well. Jesus just miraculously appears among them, inside closed doors. This must be a ghost!

PP#6: Luke 24:38-42

38 He said to them, “Why are you startled? Why are doubts arising in your hearts?
39 Look at my hands and my feet. It’s really me! Touch me and see, for a ghost doesn’t have flesh and bones like you see I have.” 40 As He said this, He showed them His hands and feet.
41 Because they were wondering and questioning in the midst of their happiness, He said to them, “Do you have anything to eat?” 42 They gave Him a piece of baked fish. 43 Taking it, He ate it in front of them.

Reader: He said to them, “Why are you startled? Why are doubts arising in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet. It’s really me! Touch me and see, for a ghost doesn’t have flesh and bones like you see I have.” As He said this, He showed them His hands and feet. Because they were wondering and questioning in the midst of their happiness, He said to them, “Do you have anything to eat?” They gave Him a piece of baked fish. Taking it, He ate it in front of them.

“Why are you so startled?” Remember, they had heard that Jesus’ grave was empty. Two angels told the women that Jesus was raised from the dead. Simon Peter had seen Him, and then these two on the Road to Emmaus. Still, it must have been shocking to have Him just appear out of nowhere.

“Look, see it really is I. Touch me. I have flesh and bones.”

He goes one further. He asks for some food to eat. And right in front of them, He ate it.

Now, I know Jesus did this to prove He was real, that He was really raised from the dead, and that He was a real person. But I get something very different—and exciting—out of this. Jesus, you see, has been raised from the dead. He has his new body. Some day, I will, too. And look, after Jesus has His new body, He still gets to enjoy food! We’re going to eat in heaven! Isn’t that exciting! That’s a joy we get to keep! I’m so excited.

But again, Jesus becomes real when they share a meal together.

PP#7: *Image of Jesus appearing to the disciples in the upper room.*

The Emmaus narrative has turned into an appearance narrative. Jesus is standing there among them all.

But notice what has happened among His followers. They were originally called together by Jesus. Then, after His crucifixion, they began to scatter. But here, those who had begun to scatter were brought back together again by the risen Jesus. Jesus creates the community again.

PP#8: Sharing the Common Life

1. Community is a divine reality

Community is not a human invention. It is a divine reality. God creates it.

God is a community to begin with. He is one being, but three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And they share a mystery of interconnected community. But then, this communal God calls us into that same community. God calls us into God's community—to be with and share fully and intimately with Him, and God also calls us into this kind of a community with others.

PP#9: Sharing the Common Life

1. Community is a divine reality
2. Community is about God (not us!)

Authentic Christian community is not about us. It's about God, who creates it. If it were about us, it'd never gets past fellowship. It'd never get past being about what I want. It was the risen Savior right there in the middle of them that forms their community, just like He had before. And how they connected and related to each other was governed not by their rules, but by His. He created different dynamics. He empowered them to live out the loving one another that He had commanded them before. He gave them the Holy Spirit to actually live it. "Peace to you." That's more than a nice greeting. That is a gift given to them from the victory He had just won. They can live in peace. They can be authentic community. That's what it means to be Christian.

God creates the community, but we participate in it. The disciples got a new sense of Jesus while walking with Him on the road, and eating with Him. But they are *transformed* when they took it back to their community: when they reconnected with the community, when they shared with their community. Their faith journeys, their Christian faith, is not just about the relationship between them and Jesus. It's not just about Jesus and me! It also creates a community, with others. John Wesley famously said, "There is no such thing as a solitary Christian. The Bible knows no religion but social religion."

PP#10: Sharing the Common Life

1. Community is a divine reality
2. Community is about God (not us!)
3. Community is about sharing life together

It's more than fellowship. It comes from spending time together. It comes from sharing experiences together. My uncle went to an air force reunion of the unit he served with. When he got together with his fellow wingmen, they instantly connected again, even though some of them he hadn't seen for 40 years. They had shared life together, spent time together, went through experiences together. They had community.

Christian community is supposed to have bonds like that. This past week Andrew, Pastor Dan and I attended Annual Conference of all the United Methodists churches in Minnesota. On the first

day there, Marie Nelson came up to me and gave me a big hug. I hadn't seen Marie for years. But we had spent time together back when I served Rosendale UMC. I hosted her 50th wedding anniversary party. She and her daughter traveled to England with us on our first trip. We served through countless meetings and ministries. I met with her as her husband was diagnosed with cancer. I conducted his funeral. And then I officiated at her wedding to her second husband. I ate at her dining room table. I walked with her through her gardens. We shared life together. And the community we had when she hugged me was still as strong as it was when I left Rosendale 11 years ago.

Jesus walks with the two disciples. He talks about the deepest issues on their hearts. He eats with them, and that's how He becomes real to them.

We must spend time together. You won't find community if you just show up late and leave early. You won't find community if you talk only about polite conversation. You won't find community unless you risk the deepest parts of your life.

It takes time, that most precious resource we have. It takes doing life together.

Look around this room. Think about all the intentions you've have to connect with various people here, but how time just seems to keep slipping by. Make a mental commitment right now to share a meal with someone else here. And when you eat together, talk about the deepest things of life. Got it? Will you? Church? OK!

PP#11: Sharing the Common Life

1. Community is a divine reality
2. Community is about God (not us!)
3. Community is about sharing life together
4. Community is about a new reality God makes within us

The disciples are alarmed when Jesus shows up. But He speaks peace into them. He changes them from being sad, doubting and fearful, to being full of joy, believing, and excited. It is this experience of Jesus—together—that validates what they each experience. They encourage each other and remind each other of what they have found to be true. That's a reason we need the community. We need to be reminded of the truth of the living Jesus when we doubt, or question, or struggle. We need to be built up when we are overwhelmed by sadness and the darkness of the world around us. We need to be encouraged when we are fearful, feeling certain all is for naught.

Jesus shows up among the community and through the community, working into us a new peace, a new reality. When we share life with others, we are shaped into God's plan for us. It can't happen just on our own. We need the community to change. It is with the community that our old nature and our old instincts begin to die, and we start behaving differently. We start to think differently about the people around us. People who we might never have associated with before, or people who we never would have thought we would befriend, suddenly become our brothers and sisters. And we find ourselves wanting to bring in more and more of those who might not belong anywhere else—we find a place for them. And our community becomes a place of love and service; a place where people experience the transforming power of Jesus as work in their lives.

PP#12: Sharing the Common Life

1. Community is a divine reality
2. Community is about God (not us!)
3. Community is about sharing life together

4. Community is about a new reality God makes within us
5. Community is about a new reality God makes around us

And that's the last point about community. Community is about a new reality that God makes around us. It's not just about what God does *in* us, but also about what God does *through* us. God calls you to be part of a wider Christian community because God wants to grow the community by what you bring to it.

The two disciples came back to share what they experienced. They showed up and contributed from their own lives. God used them to make a difference. They just had to show up. We need to be willing to show up. For some, this may mean committing to get involved more here at Forest Hills. It is a very significant decision to embrace a community of believers as your own, and see yourself as on a journey together. Or perhaps you sense God calling you to get involved on another level, in another way. Both guest and family eat at the dinner table. But after dinner, the family does the dishes. There comes a time when you're a part of the community so that you get up and help with the dishes. Perhaps God is nudging some of us to just make ourselves more available to the life and ministry here at this church, so God can bring transformation.

PP#13: *Image for a small group acting real.*

One more key nugget here. The two disciples joined with the Eleven. My count, that's 13. That's about the perfect size of a small group. Here at Forest Hills we have what we call grow groups. I urge you to get involved in one...or start your own! Come talk to me if you are interested. If you do start one, or join one, or if you are a part of one, I want to urge you to move it beyond fellowship. You be the one to risk the deeper conversation, to ask the questions, to be the first to share deeply, to suggest an outreach event. Spend time together. Talk about the deepest things of your lives. Find a way to eat together. Find a way to serve together. Share life together.

True community doesn't happen overnight. It comes only when you risk, when you go, when you share. It comes only when you move beyond fellowship. "Love your neighbor as yourself."

When we come together and share our experiences of Jesus, spend time together, serve each other and with each other, God will create a real community, both *for* us and *because of* us.

And this is a way that we can experience that peace we yearn for and crave in our lives. Peace. Peace from Jesus. Jesus says, "Peace be with you."

Amen.

Closing Song: "Bind Us Together" - Sanctify

Announcement & Benediction - David
-Lunch for Festival - Chili cookoff!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR MAY 30, 2015

Spring Series: “Emmaus: Walking with Jesus”

Sermon #3: “Sharing the Common Life”

Scriptures: Luke 24:33-43

Opening prayer

Introductions:

Introduce yourself and share about a community that you have been a part of that really helped shape who you are today.

Context: Read Luke 24:25-32 to understand the context of the story.

Highlight the main movements and address any questions or clarifications.

Read Luke 24:33-43 in two different versions.

1. Why, do you think, the disciples go back to Jerusalem?
2. They walked into an amazing discussion. How did this set the tone for what they had to share?
3. Why might have Jesus greeted them the way He did when He appeared to them?
4. Why might the disciples have had a hard time accepting it was really Jesus there among them?
5. Name the ways Jesus convinces them it is really He. Why, do you think, He did these?
6. Jesus ate food after His resurrection. Do you think we will eat food in heaven?
7. Application: What will you take away from this passage? How will you live it out?