

# Breaking Bread

Two meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus, and Jesus makes himself known to them in the scriptures and in the breaking of the bread. Jesus invites us to know him, and we too encounter the risen Christ in these ways. We join all disciples in responding to Jesus' call to love deeply from the heart.

## Focus scripture: **Luke 24:13–35**

Today we read another account of the events of the day of resurrection, this time from Luke's gospel. Two disciples – Cleopas and perhaps his wife – are walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus, talking over the events of the preceding days and the puzzling story of Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus in the garden. They are sad, disappointed, and confused. They had hoped that Jesus was the Messiah, come to bring political deliverance for Israel. It is not known where Emmaus was, but it is described as about 11 km/7 mi from Jerusalem – far enough to allow time for lengthy conversation and speculation.

As they walk along, Jesus comes near them, but they do not recognize him. He asks about their conversation, and they tell him the story of the previous week in Jerusalem. Jesus unpacks for them the Hebrew Scriptures – stories of Moses and the prophets that tell how the Messiah must suffer in order to bring about God's plan for salvation.

When they reach Emmaus, the two urge Jesus to stay with them because it is almost evening. Jesus has a meal with them. Though he is the guest, he takes the role of host – blessing and breaking the bread, and giving it to them. These are the actions at the Passover meal (the Last Supper) described in Luke 22:19 and actions continued today in the liturgy of Communion. The table is the place where these two disciples came to know Jesus more deeply. The table is the place where disciples today gather to be nourished by the Bread of Life.

Jesus vanishes, and the two return to Jerusalem to share their joy with the others. There they hear that the risen Christ has appeared to the disciples. It is good news for us that Christ appears not just to the eleven (Judas,

the twelfth disciple, died after his betrayal of Jesus) but to other followers as well. Like Cleopas and the other, we too encounter the holy at unexpected moments. They recognize the risen Christ in the breaking open of scripture and in the blessing, breaking, and sharing of bread. In these ways, Christ also is known to us.

Throughout the Easter season, we read stories of the early church from Acts. Today we engage **Acts 2:14a, 36–41**, a portion of a sermon preached by Peter. He proclaims that Jesus is the promised Messiah and calls on the crowd of listeners to turn their lives around – to repent and follow God's ways. Three thousand people respond to Peter's message and are baptized. Baptism from very early days is the ritual for entering new life in Christ.

God's promise extends to all who call on God. **Psalm 116** is a prayer of thanksgiving for healing. The psalmist gives thanks that God hears the prayers of the faithful.

The early Christians to whom **1 Peter 1:17–23** is addressed are living in fear, feeling alienated from their society. The writer proclaims that Jesus' life's work, death, and resurrection provide the sign and seal on the relationship between God and God's people. They are encouraged to set their faith and hope on God, and to love "deeply from the heart." They, as we, have been born anew through the living word of God.

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Jesus invites God's people to know who he is. Jesus was made known to the early disciples through the scriptures and the breaking of bread. How do you experience the risen Christ in your own life? In what ways are you nourished by the scriptures and Communion? What gives you the strength to witness to others about the power of God's love?



May 8, 2011

**Focus Scripture**  
**Luke 24:13–35**

**Additional Scriptures**  
**Acts 2:14a, 36–41**  
**Psalm 116:1–4, 12–19**  
**1 Peter 1:17–23**

**Risen Christ, in Emmaus, you met the two as you walked with them. Be our companion on the way. Open the scriptures to us. Feed us with the bread of life, and give us courage to witness to your love wherever our journeys take us. Amen.**

If you have Internet access, visit [www.spiritseasons.com](http://www.spiritseasons.com) to access Spirit Sightings for connections between current events and the focus passage.

## The Focus for Ages 5–12

Surprises are fun for children of all ages, and what is more surprising than suddenly to discover that the unknown traveller is Jesus. Some children may ask why the two followers did not recognize him immediately. Luke says, “their eyes were kept from recognizing him,” so however the children answer their own question is plausible. Perhaps his face was in the shadow of a head covering. Perhaps their grief and pain kept Cleopas and his companion from looking directly at the traveller. Encourage the wondering of the children.

In the Bible story, the objects of cloth, chalice, and bread are placed before the children to help them make the connection with the sacrament of communion in the church today. If children are rarely present for this celebration by the congregation, they probably will not make this connection. However, seeing these elements placed slowly and carefully before them may so impress them that they will know instinctively that this is a special moment for the church.

Pray that the children in your group will keep this story and the moment of recognition of Jesus in their hearts.

May 8, 2011



### Materials needed

#### Before the session

- ❑ Prayerfully reflect on this week’s focus scripture, Luke 24:13–35, and biblical background material (p. 67). When have you met Jesus on the road?
- ❑ Bring *basic supply kit* (see “This Season, So...” on p. 2) and, if possible, *Seasons Music CD, vol. 9* and *CD player*. *Seasons .mp3 Downloads* are available for purchase from [www.spiritseasons.com](http://www.spiritseasons.com).
- ❑ Bring songs “Alleluia” and “I Send You Out” (pp. 1 and 10–12 in *Music Section*, also #8 and #23 on *Seasons Music CD*).

#### Gather

- ❑ Prepare worship table with *white or gold cloth, pillar candle, matches, offering basket, and Bible*. Place *bookmark* at Luke.
- ❑ Display *Easter gather words* (p. 116) on *newsprint*.

#### Engage

- ❑ Prepare to tell the story on *today’s resource sheet “Surprise Traveller.”*
- ❑ Bring *cloth, plate, bread* and *chalice*.

- ❑ For the art conversation group, bring *today’s resource sheet “Surprise Traveller”* and *poster “On the Road.”*
- ❑ For the reader’s theatre group, bring *copies of today’s resource sheet “On the Road”* that you have prepared according to the directions in *Engage* and *directions* (p. 70).

#### Respond

- ❑ **Outreach zone:** information about a congregational caring ministry, “*Glow Lights*” (p. 119), *tissue paper, white glue, small glass jars, clean paintbrushes, water, and tealights*
- ❑ **Quiet zone:** *copies of today’s resource sheet “Revealing Message”* and *directions* (p. 70)
- ❑ **Art zone:** *poster “On the Road”* and *clay* or other *sculpting material*
- ❑ **Music zone:** *song “Pass It On”* (p. 8 in *Music Section*, also #7 on *Seasons Music CD*)
- ❑ **Surprise zone:** some kind of *bread snack* and *serving utensils* and *dishes*. Check that no child has an allergy to gluten products.



# Breaking Bread

**Scripture**

Luke 24:13–35

**FOCUS** To meet Jesus through the disciples' memories of the risen Christ.

## GATHER

**Welcome** Greet the children as they arrive. Welcome children who have been absent or who are new. Introduce yourself to new children and them to the group. Invite everyone to join you at the worship table.

**Song** Light the pillar candle, noting that this is the Christ candle. Play the song "Alleluia" (p. 1 in *Music Section*, also #8 on *Seasons Music CD*). Invite the children to sing it with you. During the song, have a child receive the offering.

**Litany** Lead the group in the Easter gather words (p. 116).

Extinguish the candle as a sign that the opening ritual is over.

**Connecting with the focus**

**Getting to know you** Ask the children to think of three things about themselves that others in the group may not know. Provide some examples about yourself, such as your birthday, favourite dessert, or pet's name. After everyone has had a turn to reveal the three things, ask:

- **What new discovery did you make about someone in our group?**
- **What surprised you about someone?**

Comment that even when we see people often, there are always new things to learn about them. In the story for this session, the disciples discover more about Jesus.

## ENGAGE

**Preparing for the story**

**Gospel of Luke** Have a child get the Bible from the worship table and open it to the bookmark. Invite the child to read the name of the book of the Bible. Remind the children that the gospel of Luke, like the gospel of John, is one of the books in the New Testament that tells the stories about Jesus. Recall the story from the previous session from the gospel of John in which Jesus appeared to the disciples in a room with locked doors.

**The Bible story**

**Jesus returns** Keeping the Bible open, tell the story on today's resource sheet "Surprise Traveller," based on **Luke 24:13–35**. After the story, ask:

- **How did the followers of Jesus know it was Jesus who walked with them on the road?**

**Exploring the story further**

To enable the children to explore the story further, according to interests and abilities, explain the two options and have each child select one.

**Art conversation group** The children will hear the story again, but in a shortened form. Show them the poster *On the Road*. Ask them to select one figure in the sculpture and to copy that figure's pose. Tell the story on today's resource sheet "Surprise Traveller," but in an abbreviated manner because the children will not be able to hold their poses for very long. Ask:

- **What do you think the people on the road said to each other as they hurried back to Jerusalem?**

**Reader's theatre group** This group will read the Luke passage from *The Message*. Prepare the copies of today's resource sheet "On the Road" by highlighting the part for the narrator, Jesus, Cleopas, Cleopas's companion, and the disciple in Jerusalem on each of five copies. For example, on one copy, highlight the part for Jesus. Provide the highlighted copies and these directions:

- 1 Take a copy of "On the Road."
- 2 There are five reading parts. Decide who will read each part.
- 3 Rehearse the reading of the story from Luke.
- 4 Prepare to read it to the others.



### The Bible story and us

Play the song "I Send You Out" (pp. 10–12 in *Music Section*, also #23 on *Seasons Music CD*) as the signal for the children to gather together. Invite the reader's theatre to present "On the Road." Ask:

■ **What do you remember about Jesus?**

# 3

RESPOND

Invite the children to select a zone and work with the materials there.

□ **Outreach zone: Glow lights** Throughout Jesus' ministry, he showed great care for people. When we care deeply for others, we learn more about Jesus' love for everyone. Tell the children about a caring ministry of your congregation, such as visiting people in retirement/aged care homes. Then have them make "glow lights" for the congregational caring ministry visitors to take when they visit. See "Glow Lights" (p. 119) for directions.

□ **Quiet zone: Jesus' message** The children will find a message about Jesus and ponder questions about it. Provide copies of today's resource sheet "Revealing Message," crayons, and these directions:



- 1 Take a copy of "Revealing Message."
- 2 Follow the directions on the page to find a hidden message.
- 3 When you have found the message, read the questions at the bottom of the page. Then think about them, or talk about them with a friend.



Answer: Love lives on.

□ **Art zone: Sculpting** Working from the poster *On the Road*, the children will create their own sculptures for the story of Jesus and the followers on the road to Emmaus. Display the poster so the children can look at it as they work. Provide each child with a lump of clay. Invite them to sculpt a figure to add to a larger display. Remind the children that many artists use the works of others for inspiration, but that does not mean that they copy the other's work. To give their work a different format, suggest that the figures represent the followers of Jesus after they have seen him. Look for a place to display their sculpture for others to enjoy.

□ **Music zone: Singing the message** One thing that followers of Jesus do is to continue telling of him and telling his message to others. The first stanza of the song "Pass It On" (p. 8 in *Music Section*, also #7 on *Seasons Music CD*) reminds us of that role we are to play. After singing this stanza, pause and ask:



■ **What words of Jesus do you think we should pass on?**

After this conversation, sing the stanza again.

□ **Surprise zone: Snack** Take a clue from the Bible story and break bread together. Prepare a simple bread snack for the group. Serve it at the beginning of Bless.

# 4 BLESS

**Gather** Play "I Send You Out" (pp. 10–12 in *Music Section*, also #23 on *Seasons Music CD*) as the signal to gather in a circle around the worship table.

**Sing** the song "Alleluia" (p. 1 in *Music Section*, also #8 on *Seasons Music CD*). If the music zone was used, sing the first stanza of "Pass It On" (p. 8 in *Music Section*, also #7 on *Seasons Music CD*).

**Pray** this prayer, or one of your own:

Surprising God, the story of Jesus the Christ is amazing. We want to tell this story to others. Amen.

**Blessing** To a child next to you, say, "(Child's name), tell the surprising story of Jesus to others this week." Continue the blessing until each child and leader has been blessed.



As the children hear these stories of the risen Christ, how is their understanding of Jesus deepening? What words or memories did they say they wanted to share with others?

In the Respond surprise zone in the next session, the children make a snack to take to another church group or the fellowship time. Make arrangements early this week. Ask the leader not to tell the group members so the treat is a surprise to them.



# Surprise Traveller

based on Luke 24:13–35

Spread the cloth and place the bread and chalice on it deliberately so the children will connect this action with the sacrament of communion.

It was the first day of the week. Cleopas, a follower of Jesus, and another disciple, perhaps his wife, were on their way home. They were sad about Jesus and confused about what to do now that Jesus was gone.

They didn't say much as they walked along the dusty road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. But from time to time, one of them remembered something that Jesus had done or said and spoke of it. Or one of them said, "I can't believe what happened. I can't believe Jesus is no longer with us."

They paid attention to no one, but, nearing Emmaus, someone joined them. The stranger asked, "You look sad. What has happened to make you look like this?"

"Are you the only one in all Jerusalem who hasn't heard what happened there?" they asked.

"What do you mean?" asked the stranger.

The two followers of Jesus said, "About Jesus. Jesus was a prophet from God, who was powerful in word and action. But Jesus was betrayed and arrested. After a trial, Jesus was sentenced to death. That happened three days ago. Some say Jesus is alive, but we haven't seen Jesus. So to us, Jesus is dead."

When the two followers finished, the stranger said, "How long it takes for people to understand what has happened." Then he told them all about Moses and the prophets of old. He explained them in new ways.

When they came to the village of Emmaus, they said to the stranger walking with them, "It is getting late. Please stay with us tonight."

The three of them went into the house. They sat down and ate together. (*Spread the cloth. Slowly set the chalice and plate of bread on it.*) The stranger picked up the bread and broke it in half (*break the bread*). When he handed it to Cleopas and the other follower, they were surprised. The stranger on the road was Jesus! But at that moment, Jesus was gone.

"We should have known," said Cleopas. "Weren't we amazed at what he told us on the road?"

Even though it was getting dark, the two followers hurried to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples what had happened.



# ON THE ROAD

## *Reader's Theatre based on Luke 24:13–35*

That same day two of them were walking to the village Emmaus, about seven miles out of Jerusalem. They were deep in conversation, going over all these things that had happened. In the middle of their talk and questions, Jesus came up and walked along with them. But they were not able to recognize who he was.

He asked, “What’s this you’re discussing so intently as you walk along?”

They just stood there, long-faced, like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them, his name was Cleopas, said, “Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard what’s happened during the last few days?”

He said, “What has happened?”

They said, “The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet, dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death, and crucified him. And we had our hopes up that he was the One, the One about to deliver Israel. And it is now the third day since it happened. But now some of our women have completely confused us. Early this morning they were at the tomb and couldn’t find his body. They came back with the story that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Some of our friends went off to the tomb to check and found it empty just as the women said, but they didn’t see Jesus.”

Then he said to them, “So thick-headed! So slow-hearted! Why can’t you simply believe all that the prophets said? Don’t you see that these things had to happen, that the Messiah had to suffer and only then enter into his glory?” Then he started at the beginning, with the Books of Moses, and went on through all the Prophets, pointing out everything in the Scriptures that referred to him.

They came to the edge of the village where they were headed. He acted as if he were going on but they pressed him: “Stay and have supper with us. It’s nearly evening; the day is done.” So he went in with them. And here is what happened: He sat down at the table with them. Taking the bread, he blessed and broke and gave it to them. At that moment, open-eyed, wide-eyed, they recognized him. And then he disappeared.

Back and forth they talked. “Didn’t we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?”

They didn’t waste a minute. They were up and on their way back to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and their friends gathered together, talking away: “It’s really happened! The Master has been raised up – Simon saw him!”

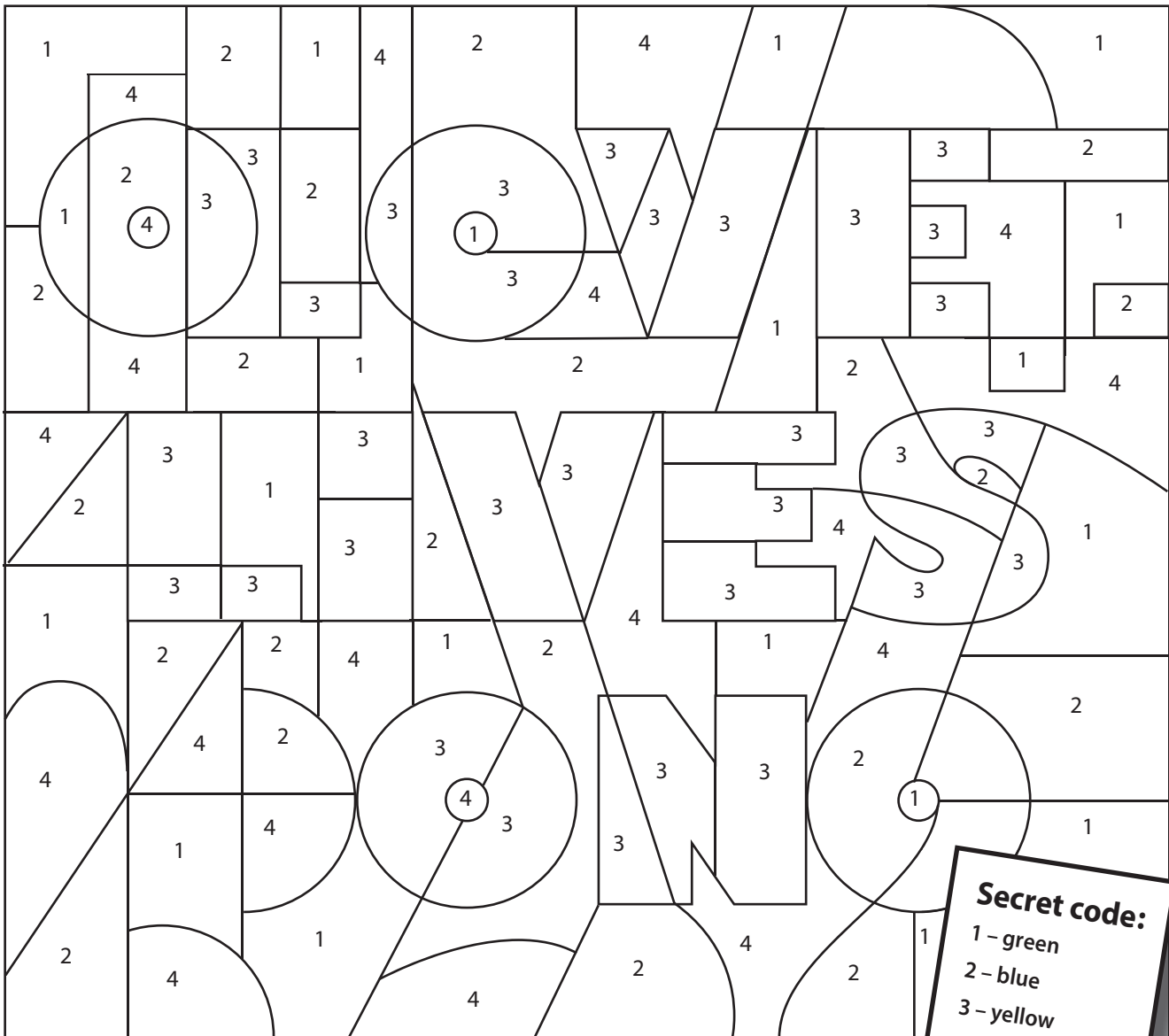
Then the two went over everything that happened on the road and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

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# Revealing Message

Use the code below to reveal the discovery the disciples made when the visitor broke bread and gave it to them.



**Secret code:**  
1 - green  
2 - blue  
3 - yellow  
4 - red

### Questions to ponder:

- *Where do you see signs of God's love in the world?*
- *How do you show love to creation and other people?*

# Gather Rituals

## Lenten gathering litany

*(Place the purple cloth on the worship table.)*

**One:** During Lent we think deeply about God and how we are living in God's ways.

**All:** And God is with us.

*(Place the purple ribbon as a path across the cloth on the table.)*

**One:** As we move through Lent, we ask questions of God and of ourselves.

**All:** And God is with us.

*(Place six stones on the purple ribbon.)*

**One:** During Lent, we hear and explore stories of journey, close relationship with God, challenge and opportunities, needs met, and strength.

**All:** And God is with us.

*(Place six votive candles on the purple ribbon and light them.)*

**One:** With every question and every story, we learn more about God and God's ways.

**All:** And God is with us.

Easter  
gather  
words

**In the Easter season,  
we celebrate Jesus  
alive in a new way.**

*(Invite the children to repeat each  
line after you.)*

Together we show Jesus' love  
to each other  
And show Jesus' love  
to the world.  
We gather in love  
to be the church.



# Glow Lights

## Materials

- Tissue paper (variety of colours)
- White glue
- Clean paintbrushes
- Small glass jars
- Tealights

## Directions

1. Tear the tissue paper into small pieces.
2. Mix 25 ml/2 tbsp white glue and 10 ml/2 tsp water together in a small container. Prepare enough containers that each child will have one.
3. Brush a light coating of the glue mixture onto a small section of the jar.
4. Put pieces of tissue paper on the glued area. Overlap them slightly. Smooth them down with the wet paintbrush. Continue with these steps until the jar is covered.
5. Let it dry. Set a tealight in the jar.

