

Scripture

Luke 24:13-35

Emmaus Revelation

**We recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread.**

- ◆ Two disciples of Jesus meet the risen Jesus on the road, but recognize him only when he breaks bread with them.
- ◆ The gospel points to gathering around a table for fellowship as one way in which we experience the risen Lord. Remember that the older children gathered around the table in a faith formation group also offer and receive the risen Jesus to one another.
- ◆ Today's session invites group members to explore scriptural and liturgical images of sharing bread with Jesus and one another.

Core Session

- ◆ Getting Started (*Who I Am Cards*)
- ◆ Today's Gospel
- ◆ Art
- ◆ Praying Together

Enrichment

- ◆ Explore the Good News
- ◆ Literature: Hughes's "Walkers with the Dawn"
- ◆ Church Walk
- ◆ Music: "My Sisters and Brothers"
- ◆ Easter Tree Craft (*branches, flowerpot, sand, eggs, nut pick or manicure scissors, bowl, rubber bands, ribbons; optional: food colors*)
- ◆ Info: Where You'll Find Everything Else

Helps for Leaders

- ◆ More about Today's Scriptures
- ◆ Reflection
- ◆ Using Fiber Arts To Bring Different Age Groups Together

✓ Getting Started (5-15 minutes)

Before the session print copies of the *Who I Am Cards*, attached to this document.

In the session, ask one participant to open the session by leading everyone in the Easter greeting:

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

On the board or newsprint write three characteristics that describe you. For example, you could list something you like to do, a movie you like to see and a color you like to wear. Explain that these characteristics help others to identify you.

Distribute the *Who I Am Cards*. Ask participants to follow the directions on the cards. Collect the cards and read one characteristic at a time. Invite participants to identify one another using these characteristics. When all participants have been identified, discuss:

- ◆ Who was the easiest to identify? the hardest? Why?

✓ Today's Gospel (10-15 minutes)

Participants discuss the story of the road to Emmaus.

Help participants find **Luke 24:13-35**, explaining that Luke is one of the four gospels and the third book of the New Testament. Begin with a shared meditation. Set a prayerful atmosphere by reading the passage slowly: ask them to listen for the words or phrases that catch their attention. Ask:

- ◆ What word or phrase did you hear in today's reading?

Be sure to share your own response, too. Explain that this story is another Easter story about Jesus. Ask participants to follow along as you read the passage aloud. Discuss:

- ◆ When do the disciples *not* recognize Jesus?
- ◆ Why do you think they do not recognize Jesus?
- ◆ When *do* the disciples recognize Jesus?
- ◆ Why do the disciples recognize Jesus?
- ◆ Have you ever felt there was a time when God or Jesus was close to you? When? How did you feel?
- ◆ Do you think Jesus is with us even when we do not recognize him or feel that he is with us? Why or why not?

✓ Art (15-30 minutes)

Participants make pictures of Jesus in Emmaus and Jesus in the Eucharist.

Discuss:

- ◆ What did Jesus do at the meal in Emmaus? (*broke bread*)
- ◆ When do we break bread together at church? (*in the Eucharist*)
- ◆ Who of us has shared the bread in church? What does that mean to us?

Explain that Christians believe Jesus is present in a way we cannot explain at every Eucharist. Invite participants to make pictures showing Jesus breaking bread.

Distribute paper and drawing materials. *Directions to the participants:*

- ◆ Divide your paper into two halves.
- ◆ Draw a picture of a loaf of bread that connects both halves.
- ◆ On one side of the picture, draw the breaking of the bread in Emmaus.
- ◆ On the other side of the picture, draw the breaking of the bread at the Eucharist.
- ◆ You can put yourself into either half.

Ask volunteers to show and explain their drawings.

✓ Praying Together (5 minutes)

Light the candle decorated in the session for the 2nd Sunday of Easter. Invite participants to continue experimenting with using scripture verses as prayer. Help the participants memorize these words from **Luke 24:34**:
The Lord is risen indeed!

Memorize the verse together by saying it together slowly and rhythmically several times. Then pause and say:

- ◆ Think about times when you feel Jesus is especially close to you, or especially far away from you.
- ◆ Use your own words to tell Jesus what you feel.

Pause, then slowly repeat once more the scripture verse above. Close by praying:

- ◆ Lord Jesus, help us feel how close you are to each one of us. *Amen.*

Note: Distribute this week's *At Home with the Good News* to group members (or e-mail it to families).

□ Explore the Good News

(5-15 minutes)

Use the On the Road activity on page 1 of today's *Explore the Good News* to help group members further explore today's story. What would they see if they were on the road with Jesus? What can they imagine Jesus saying to them? What can they imagine saying to Jesus?

On page 2 group members will find an activity called Amazing Appearances. This ongoing activity helps older children practice scripture skills as they explore the variety of resurrection stories in the gospels.

□ Literature (10-20 minutes)

Hughes's "Walkers with the Dawn"

On a board or poster board write these words to the Langston Hughes poem first explored in the sessions for the 4th and 5th Sundays in Lent:

Being walkers with the dawn and morning,
Walkers with the sun and morning,
We are not afraid of night,
Nor days of gloom,
Nor darkness—
Being walkers with the sun and morning.

Then invite group members to create a reading of the poem interspersed with words from today's gospel. What lines could Jesus speak? What lines could the disciples speak? What lines could *we* speak? Ask volunteers to read the parts of *Jesus* and the *two disciples*. Other group members read the parts of Jesus' friends today. Discuss:

- ◆ How is being a friend of Jesus like being a walker with the dawn and morning?
- ◆ How can being a friend of Jesus help us when we feel afraid?

After the discussion, read "Walkers with the Dawn" in unison, then, on the board or newsprint, write

- ◆ Being walkers with the dawn and morning, we...

Invite volunteers to provide completions to this opening phrase of Hughes's poem.

Note: Learn more about Langston Hughes online at <http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/83>. This website also contains a selection of his poems.

□ Church Walk (10-20 minutes)

You may want to extend the connection between today's gospel and our church worship by taking your group on a tour of your church's sacristy and sanctuary.

Before the session make any necessary arrangements with the staff of your congregation.

In the session, explain that in today's story Jesus did two important things to help his friends. First, he explained the Bible to them; then he shared bread with them. These are the same two things that happen in the Eucharist for us. Explain that the group will now see some of the things that are used in these two parts of the Eucharist.

In the sacristy, help group members find such items as chalices, patens, linens and vestments. You might also explain where the bread that your church uses comes from.

Be sure to see the lectionary, too. This may be kept in the sacristy or may be left in the sanctuary. Often a Bible will also be enthroned in a place of honor in the sanctuary.

In the sanctuary, help group members find such items as the lectern or pulpit, the altar, the tabernacle and the Easter candle. Ask group members to show how each place or item is used in the weekly Eucharist. Offer time to look around and ask questions.

□ Music (10-20 minutes)

“My Sisters and Brothers”

Play “My Sisters and Brothers.” (Open your Spring-A Seasonal Resources folder, then click on *Companion Music* for options on obtaining this music.) Group members may have been introduced to this song in the 5th Sunday in Lent. Encourage group members to listen as the song plays to what advice it has to offer for those of us “on the journey.”

When the song concludes, ask a volunteer to write on the board or newsprint what tips for the journey they noted in “My Sisters and Brothers.”

Continue:

- ◆ According to “My Sisters and Brothers,” what’s the final goal of the journey?
- ◆ What will “the promised land” be like?

*When the battle is fought and the victory’s won
We can all shout together, we have overcome
We’ll talk to the Father and the Son
When we make it to the promised land*

*And we can all be together
Shaking a hand
When we make it to the promised land*

*We got to take our fellow man by the hand
And try to help him to understand
That we can all be together, forever and ever
When we make it to the promised land*

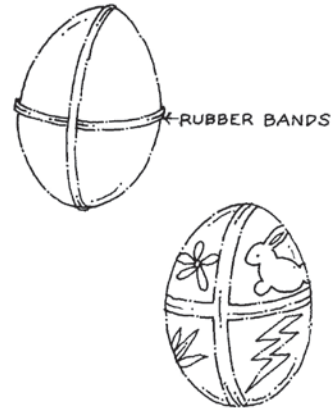
□ Easter Tree Craft (15-30 minutes)

Participants continue decorating the Easter tree begun in the session for the 2nd Sunday of Easter.

Directions to the participants:

- ◆ Use a nut pick or pair of manicure scissors to make a tiny hole in each end of the egg. Blow through one end to force the egg into a bowl.
- ◆ Use rubber bands to divide the egg into four or more sections; for example, put one band lengthwise around the egg and a second band around the egg’s “equator.” (*The eggs may be dyed first. Make each dye by mixing ¾ cup water, 1 teaspoon vinegar and 10-20 drops food color in a cup.*)
- ◆ Use felt pens (*or colored pencils*) to trace the lines formed by the rubber bands.
- ◆ In each section, draw a symbol or picture from the Eucharist or from today’s story.

- ◆ Add any other decorations or borders you like to each section.
- ◆ Use ribbon to hang your finished egg from the Easter tree.



INFO Where You’ll Find Everything Else

- ◆ Attached to this Session Plan you will find:
 - Backgrounds and reflections for today’s readings, titled *More about Today’s Scriptures*.
 - Printable *Who I Am Cards*, to be used in today’s Getting Started.
 - An optional (and ongoing) *Faith Skills* activity exploring Baptism.
 - A helpful article looking at *Older Children and the Gospel*.
 - A family paper, *At Home with the Good News*, to print and distribute *or* to e-mail to families for use at home.
- ◆ Open your Spring-A Seasonal Resources folder, then click on *Seasonal Articles* to find:
 - Information on Spring-A’s *Models of the Faith*.
 - An article examining *Using Music and Musical Activities* in faith-formation.
 - The *Introduction for Intermediate* for **Living the Good News**.

More about Today's Scriptures

Today's readings invite us into fellowship with the resurrected Christ and with each other. The reading from Acts tells how faith in the resurrected Jesus empowers the fledgling community of believers. The First Letter of Peter further explores the redemptive work of Jesus, who ransoms us from emptiness and exile. Finally, in the gospel, the risen Jesus teaches the two disciples from the scriptures and shares a meal with them, establishing a pattern we still follow in our weekly liturgy.

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Today's reading is the first of the major summaries to link together the specific events and teachings of Luke's narrative. Peter proclaims that the crucified Jesus has been exalted as Lord and Messiah. Now the saving name is Jesus Christ.

In response to the plea of the crowd, Peter outlines the way of salvation.

The first step is repentance (Greek, *metanoia*, meaning "a change of mind and heart, a conversion"). The second step is baptism "in the name" (v. 38) that brings salvation. Those who submit to repentance and baptism receive forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit, who provides the fundamental principle of life in the Christian community.

1 Peter 1:17-23

This reading exhorts believers to a standard of life that reflects what God has done for them. The appropriate response to God's greatness and goodness is behavior pleasing to God.

The image of ransoming, or redemption, is taken from the Old Testament where it has both a secular and a theological use. In Hebrew society an enslaved person or alienated land was bought back by the next-of-kin, and the first-born was bought back by the family.

In the New Testament, the metaphor of the legal transaction of redemption is of great significance. Jesus applies the term to his death, and Paul also speaks of the price of Jesus' blood. The term redemption is used most often, however, in the general sense of paying the price.

Luke 24:13-35

The two disciples on the way to Emmaus share the popular view of Jesus as a prophet and point to the hope that Jesus was in fact the expected prophet-like-Moses. Comprehension begins with the interpretation of the scriptures, which pointed toward the suffering and glory of the Messiah. The power of the word of God prepared them to receive the broken bread in full recognition of Jesus.

The postresurrection table fellowship with Jesus links the feeding during his early ministry and the pledge at the Last Supper with the eucharistic experiences of the early Church. Although Jesus' physical presence is withdrawn, his self-revelation in scripture and his manifestation in the Eucharist remain. The pattern of word and sacrament in the story becomes that of the Christian liturgy and life.

Reflection

Two phrases seem pivotal to today's gospel. The first, "But we had hoped..." (Luke 24:21) sums up the huge disappointment of the disciples. They do not want to be interrupted by a stranger at a time of intense grief. How ironic that we too, preoccupied with what seem like major concerns, don't want intrusions, even if Jesus is the unsuspected intruder.

Often we get our hopes up, then when they come crashing down, we grow a bit more cynical, a bit less likely to hope again. To Cleopas and companion, the cross meant disaster. So we can't see past what seems like failure or destruction to the underlying blessing. We don't suspect that Christ lies hidden in the face of the stranger. The last thing we want is venturing into insecurity or risk. Christianity is fine as long as it's safe and complacent, not requiring change.

The second phrase, "Abide with us..." (v. 29), shifts that whole picture. We see a social event differently if the group is composed of strangers or of people we love. This phrase has inspired poignant hymns and expresses the deep hope of Christians: with Christ beside us, we can do anything.

Using Fiber Arts To Bring Different Age Groups Together

by Linda Ashe-Ford

The arts provide a way to bring children, teens and adults together to celebrate the glory of the Lord. Here are two more activities that you can use in your sessions.

Parish Banner

Spring is a wonderful time to celebrate the coming together of the Body of Christ by making a Parish Banner. Use the story of Jesus choosing four fishermen in Matthew 4:18-22 to talk about how we are the fish that Jesus called the disciples to gather.

Start by using a large, tabbed curtain panel for the banner base. Precut simple fish shapes, then ask everyone to decorate their own fish by using materials you have gathered in advance, for example, fabric pens, glitter glue, buttons, trim, beads and other decorations that can be easily glued or sewed onto the fish.

Ask some of your seasoned craft people to help attach the fish to the banner by using a simple running stitch. The bulk of this project can be completed in an afternoon or evening, with the finishing touches done by volunteers in a few hours. Your banner can be ready to hang a few days later.

This same idea can also be used to make a “Let Your Light Shine” banner: first read Matthew 5: 14-16 to remind everyone to let their light shine, then instead of making fish to decorate, have everyone decorate candle shapes for the banner.

Prayer Blanket or Prayer Shawl

To celebrate the gifts of God for the people of God, look for activities that bring all ages together to help someone else. Ask the knitters in your church to help with a Prayer Blanket or Prayer Shawl.

Seasoned knitters can teach new and less experienced knitters of all ages to knit strips that can be joined together to make blankets, scarves or wraps. Younger children or those who don't wish to knit can decorate cards containing the prayer to include with the blankets and shawls. Ask older children and teens to write prayers to go on the cards.

Quilts

Invite individuals, groups or families in the parish to make up individual quilt squares in advance. At the gathering, give each participant a square to decorate using fabric markers or paint. Invite the group to decide on the design for the quilt(s). Enlist the help of quilters to assemble and finish the quilts. If you wish, your finished projects might be displayed, then donated to a homeless shelter, a hospital or the sick and needy.

Altar Cloths

Another project that can involve all age levels is the making of an Altar Cloth. First have older children or teens research what an altar cloth is and how it is used. Ask a member of the altar guild to speak to all age levels about how they choose and care for the altar cloths used in your church. Have older children and teens brainstorm ideas for the cloth you wish to make.

Using a white cotton tablecloth as a base, draw pictures based on the chosen theme, using fabric markers. One altar cloth that we made was used for a special youth service that our teen group planned. We also made an altar cloth that represented everyone by drawing simple body shapes on a white tablecloth, then asking everyone to finish the bodies by drawing themselves. We use this one for First Communion.

Planning activities inclusive of different age levels is an important way to bring people together in fellowship. It can help build a strong faith community where children and adults learn that each has gifts from God to share. Jesus said, “When two or more are gathered in my name, I'll be there.” Let's gather everyone in his name.