

LUKE 24: 13 - 35

Jesus on the Emmaus road

A couple of followers of Jesus are on the road. Probably husband and wife, they are leaving Jerusalem, perhaps giving up and going home. They are distressed by the death of Jesus and disturbed by rumours of an empty tomb. But they are still asking their questions, wondering about what they've seen and heard, and in their questioning and wondering, they are joined by Jesus. Jesus is part of the conversation before they realise it. With Jesus as their travelling companion they travel not only the Emmaus Road, but also the Scriptures. Through the Law, on past the prophets they tramp, and eventually arrive in the very present moment. And right there, round the kitchen table, they recognise Jesus. Jesus is always with us, in the everyday things of our life, even before we are aware of it. As we question and wonder and invite Jesus in, we recognise him as more than just another person on the road. He is the Risen Lord.



Music Suggestions:

(Langmead)	Lord let me see
(Baloche)	Open the eyes of my heart See p.24 for presentation ideas.
(Meece)	I Can See



Connect:

“Recognize Me Yet?” Puzzles

In preparation, find some large face photos of either famous characters in magazines or people in your community. Cut the faces out and stick them on coloured paper/ card as backing. Cut each face into about nine jigsaw pieces.

Divide into groups of about nine people. Give each group a puzzle to sort.

In the groups: give each person in the group one piece of the puzzle. Go around the group one by one, letting each person put down their puzzle piece and have a go at guessing who the face is. Possible celebrities could include Lisa Simpson, B1 & B2 or Ben Ten. You might use photos of members of your community, perhaps even your missionaries. How many pieces of the puzzle do you need to identify the mystery person?

Alternatively, this could be done with one puzzle, as a large group with volunteers to place the pieces.



It took a while for Jesus' friends to realise who he was. As they walked along the road the bits of the puzzle began to fall into place and they finally recognised him when they ate together. We are also putting the pieces together and gradually recognising Jesus more and more for who he really is.



Context:

Feeling Box:

Make a 'Feeling Box' by firmly gluing the following textural items to the base and walls of a cardboard box. Cut a fist sized hole close to the bottom and firmly seal the top.

Sample items: smooth river stone, sand paper, sponge (feels like bread) or real bread, nails, thin cloth strips, cutlery.

Invite several volunteers, one at a time to put their hand in the box and feel around. When everyone has had a turn, ask people about their experience.

Did it feel normal/weird/not what was expected?

Then ask each person to specifically describe what they felt.

Allow the variation, uncertainty, as well as certainty and conviction, to be expressed.

This is how it was for the friends and followers of Jesus during the final days of Jesus' life and death, and then as they heard about the empty tomb. They felt and experienced lots of different things. Some of it was strange, some scary, some amazing, a lot of it was confusing. Even when some of the disciples met Jesus, they were still not sure what it all meant.





Content:



Opening the Bible: LUKE 24: 13 - 35
What Are You Looking For?



See Appendix:

In Preparation: Gather enough CEV Bibles in a ratio of 1:6 for your congregation. Make a 'book mark' for each Bible with the passage printed in larger font (see Appendix). Tri-fold long ways and glue a couple of Goggle eyes to the top of the page. You will also need to circle a different letter in the instructions for each group.

***Highlight, and rehearse reading aloud
all the words beginning with the letter***

S K P H* D B

****H excludes the words he, him, has, had, have***

If you are going to need more than 6 groups because of the number of people in your gathering, simply assign more than one group to each letter. Make sure you have a fluoro highlighter for each group.

During the Service: Divide into groups of roughly six, and give a prepared Bible, enlarged passage and highlighter to each group.

Explain that their task is to follow the instructions and highlight on their sheet the words of the letter that is circled for them. Then go through and 'practice' each word, making sure the younger members who aren't readers or those with poor eyesight aren't disadvantaged.

After a few minutes, call attention back to the centre, checking that each group has completed their highlighting. Display the passage on the screen in clear font. Explain that you will be leading a communal multi-vocal reading of the passage. Each group is to join in reading the words that they have highlighted on their copy, as you read the entire passage.

If necessary, do a little demo first, identifying the groups that will join in first: the S group on the second word "same" and the D group who will join in on the third and seventh words "day" and "disciples".

After you have read the entire passage with all of the groups joining in, do some further thinking and sharing together about what people noticed from their 'vantage point' or perspective.

- We acknowledge that none of us sees everything completely - so being biased towards particular words is not different or new. We just did it a bit more consciously today.
- We acknowledge that there is wisdom to be gained from hearing different voices and their particular emphases.
- What word or phrase did you especially notice today?
- Is there another set of words that you think should be highlighted?
eg: all the J's – including Jesus?
all the 'walking and talking' words?



Consider:



Opening the Bible: LUKE 24: 13 - 35

This is Our Journey and Our Story too.

Print out the text of Luke 24:13-35 in lines on strips of paper.

Make sure that the verse numbers appear on every piece of paper.

Distribute multiple rolls of sticky tape. As a group, work together to join all of the strips of paper, end on end in order, so that the whole passage becomes a road that you can walk along and read. This should be quite long. Perhaps start it in the foyer of your building and let it run in and around your space. If it has to turn corners, or cross over itself at some points, it will merely increase the verisimilitude it bears to our actual journey with Jesus.

You could use this rendering of the text in a number of ways.

- Ask everyone to stand along the road at some point that has a particular significance for them. Use this as an opportunity for reflective prayer

Risen and Living Jesus, we are standing in places that acknowledge that you are with us, that you are alive and that we have encountered you. Thank you for these moments. Some of these are moments of revelation and recognition, some are moments of searching and questioning, some of doubt, some of sad and gloomy days, some of surprise, some of invitation and some of blessing. However we have encountered you in the past, help us to recognise you more and more as we walk and talk with strangers and friends.

- Attempt a reading in which those who stand by a particular part of the text are invited to join in reading it. So that no one is embarrassed or pressured to read, one or two people should read from beginning to end.
- If your group is small enough, or perhaps you have a small group who will do this vicariously for the whole of your community, attempt a reading in which everyone starts at the beginning and journeys along the text road, around your building.

Song of Reflection: David Meece, I Can See. (Seven, 1985)

*All at once he walked beside me, like he'd been there all along
Not a stranger but a father, who could sense when something's wrong
And he answered all my questions and he understood my fears
That somehow vanished now that he was here
I can see who walks with me, I can hear who speaks my name
I can feel something stirring in my heart
And his words ring strong and true
like a once familiar strain
and I know I'll never be the same
I can see.*



Consider:

STATION 1: On the Road with Jesus Number Plates

Provide pieces of black card (1/3 A4 size) and plenty of individual letters and numbers printed White on Black background. Also provide 'VIC' (or whatever your state initials are) and 'On the road with Jesus' print outs (also in white text on black). Kids can choose whatever numbers/letters they want. Encourage them to take this home and put it up somewhere to remind them that Jesus is always with them on the road.



STATION 2: Dusty Chocolate Footprints

Give each person a plate and one round Marie biscuit, one oval Arrowroot biscuit and five brown Smarties. Spread icing on the two biscuits and use a little extra to stick them to the plate. Each person sprinkles a tablespoon of drinking chocolate over the biscuits and plate in order to create a dusty footprint. Each person now uses a toothpick to write/draw anything they want to say to Jesus in the 'dust'.

Jesus is alive and he is with us every day everywhere we go. When we eat, walk, talk, play whatever we are doing, Jesus is there to help us understand things and to have hope.

STATION 3: Revealing the Truth

Prepare three large wall posters in the following way:

Using the illustrations from **Top Ten Stories from Mark (SU)**, photocopy the pictures of the last supper, the crucifixion and the empty tomb on to OHP transparencies. Throw these images up onto the poster pages on a wall and trace the images using white crayon or a wax candle to create an invisible image.

Put the posters up on a wall in your gathering space. During the sermon, invite participants to colour the posters completely with coloured pencils or textas. (Thinned water-based paint is also wonderful in effect for this, but may not bring peace to all in attendance). As the colour covers the poster, but is repelled by the wax, the images of Jesus' story will be revealed.



During the Sermon...

If you really have to have a sermon (an extended time of monologue) and you have the vibe that not everyone is going to find this spellbindingly riveting - (there might be some 3 year olds, possibly a 12 year old lad, and even a 78 year old who's heard it all before) - here are some quiet activities you could set up in 'stations' around your space.

Have a song just before the sermon starts. Introduce the 'stations' before the song, allowing time for those who want to do an activity to move to that space and get going during the song before the sermon starts.

Generally, if you are clear and positive about the expectation that some of us will learn by listening quietly and others will learn through doing, most children will be easily able to adapt to this. (Adults, of course, are a law unto themselves!)

If you are a preacher, you will find that it will be fairly easy to weave some kind of reference to the content of each of these 'stations' (I'm assuming you'll be preaching on the passage).

Even just a passing reference to these embodiments of the story sends the signal to your young participants that they are part of the story and that your words are also for them.



Consequence:



Prayer Response: Question Road

Make a three metre road by laying out a strip of black industrial plastic (or cut up a sturdy garbag.) Use white masking tape to make broken white lines down the middle for effect. Give each person some post-it notes to write questions on or draw pictures.



Say something like: "If you were walking down the road one day and suddenly you could see Jesus right there, walking along side you, what questions would you want to ask him? Write or draw them on your post-it note and stick them somewhere along the road. "



Recognising Jesus - SONG: What Now?

Steve Curtis Chapman sings this song, which challenges us about what we think Jesus is like, and whether we'd recognise him if we saw him. It also challenges us to think about what we will do when we do recognise Jesus.

*I saw the face of Jesus in a little orphan girl
She was standing in the corner on the other side of the world
What now? What will you do now that you've found me?
I know I may not look like what you expected but if you remember
This is right where I said I would be...What now?*

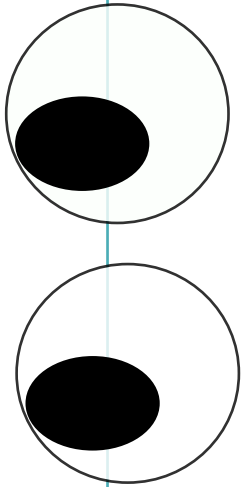
Steve Curtis Chapman, What Now. (All things New, 2004)

Extras

Where's Wally: Before or After opportunities

Take a look at some 'Where's Wally' book pages. Most public libraries will have several of these, and many families have one or two in their collection. There are also a number of 'Where's Jesus' and 'Seeking Sammy' Bible story versions of the 'Where's Wally' concept.

As you have fun looking for Wally (or Jesus) it's a great time to share your stories of how we spot Jesus in our everyday scenes and how we point Jesus out to others around us who haven't spotted him yet (that would be a bit of Hope and Mission). He's not hard to find.



Party On and On and On : Bible Text Bookmarks

**Highlight, and rehearse reading aloud
all the words beginning with the letter**

S K P H* D B

***H excludes the words he, him, has,
had, have**

Luke 24:13-25

¹³That same day two of Jesus' disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴As they were talking and thinking about what had happened, ¹⁵Jesus came near and started walking along beside them. ¹⁶But they did not know who he was.

¹⁷Jesus asked them, "What were you talking about as you walked along?"

The two of them stood there looking sad and gloomy. ¹⁸Then the one named Cleopas asked Jesus, "Are you the only person from Jerusalem who didn't know what was happening there these last few days?"

¹⁹"What do you mean?" Jesus asked.

They answered:

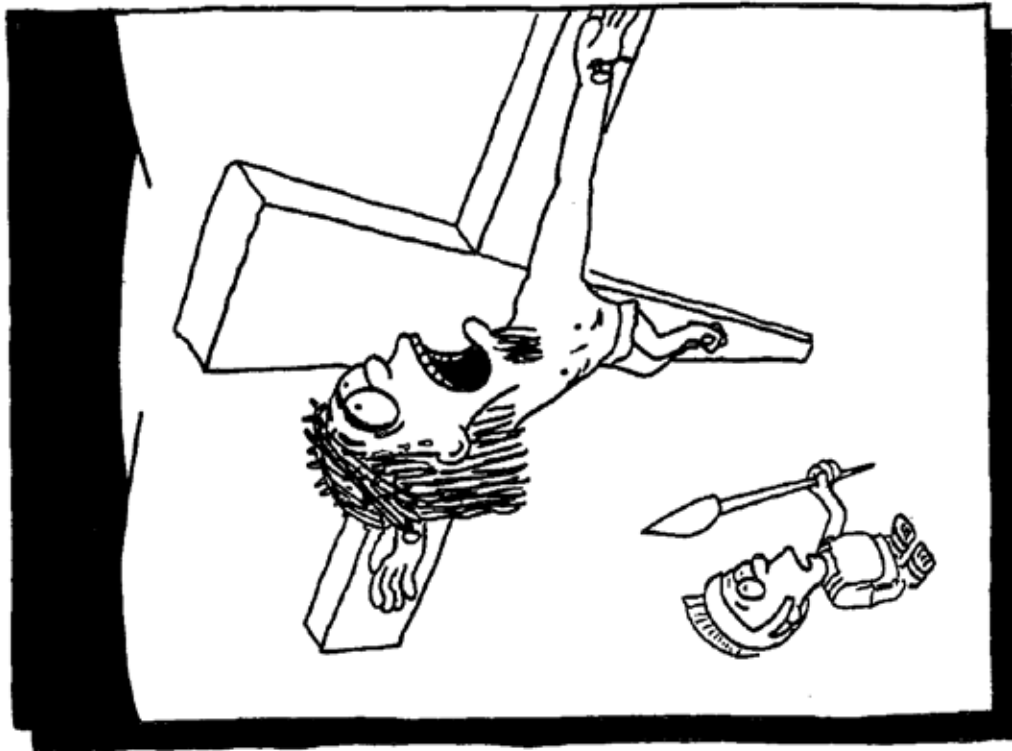
Those things that happened to Jesus from Nazareth. By what he did and said he showed that he was a powerful prophet, who pleased God and all the people. ²⁰Then the chief priests and our leaders had him arrested and sentenced to die on a cross. ²¹We had hoped that he would be the one to set Israel free! But it has already been three days since all this happened.

²²Some women in our group surprised us. They had gone to the tomb early in the morning, ²³but did not find the body of Jesus. They came back, saying that they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. ²⁴Some men from our group went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said. But they didn't see Jesus either.

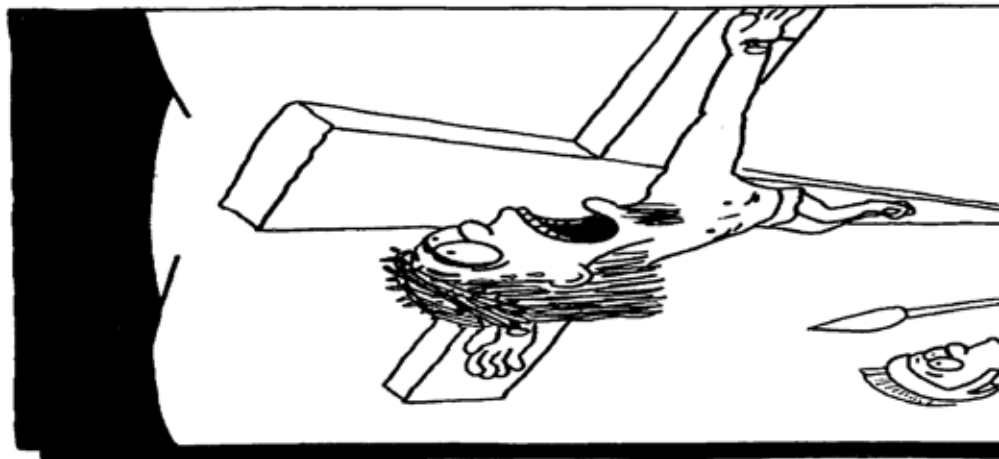
²⁵Then Jesus asked the two disciples, "Why can't you understand? How can you be so slow to believe all that the prophets said? ²⁶Didn't you know that the Messiah would have to suffer before he was given his glory?" ²⁷Jesus then explained everything written about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets. ²⁸When the two of them came near the village where they were going, Jesus seemed to be going farther. ²⁹They begged him, "Stay with us! It's already late, and the sun is going down." So Jesus went into the house to stay with them.

³⁰After Jesus sat down to eat, he took some bread. He blessed it and broke it. Then he gave it to them. ³¹At once they knew who he was, but he disappeared. ³²They said to each other, "When he talked with us along the road and explained the Scriptures to us, didn't it warm our hearts?" ³³So they got right up and returned to Jerusalem.

The two disciples found the eleven apostles and the others gathered together. ³⁴And they learned from the group that the Lord was really alive and had appeared to Peter. ³⁵Then the disciples from Emmaus told what happened on the road and how they knew he was the Lord when he broke the bread.



This man really was the Son of God!



Party On and On and On : Station 3 Top Ten Posters

