**Easter Sunday: He Is Risen**

**The Word**

Read together Luke 24

**The Big Idea**

The risen Jesus takes the disciples through a process of opening up to the reality of his resurrection that leads them from despair, to wonder, and finally to joy and becoming witnesses to his resurrection. We are similarly on this journey with Jesus where he is opening us up to the truth and joy of life with him.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. How did you experience the Easter story in a fresh way this year? Did you have any fresh perspective, insight, or encouragement?

2. Our theme through Easter week was simply walking with Jesus and seeing him in the fullness of who he is. What did you notice about Jesus from Luke’s resurrection account? It could be something that encouraged you, comforted you, confused you, or whatever.

3. On Sunday we focused on the journey theme: Jesus led the disciples through a process of discovering the full truth and implications of his resurrection. Consider your own journey with Jesus right now and your own process of faith. What big questions, issues, or challenges are you experiencing at this stage of the journey?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Imagine the characters at the beginning of Easter morning

 A. The disciples

 1. The women, the 11, and others

 2. They are in despair, emotionally exhausted, heartbroken, and confused

3. They had enough evidence to expect a resurrection (the Old Testament plus Jesus explicit and repeated words to them—see Luke 18:31-34), but they couldn’t comprehend the idea of a crucified messiah

B. Jesus

 1. He has his resurrection body

2. The cross is behind him, and he is now full of joy and anticipation

II. Scene 1: The women at the tomb

A. These women have been faithful disciples whose lives were transformed by Jesus (see Lk 8:1-3)

B. Upon finding an open and empty tomb, their response is one of being perplexed rather than understanding (v. 4)

 C. The angels open their minds to the reality of the situation (v. 4-6)

D. They leave amazed and become witnesses to the 11 apostles

III. Scene 2: Two disciples on Road to Emmaus

A. These disciples are in the presence of Jesus and yet they “were kept [by God] from recognizing him” (v. 16)

B. There is great irony here (v. 17-18). They think Jesus is in the dark on current events, but he’s the only one in the know.

C. Jesus opens the Scriptures to them (v. 25-27, and v. 32). This must have been an amazing conversation where the Son of God reveals himself in the Word of God.

D. Jesus opens their eyes to recognize him when he breaks the bread (v. 30-31). This may be an echo of other times he broke bread, such as at the feeding of the 5000 and the last supper.

E. They leave amazed and become witnesses to the 11 apostles

IV. Scene Three: Jesus appears to the 11 and the others

A. Jesus welcomes them with his “peace” (v. 36)

B. They are still startled and afraid and still did not believe out of amazement (v. 37, 41)

C. Jesus offers concrete proof that it is he, himself and not some ghost (touching his hands and feet, eating food in their presence)

D. Jesus opens their minds to understand the Scriptures (v. 45-47)

E. The disciples are turned into witnesses (v. 48) who will be empowered by the Spirit (v. 49)

F. The disciples are finally filled with great joy, worship, and praise (v. 52-53)

V. Conclusion

A. Jesus takes the disciples on this journey of being opened up to the truth of his resurrection.

B. They go through a process of moving from despair, to doubt, to confusion, to amazement, to joy and finally to becoming witnesses of the truth.

C. Jesus takes us all on our own journey of faith. Like the disciples, we are often slow to understand, but he takes us through a process of opening our hearts and minds to the truth of who he is.

D. *For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).*