

VISION 2020



TODAY'S THEME

DAY 4 | STRUGGLING to see as God sees.

We've explored three days of seeing as God sees. But let's be real, it's not always easy. Sometimes we really struggle to see as God sees. It's ok to feel that way. God embraces our struggles and promises to be with us always. And with this good news, we can face whatever hardship comes our way. It won't be easy, but God will be with us.

WORD

Remember! You can read this printed scripture from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Or you can watch the Vision Story video on the website.

Luke 24: 14-35 [New Revised Standard Version]

Talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

WONDER

Wonder Questions after the Story

- I wonder how Cleopas and his friend felt as they walked along?
- I wonder why it was hard for Cleopas and his friend to see that the stranger was Jesus?
- I wonder how they knew it was Jesus when he broke the bread. What do you think?
- I wonder what the disciples thought when Cleopas and his friend shared what happened?
- I wonder when is it hard for you to see where Jesus is in your life?
- I wonder what questions make you struggle the most?
- I wonder what would you like to ask Jesus on a walk together?

FAITH PRACTICE

Faith practices are actions and activities that help us grow in our faith and to feel God's presence in our lives.

Labyrinth | Sometimes, if we're struggling, simply slowing down and letting our thoughts flow makes enough space to let God in. A Labyrinth is a maze-like path that invites people to walk slowly and quietly. The use of Labyrinths dates back to 325 C.E. Since that time labyrinths have been prayed, studied, danced, traced and drawn as Christians use this spiritual tool to draw closer to God. Try a life-size labyrinth, desktop labyrinth or draw your own to trace with your finger.

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FAMILY DEVOTION

Gather around the dinner table for a family devotion. Each day's family devotion has the same flow, start the meal with a camp grace, then make space to wonder together with the questions provided, read scripture and close in prayer. If you're feeling bold, you can continue with the Digging Deeper section to learn more about the scripture.

CAMP GRACE

Today's Camp Grace is Johnny Appleseed! Remember you can use the one we suggest, or pick another from the Camp Grace list on our website. And don't forget about the sample videos led by Lutherhill's alumni summer staff.

JOHNNY APPLESEED | Oh, the Lord is good to me, and so I thank the Lord, for giving me the things I need like
The sun and the rain and the apple seed, The Lord is good to me, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Aaaaaamen

WONDER TOGETHER

- I wonder when you go for a long walk or car ride, what you like to do on the way?
- I wonder what makes you struggle?
- I wonder what you do when you are struggling?
- I wonder who helps you when you have a challenge or problem that you can't figure out?
- I wonder if it feels ok to struggle?
- I wonder if it's hard to see good things when you are struggling?

WORD | Luke 24: 14-35

Read from your family Bible, from the printed version on this handout, or watch the Vision Story together.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Grace-filled God, you promise to be with us always, even when we struggle. Give us the courage to continue when life is hard. Give us the strength to endure when we struggle to see as you see. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

This story takes place on the very first Easter Sunday in the late afternoon. Two followers of Jesus were walking the long (approximately seven mile) stretch from Jerusalem to Emmaus. One of the men was named Cleopas, scholars believe that this was a known person among the early followers of Jesus and lends credibility to the account. Cleopas and his unnamed friend knew about the crucifixion of Jesus, had experienced the uncertainty in the aftermath and had heard rumors from some women in their group that Jesus was raised from the dead.

As they traveled to Emmaus from Jerusalem, they were in deep conversation about what had taken place. As they walked along, another traveler joins them who happens to be the resurrected Jesus. Jesus opens the scriptures to them, reframing their experience through the story of God's love. The men begin to see their struggle in a new way. When they arrive in Emmaus, Jesus turns to leave and they invite him to dinner. Ancient Middle Eastern hospitality insisted on such welcoming. As it was near nightfall, the road would be a dangerous place for a single traveler.

As they reclined at dinner, Jesus takes bread, gives thanks, and breaks it. Does this pattern sound familiar? Then Jesus vanishes before their eyes! Having recognized Jesus, they rush back to Jerusalem – even though it was nighttime, and they had just made the long journey. They could not wait to share the good news!

There's a familiar pattern to their revelation. First, they walk along and are joined by a stranger (gathering), second, they retell the story of Jesus (word), they break bread (meal) and are sent to share the good news (sending). This is the four-fold pattern of worship. The pattern that helps us seek revelation, and a way through all of life's struggles. Jesus promises to be with us always, in all situations, especially in the midst of our uncertainty, doubt, questions, and struggles. Jesus leans into the questions of Cleopas and his friend. Jesus does the same with you and me. So, we can trust even when we are not sure. We can see God's trail of grace as we walk along.