

Surf Coast Uniting Churches  
 Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026  
 Third Sunday of Easter



The Road to Emmaus

**Introit 703 As pants the deer**

*As the deer pants for the water,  
 so my soul longs after you.  
 You alone are my heart's desire  
 and I long to worship you.*

*You alone are my strength, my shield,  
 to you alone may my spirit yield.  
 You alone are my heart's desire  
 and I long to worship you.*

Martin Nyström 1956-based on Psalm 42:1-2

**Welcome**

May the worship bless you on this wonderful Easter Day

**Acknowledgment**

This land is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here. We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people,  
 traditional custodians of this land under God.  
 We commit ourselves again to working for reconciliation in this land.

**Call to Worship**

Christ is risen!  
**Christ is risen indeed!**

**Easter Prayer**

Prayer from Celtic Daily Prayer Green Book © 2015 The Northumbria Community Trust (adapted)  
 Responses in bold © 2026 T. Lyndon

Lord, whenever failure spreads a cloud of gloom above us  
 and fogs of apathy confuse our every step

***That is the time you come near and stay with us***

When the demands of life encroach on our quiet moments  
 when pressures grind our spirits into dust  
 when time dries up like water in a desert

and prayer seems pushed into mere words like dried up husks

*That is the time you come near and join us on our journey  
That is the time you come and stay with us  
That is the time you speak to us in the word and in your teachings  
That is the time when bring hope to our hearts and rekindle the flame.*

Lord of our yesterdays  
and hope of bright tomorrows

*Our hearts burn when we hear your word  
as you come close to us on our journey through life.  
Our hope returns when you break bread with us  
and we know you in the breaking of the bread  
as your body was once broken for us.  
We come to know our suffering in the breaking of the bread.  
Our hope returns and we believe.*

#### **Prayer of Confession**

We are invited to bring all that's on our hearts to the Lord in this moment of silence and to ask for healing, forgiveness and the grace to forgive others.

#### *Silence*

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us  
"Our sins are forgiven"  
**Thanks be to God.**

#### **Hymn 584 Just as I am**

*Just as I am, though tossed about  
with many a conflict, many a doubt,  
fightings and fears within, without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

#### **Reading - Luke 24:13-35**

24:13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,

24:14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

24:15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them,

24:16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

24:17 And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.

24:18 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?"

24:19 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,

24:20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.

24:21 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.

24:22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,

- 24:23 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.
- 24:24 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."
- 24:25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!
- 24:26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?"
- 24:27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.
- 24:28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.
- 24:29 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.
- 24:30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
- 24:31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight.
- 24:32 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?"
- 24:33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.
- 24:34 They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"
- 24:35 Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

### **Hymn 398 Come Down O Love Divine**

*Come down, O Love divine,  
seek now this soul of mine,  
and visit it with your own ardour glowing;  
O Comforter, draw near,  
within my heart appear  
and kindle it, your holy flame bestowing.*

### **Sermon - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

*In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen*



Failure and sadness, hope and joy, are found in today's gospel.

The journey begins where two disciples set off on the road to Emmaus on Easter Sunday. Perhaps they were feeling downhearted and disappointed, sad and despondent because everything they hoped for has been a failure, it was all over and finished and they had lost hope in the future. Jesus found them on the road and came near to them and went with them. Perhaps the Spirit kept them from recognizing Jesus.

Then there was a little bit of first century humour. Jesus asked them what they were talking about and they responded with a question: Are you the only one who doesn't know what things have happened? And Jesus says: *What things?*

Perhaps this is an invitation to tell their story and share how they are feeling.

They share about how they hoped Jesus came to redeem Israel from Roman occupation and offer a political redemption. They didn't understand why he came or believe the women's stories about him being raised from the dead by God or other witness accounts.

Jesus says to them, they are '*foolish and slow of heart to believe all the prophets had declared.*' He tells them the Messiah was meant to suffer the things they spoke of where he was handed over by the chief priests and leaders to be condemned and crucified. The Messiah was meant to suffer these things to enter into his glory. Jesus walks beside them as they journey and beginning with the prophets, with Moses, he interprets to them the things about him in scripture.

When they reach the village of Emmaus the two disciples invite Jesus to stay with them as their guest and Jesus stays with them.

As they sit at the table it is Jesus who becomes host and breaks bread with the disciples.



After Jesus breaks bread and gives thanks, he disappears. But they recognise him at that moment, in the breaking of the bread which symbolises the breaking of his body.

They say to one another, did not our hearts burn when he was talking to us on the road and opening the scriptures to us. See in the painting how one of the disciples has his hand on his heart.

At the beginning of their journey Jesus called them foolish and slow of heart, now, when they looked back, they realised their hearts were burning, as Jesus walked alongside them and taught them all about who he is for all of us.

I wonder if when we face disappointment and failure and loose hope, we lose sight of the resurrection message in the gospel. Perhaps these are the times Jesus comes near to us on our journey. These are the times when Jesus came to stay with us. These are the times when Jesus meets us when we pray or when the bread is broken during communion.



Perhaps when we look back over our life, we remember the times our hearts burned when we listened to Jesus' teachings and scripture being interpreted.

The times we know Jesus joined us on our journey and listened to our pain, and sadness and the times when we recognised his pain and our own, in the breaking of the bread.

Let's sit with this image as I share a story about a church in Beirut.

The church and a Migrant centre next door are home to domestic workers and refugees. Domestic workers are Filipino, with some East Asian and African members, many of whom experience discrimination and exploitation and refugees are largely from the Middle East.

This Easter the church celebrated Easter below ground level, while sheltering from rocket fire and missile strikes.

A member of the church said this Easter the focus was on welcoming Jesus and staying strong because he is always there for us. He is sitting in the shelter with the suffering. They find it uncomfortable to see so much suffering but that's where they see God's grace at work. They said the Lord is sitting in our shelter in a world that is broken and this is where the people come to know the significance of the risen Christ.

The congregation and those who shelter with them share common fears for their family and future and find hope when Jesus comes near and stays with them.

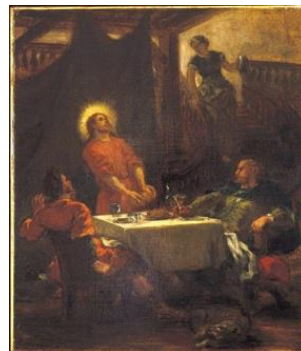
Many of us live in fear for our children. Currently both parents need to work, just to create a future for their family and to survive. Many are struggling to embrace the great Australian dream of owning their own home. For many, it's a struggle to get the basics in life. I've heard there is a generation of children and young people who are labelled the anxious generation, and 800,000 thousand children and teenagers are on Ritalin, and some young people are questioning the basis of our society, and some are becoming Christians. Perhaps it's worth checking this out.

I wonder what we can do to bridge the gap between their world and ours.

What did Jesus do in today's gospel?

He drew near to the disciples who had lost hope. He walked with them and listened to their story. When they finished telling their story he spoke to them about their loss of hope and spent time addressing their lack of understanding about his suffering by interpreting the gospel to them. He stayed with them and by staying with them they came to know him in the breaking of the bread which symbolises the breaking of his body.

When Jesus left them, they realised all along their hearts had been burning as he journeyed and stayed with them. They had come to know his presence with them in their hearts.



This painting is by Delacroix. It's different to the two previous paintings. In this painting three people form a triangle around Jesus, with the woman on the stairs looking down on the two men who finally are able to bring together the scriptures, witness accounts of the risen Jesus and their own personal experience of Jesus.



The final painting is of an African Jesus in a domestic setting where women are cooking and the men are sitting at the table with Jesus, who recognise Jesus as he breaks bread with them.



In this painting a small child looks on with wonder, as they witness the disciples recognising Jesus. Perhaps the child is filled with wonder. Children are often without filters and can see and know the truth. They can feel the joy of the disciples and others.

Perhaps that is what today's gospel invites us to do, for each one of us is a child of God.

The good news for today with the third gospel about the risen Christ is we are invited to be like a child and the disciples. We can draw together all we have experienced over Easter and look back on the times our heart has burned and known the presence of Jesus. We can learn from the gospel how to bridge the gap between those whose hearts have not yet burned, whose lives are without hope and who are anxious about the future. We can bring the Easter message of hope to others.

The Lord be with you

### ***Moment of quiet reflection***



### **Hymn 681 Lord let me see**

*Lord let me see, see more and more,  
see the beauty of a person, not the colour of the skin,  
see the faces of the homeless with no-one to take them in,  
see discouragement because she'll never win:  
see the face of our Lord in the pain:  
Lord let me see*

### Offering

Lord, giver of every good thing, we bring to you our lives, gifts and resources for the building up of your kingdom and church. We give thanks for blessings and transformation that come through your grace and love made known in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

### Prayers of the people

Prayers for peace, for the world and for those who are grieving and suffering from health issues

### The Lord's prayer

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive  
those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

### Hymn 242 Lord of the Dance

*They cut me down and I leap up high.*

*I am the life that will never, never die.*

*I'll live in you if, if you'll live in me:*

*I am the Lord of the Dance, said he:*

*Sydney Carter 1915-alt.*

### Sending

Now, O God, may your servants go in peace as you promised.

For our eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all to see.

A light to the nations and the glory of your people, amen

### Hymn 779 May the Feet of God

May the feet of God walk with you,  
and his hand hold you tight.

May the eye of God rest on you,  
and his ear hear your cry.

May the smile of God be for you,  
and his breath give you life.

May the Child of God grow in you,  
and his love bring you home.

Aubrey Podlich 1946-