

Reflections for the 3rd Sunday of Easter

The stranger who walks with us

The gospel of Luke tells us a story (in chapter 24) about two disciples who walked away from Jerusalem, 'their faces downcast', on the day when the news was starting to spread that the tomb was empty, and some began to say that Jesus was alive.

They walked towards a village called Emmaus, a few miles from Jerusalem, and as they walked a stranger came and walked alongside them. At first the stranger just walked with them, then asked what they had been discussing, and listened as they talked about the hope they had placed in Jesus, and how their hopes had been shattered by his death. Then the stranger began to explain to them how God's purposes were being fulfilled through all these unexpected events.

At the end of their journey, they invited the stranger to share their evening meal, and it was only when he broke and shared the bread that 'their eyes were opened', and they realised it was the risen Lord Jesus himself, who had shared their journey when they feared that he was lost to them for ever.

This is a story to treasure, because it is a story that is full of promises, like these:
that even when we feel like giving up, there is always a way of hope to be discovered
that when we feel that we are among strangers, they may turn out to be 'angels' in
disguise – God's messengers for us
that when we feel that we are lost and alone, God may be with us, even when we
have failed to recognise his presence
that in every place and moment, we may discover that the word of God is near
and that when we gather and meet together (in the real or, at the moment, in the
'virtual' world) we may find that we are at the same time meeting with God

Revd John Waller

Living God,
your Son made himself known to his friends
as they gathered at the table
and broke bread together:
open the eyes of our faith
so that we may see all things
in the light of your love,
shown to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.