

The Rev. Jay Lawlor “Jesus Walks With You” 3rd Sunday of Easter, April 30, 2017

The Rev. Jay Lawlor continued as visiting priest at Grace Episcopal Church in Muncie, IN and encouraged them during their time of transition between rectors.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, February 21, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) preached the [sermon](#) “Jesus Walks With You” for the Third Sunday of Easter on April 30, 2017 at Grace Episcopal Church, Muncie, Indiana. Following is a transcript of Rev. Lawlor's sermon.

Two disciples are walking along the road to Emmaus. It is near evening after a long day. They are debriefing . . . engaged in conversation about all that has taken place the last three days – Good Friday to Easter, and do not even notice Jesus coming up along beside them. We are told they are kept from recognizing him, but it seems even more than that. It seems they are so engaged in deep conversation that they failed to recognize someone had come along beside them. So Jesus inserts himself into the conversation: “What are you discussing as you walk along the road?” – As if he didn't know.

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Be gentle with each other, and with yourself. You are embarking on a journey. A journey along a road not unlike that which leads to Emmaus, because it is a journey Jesus travels with you.”

The Rev. Jay Lawlor



Jesus on the Road to Emmaus - Creative Commons License

They stop with sad looks on their faces. You see, like the other disciples, they at first do not believe the good news delivered by the women who witnessed the empty tomb and the vision of angels who told them Jesus was alive. Nonetheless, one of disciples, named Cleopas, replies to Jesus's question as if Jesus must be clueless: “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?”

But Jesus plays along by asking “What things?” So the two disciples summarized all that happened from Good Friday to earlier that Easter day. But they don't get it. They are traveling

home to Emmaus, sad and bewildered . . . not yet believing Jesus is alive . . . not recognizing he is walking along the road with them. When they reach Emmaus, Jesus walks on ahead, but the two disciples invite him to stay for it is nearly dark.

At supper Jesus takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them. At that moment they recognize him. It all connects for them . . . that feeling they had walking along the road and talking with Jesus. "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

Their sadness and confusion turned to joy and clarity ... their longing fulfilled. In that moment, they see. In broken and blessed bread they encounter the risen Christ. The one who had been with them all along.

So the Emmaus story is one of encounter with the risen Jesus. One we can relate to as a Eucharist-centered people. Week after week we come to encounter the risen Christ in broken and blessed bread. And as important as that is – as central as The Holy Eucharist is to our lives as Episcopalians, the Emmaus story also has another message to share.

Remember that Jesus walked with the two disciples as they journeyed along the road. They may not have recognized him, but he was there. He may have seemed a stranger, but it was the living Jesus.

You see, not only is Jesus present to us in the Eucharist, he travels with us as we journey along the road. As we gather together around tables to share fellowship, as we study the Bible, as we welcome friend and stranger alike in hospitality – in all of these things and more, Jesus is present. He walks along side us and before us.

These are especially important to remember as you enter a period of transition – a journey from who you have been as a people of God to all God is calling you to be. The good news is Jesus walks with you. Jesus is beside you every step of the way. Even if you take a wrong turn or misstep, Jesus will be right there with you.

I spent most of last week in Chicago for Interim Ministry training, and I would like to share a few of the important things I took away from the training. The first is that a period of transition is more than leaving behind one thing to move toward something new; it is a time where creativity can flourish and grace can abound. So embrace it as a time of excitement and energy. The second is that God's fidelity is assured. At times you may feel like you are wandering, unsure which way to go, but be faithful to God's call and God will be faithful to you. The third is that you have what you need to succeed; the decision to succeed is up to you.

So listen to God in prayer and listen to each other. Be gentle with each other, and with yourself. You are embarking on a journey. A journey along a road not unlike that which leads to Emmaus . . . because it is a journey Jesus travels with you. Be sure to take the time to recognize he is there and you can't go wrong. Amen.

This sermon reprinted from The Rev. Jay Lawlor "Jesus Walks with You" at <https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/jesus-walks-rev-jay-lawlor-sermon-3-easter-year-apr-30-2017/>

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