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Easter 3B  
Acts 3:12-19  
Psalm 4  
1 John 3:1-7  
Luke 24:36b-48

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

*The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

Well, it's still Easter. For some reason, I've found that the church does a really good job of setting aside Advent and Lent as seasons of "special intention" – but not Easter.

Which is a shame, because while Advent has four Sundays, and Lent has six Sundays (counting Palm/Passion Sunday) – Easter has seven Sundays and then Pentecost. We build up to it from the start of the church year with Advent, and then we mostly celebrate Easter Day and are done.

Maybe it's because we haven't been as good at marketing the theme of the season. Advent is expectation and anticipation. Lent is repentance and self-examination. But what is Easter? If you had to encapsulate the season, what words would you use? [wait for answers] Could/would you celebrate that in your life for fifty days? What might change if you did so?

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Regardless of whether or not we celebrate the season with special intention, the scripture we read during this season has a lot to teach us about being Easter Christians

This year on Easter Day we began with the Gospel of John's story of Mary Magdalene traveling to the tomb at dawn to be near where her friend was laid to rest. There she discovered the stone rolled away and later was the first to meet the risen Christ – becoming the Apostle to the Apostles, announcing, *"I have seen the Lord."*

**Here** we learn the importance of not letting our fear lock us away and the importance of showing up. Without her faithfulness, the whole direction of our faith tradition would be different.

Last week, on the Second Sunday of Easter, we continued in John's Gospel with the story of later that same day. Mary had returned with the good news of Jesus' resurrection, but his friends were still locked in that upper room.

Nonetheless, he appeared to them, gave them his peace, showed them his wounds, gave them the Spirit, and commissioned them in the work of reconciliation. All except for Thomas, who upon his return, laments and desires the same. And so Jesus showed up again, granting Thomas his share, and giving words of comfort to all who would come later – including us – that we will be tasked with believing without seeing, and called blessed for doing so.

**Here** we learn the deep truth that Jesus will always meet us where we are – but that when he comes to us we will be changed, and we will be sent out to live and share God's mission of compassion, justice, and reconciliation.

And now today. Today we move to a resurrection appearance from the Gospel of Luke.

It begins with Jesus meeting the disciples in a locked room again, startling and terrifying them and giving them his peace. And again, he shows them his wounds and invites them to touch. Then, interestingly enough, he asks if they have anything to eat and they give him broiled fish. Then he taught them, opening their minds to understand the scriptures.

The significance of all this is lost because we haven't read the verses just prior to this, about Jesus meeting two disciples on the road to Emmaus. In that story he walked with them and explained scripture to them too, teaching them about his life and death even though they didn't recognize him for who he was. It was only when they gathered to eat together, and he broke the bread, that they knew him.

Bread and fish. These two stories from Luke read together evoke the feeding of the multitude – a story about abundance – another meal, another eucharist, Jesus shared with his friends. But just as importantly, in both stories Jesus did what essentially amounted to a Bible study.

**Here** we learn a pattern for holy living and discipleship. We share God’s peace. We gather together. We break bread – for Eucharist with a big E and eucharists with little e’s. We study scripture together. And – as Luke’s Gospel today ends – we are to be witnesses to the Good News.

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The Easter season has much more in store for us too: Good Shepherd Sunday, vines and pruning, abiding in love and the Great Commandment, and a final message of farewell before the Spirit comes on the Day of Pentecost.

Perhaps our task is to walk these fifty days faithfully, praying and working for a faith that comes alive. That we don’t take this season for granted – remembering that Easter is not just one day – and then living that way.

I still think we could do more to make Easter a season of “special intention” – but either way, God is with us as we once again celebrate with joy the resurrection, saying

Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
*The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!*