



LAW, GRACE, AND WISDOM:
OUR FAITH, GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13–35

Road to Emmaus—Art Workshop
Road to Emmaus—Audiovisual Workshop
Road to Emmaus—Computer Workshop
Road to Emmaus—Drama/Storytelling Workshop
Road to Emmaus—Games and Puzzles Workshop
Road to Emmaus—Music and Worship Workshop
Road to Emmaus—Bonus: Cooking Workshop

Publisher: Sandra Albritton Moak

Writers: **Leader to Leader**—Cindy Cushman
Art Workshop—Meg Elliott Rift
Audiovisual Workshop—Jeanne McIver
Computer Workshop—Cathy Caldwell Hoop
Drama/Storytelling Workshop—Rita Odom
Games and Puzzles Workshop—Terry Biers
Music and Worship Workshop—Martha Bess DeWitt
Bonus: Cooking Workshop—Christina Berry

Writing Team Manager: Meg Elliott Rift

Editor: Betsy Ensign-George

Art Director: Jeanne Williams

Designer: Jeanne Williams

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Road to Emmaus

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Leader to Leader

Bonus: Cooking
Workshop



Biblical Background

It is a Sunday evening, and two disciples, deep in conversation about the strange events of the past week, are on a journey. A stranger happens upon them, and asks what they are discussing . . .

So begins this post-resurrection story that is found only in the gospel of Luke. It is a narrative that possesses all the literary elements of a good story—movement, emotion, suspense, and an exciting climax—set within the framework of what, at its outset, was expected to be a simple journey from one town to another.

The two disciples walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus, slowly and hopelessly, and talk about all that has happened in recent days. Most likely, they are still in shock over the tragic things that happened to a man they love, respected, and believed in. They encounter a fellow traveler, and the readers of the story are told what the disciples do not know. The traveler is Jesus himself. As they walk, Jesus teaches them the meaning of the Scriptures. They arrive at their destination and invite him to stay for dinner. He accepts their hospitality and then, as Luke explains: “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” (Luke 24:30–31). At this, Jesus disappears . . . before they have a chance to ask any questions or make any professions. But they turn to one another and acknowledge that they had a funny feeling, the kind you have when, in the presence of the familiar or the extraordinary, you sense that something bigger is going on. They say, “Were not our hearts burning within us . . . (v. 32)?” The rest of their words were not yet formulated because what they were experiencing was still beyond comprehension: Easter, resurrection, new life, and hope. But they felt it. They recognized it in the breaking of the bread, the very act Jesus told them to remember him by. They felt compelled to return to Jerusalem, in spite of the late hour, anxious and excited to share their experience with the other disciples.

This story teaches us about what it means to be disciples of the risen Christ. Word and Sacrament, hospitality and witness, revelation and remembrance are all important themes in this unit’s story and in the life of the Christian believer.

Theological Connections

Perhaps the most important thing the story of the “Road to Emmaus” teaches us is how it is we get to know the living Christ. What we learn from the story is that getting to know Christ involves both divine and human action.

Central to the story is the revelation of God present in both Word and Sacrament, the two critical elements of Christian worship. When the two disciples met Jesus on the road, they did not immediately recognize him. Only after he interpreted the Scriptures to them and shared a meal where he blessed and broke the bread did they recognize him. Like the Emmaus disciples, believers ever since have encountered, experienced, and recognized Jesus by reverently receiving Word and Sacrament.

Even with God’s revelatory acts, the disciples could have missed the opportunity to recognize Jesus. Had they not been open to hearing what Jesus had to say on the road, and had they not taken the initiative of extending an invitation to him to stay for dinner, Jesus could have gone on by with them none the wiser. Like Abraham and Sarah, rushing to welcome the strangers who turn out to be angels bringing the promise of Isaac’s birth, the two disciples learned the truth of Paul’s teaching, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:2).

We can never be sure where we will meet Christ. However, we can be sure that if we neglect to show hospitality to others, if we do not open ourselves to meeting Christ in unexpected people and places, we may miss an experience of the presence of God. When we do open ourselves to such experiences, we may find the experience so powerful that, like



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the two disciples, we are compelled to tell others about it. If others are to learn about God's revelatory acts, Christian believers must witness to their own experiences, as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus did.

Educational Emphases

A key part of our task in Christian education is to simply let children begin to learn what is in the Bible. The "Road to Emmaus" story is an interesting, engaging story about Jesus that children will enjoy hearing and learning. If the children, particularly the younger children, leave this unit with no more than an ability to tell this story in their own words, then it will have been time well spent. To learn that much means the children have learned something about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If you want to go deeper, even with the younger children, a good place to start is with the hospitality of the two disciples and what they gained by their willingness to extend hospitality to a stranger. In working with the older children, you can also make the connection between how the two disciples experienced Jesus through Word and Sacrament and what we do in worship each week. If they've ever found themselves wondering why we do what we do in worship, this story gives them one answer—to get to know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Take Note

In our day and age, when so much is made of "stranger danger," the biblically prominent theme of extending hospitality to strangers gives parents and Christian educators pause. Although it is important to confirm what children have learned from parents and teachers about never going anywhere with an adult they do not know, you can still include the theme of hospitality to strangers by highlighting the differences between what the Bible is talking about and what they have learned at school and at home.

For example, this can be an opportunity to teach children about some of the differences between the

society in which we live and what life was like before and during the time of Jesus. In a place and time where there were no restaurants or hotels, the only places travelers were able to eat and stay the night were in other people's homes, and people weren't always traveling in places where they knew other people and could rely on friends or family. The entire culture was dependent on the expectation that people would open their homes to strangers passing through who were in need of food or shelter.

Note: Even in biblical times, this would have been the responsibility of the adults in the household and not the children.

Although that is not the case for the society in which we live, we can still learn from this story and from others in the Bible that it is important to welcome people who are different from us. Even though that does *not* mean that a child should ever go somewhere alone with an adult he or she does not know, it does mean that the children should be friendly to a new student in their class at school, or stick up for a child who is picked on by others in the class. The presence of Christ may be found in that person, just as we experience Christ in our best friend or loved one. May you and the children you teach get to know Christ in new and exciting ways as you embark on this journey of the road to Emmaus.

Welcoming All Children

We encourage all leaders to consider how each unit and each workshop might affect the learning of children with special needs in your churches. Because these issues vary widely from church to church and from child to child, rather than offering general guidelines here that may or may not address your concerns, we encourage you to seek assistance from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Disability Consultants. Go to www.pcusa.org/phewa/consult.htm for contact information for consultants in areas of hearing, mobility, vision, and developmental disabilities, who are available by phone or e-mail to assist you with any questions or concerns you might have.



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Suggested Supplemental Resources

Computer Software

Microsoft Windows “paint” program *Kid Pix Studio Deluxe, 3rd edition*, available from Sunday Software, www.sundaysoftware.com or 1-800-678-1948.

Discovery’s *Life of Christ* for older children, available from Sunday Software, www.sundaysoftware.com or 1-800-678-1948.

Books

Milton, Ralph. *The Family Story Bible*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

Audiovisual

The Miracle Maker—The Story of Jesus by Family Home Entertainment. VHS tape or DVD, available from www.amazon.com. For all ages.

Fish Eyes: Emmaus Road/Inside the Fish (Tape 7, Episodes 13 and 14). VHS tape (Item #V984), available from www.gospeldirect.com or 1-800-467-7353. For older children.

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Main Idea

Two disciples walking on a road meet a stranger who teaches them Scripture. They share a meal together and realize that it was Jesus all along.

Something to Remember

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures (Luke 24:27).

Question 28. How do we know that Jesus is Lord?

After he died and was raised from the dead, he appeared to his disciples, both women and men. He revealed himself to them as our living Lord and Savior. Through the Bible, he continues to reveal himself to us today.

—*Belonging to God: A First Catechism*

Objectives of the Workshop

The children will have the opportunity to:

- Bake bread and share it.
- Consider how we may sense the presence of Christ in surprising places.

Things to Prepare

- Write four questions on index cards for younger children (see Assemble for questions). (Assemble)
- Print and/or photocopy the recipe cards, “Emmaus Honey Wheat Bread” (Resource 1, page 7), onto card stock. Make one for each child to take home, plus one for each group of three or four children to use during the workshop. Cut the cards apart. Place a recipe card in a plastic bag or sack for each child to take home with the bread. (Claim)
- Make sure you have enough bread ingredients for each group of three or four to prepare a recipe. Place ingredients on table(s). (Claim)

You Will Need

Assemble

- Blank index cards (one for each older child)
- Prepared index cards with four questions (one card for each younger child)
- Pencils

Bible Study

- Bibles, one for each child

Claim

- Aprons (optional)
- For each group of three or four children:
 - One “Emmaus Honey Wheat Bread” recipe card (Resource 1, page 7)
 - Ingredients for bread (listed on recipe card)
 - Cooking oil spray
 - Mixing bowls
 - Measuring cups
 - Measuring spoons
 - Wooden spoons
- Disposable aluminum baking sheet or aluminum foil and regular baking sheet
- Permanent marker
- Oven
- Kitchen timer
- Oven mitts
- Wire cooling rack
- Plastic wrap
- Plastic bags or sacks, one for each child
- Photocopied and cut-out “Emmaus Honey Wheat Bread” recipe card (Resource 1, page 7) for each child

Depart

- No materials needed



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Bonus: Cooking Workshop



Assemble: God Calls Us Together

Before the workshop, write the four questions from the Favorite Foods section below on an index card for each younger child.

Favorite Foods

Welcome the children as they enter, and invite them to gather with you around a table. Give each older child an index card and ask them to write the following on the card:

- Favorite food:
- Where I get this food:
- Who I like to eat this food with:
- A memory of enjoying this food:

Cards for younger children will already have the questions written on them. Younger children may need some assistance with writing answers. Invite the children to share their responses.

Opening Prayer

Pray the following prayer, pausing at the end of each phrase and letting the children repeat it after you:

Dear God,
We come together to your table.
We join together to learn about you.
Help us to see you.
Help us to know you.
In Jesus' name, we pray.
Amen.

Bible Study: We Hear God's Word

Claim: We Respond to God's Word

Note: The Bible Study and the Claim cooking activity will take place at the same time, with the Bible story being read and discussed while the bread is baking and cooling (see "Thinking about the Story" in Claim).

Before the workshop, print and/or photocopy the recipe cards, "Emmaus Honey Wheat Bread" (Resource 1, page 7) onto card stock. Make one for each child to take home, plus one for each group of three or four children to use during the workshop. Cut the cards apart. Place a recipe card in a plastic bag or sack for each child to take home with the bread. Make sure you have enough bread ingredients for each group of three or four to prepare a recipe. Place ingredients on table(s).

Baking Bread

Before they begin to cook, invite the children to wash their hands thoroughly. You may also wish to provide aprons for each child. Once everyone has washed up and prepared, gather around your cooking space. Have the children get into groups of three or four. Give each group a baking sheet. If you are using disposable aluminum baking sheets, have each child write his or her name on a section of the baking sheet with a permanent marker. If you are using regular baking sheets, have children line the sheets with aluminum foil and use the permanent marker to write their names directly on the foil. Spray the sheets or foil with cooking oil spray.

Show the children the ingredients for the bread and tell them that bread plays an important role in today's story. Before measuring and mixing, read the recipe card (prepared from Resource 1, page 7) together to make sure that everyone understands the instructions. Remind everyone of the importance of taking care in the kitchen as they measure, mix, and bake. Have the children work together to prepare their bread. Have an adult move the baking pans into and out of the oven.

Clean Up

Have the children clean up the work space. Have them put away ingredients, wash and dry the utensils, and wash their hands.



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Thinking about the Story

Read the story while the bread is baking and cooling. Distribute Bibles and have the children turn to Luke 24:13–35. Younger children may need some assistance in finding the passage. With younger children, read the Scripture passage aloud and have the children follow along. With older children, ask them to take turns reading the verses out loud. Ponder the following questions with the children:

- Why were the people on the road to Emmaus?
- What made them so sad?
- Why do you suppose they didn't recognize Jesus?
- What was it that made them invite this stranger to stay and eat with them?
- When he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, what did it remind you of?
- How does our sharing food together at the table remind us of Jesus?

Wrap the bread in plastic as soon as it is cool enough. Make sure each child has a small loaf to take home. Put the bread in plastic bags or sacks and include a recipe card in each bag or sack. Encourage the children to share the bread with a family member, neighbor, or friend.

Depart: God Sends Us into the World Walking With Jesus

Gather the children in a circle and talk for a few moments about how the two disciples in the story were surprised to discover that the person they traveled with was actually Jesus, the risen Christ. Imagine together about what that experience may have been like. In our lives we meet and know people who behave in Christlike ways. But this is a story of people who actually walked with Jesus. Can you imagine what it would be like to walk with Jesus? Ask the children to think about what they would ask Jesus. What would they talk about with him if they had the opportunity?

Pass-along Blessing

Conclude your time together by turning to the child on your right and saying, “(Name), Christ be with you.” Have them turn and say the same thing to the person on their right and so on around the circle until all have been blessed.

Dismiss the children and give them their bread and recipe cards to take home.

Evaluate

How did the lesson bless you today? In what moments did you recognize the risen Lord? What part of the cooking activity might be done more simply or easily in the future?



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Resource 1

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Workshop



Emmaus Honey Wheat Bread

Note to Leader: Print and/or photocopy this page on card stock. Make one recipe card for each child, plus one for each group of three or four children to use during the workshop. Cut apart the recipe cards.

Emmaus Honey Wheat Bread

Ingredients:

- 1 cup biscuit mix
- 1 cup cracked wheat flour
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 cup warm water
- 1/4 cup milk
- 4 tablespoons honey
- 1/2 tablespoon melted butter

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Grease baking sheet.
3. Mix together all ingredients except the melted butter.
4. Place on floured surface.
5. Divide into 4 sections, shaping each into a round loaf.
6. Score and drizzle melted butter over loaves.
7. Bake on greased baking sheet at 375 degrees for 10–14 minutes, until bottom is lightly browned.
8. Cool on a wire rack. Makes 4 small round loaves of bread.

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