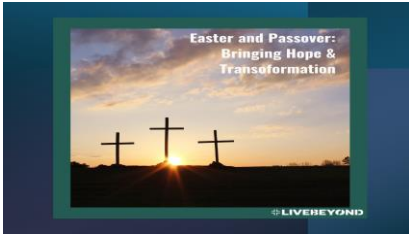


SERMON 19.04.2026



As we go through the season of Easter, allow yourselves time out to think and reflect and pray on what the season means to you. How many times in our lives have we said, 'I hope and I pray for....' as we hope for change in our lives. How many times have you changed things around in your lives and transformed the person you are today. Our lives are a continual journey, with many changes of direction as we strive to do the best we

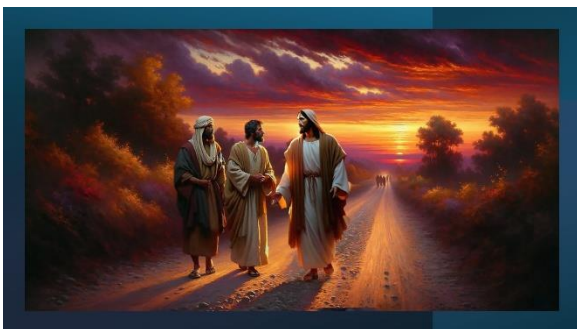
can. The gospel reading today the journey to Emmaus takes me back to times of journeys I have been on. Times where I have walked the dogs around the local streets or in the local park, on the beach on holiday, on the fens in Norfolk. Each time I have walked I have often passed people I know but also people I don't know. I usually smile and say hello. Sometimes I have stopped to have a chat with them for a while.

Maundy Thursday I travelled halfway to Norfolk to meet with a couple who recently has lost their beautiful dog. They live in the same village as my sister in Norfolk and she told Gail and John I had Yorkshire Terrier Puppies and they were interested in them. We made contact via WhatsApp and then we had a video call so they could see the puppies and think about if they wanted one. They laughed at their antics and said they would like to meet and see two in particular. As she was on holiday for 10 days and needed to train the puppy to go in the office with her at the Airforce base before she went back to work. The only day I could fit it in was Maundy Thursday, allowing me time to drive to a halfway point and to get back in time for our service.



When at the halfway point at the services, we were blessed with sunshine and spent time outside so that they could see and hold the dogs and see the parents. We spent ages chatting and spoke about John having just travelled to Yorkshire for his mother's funeral. While we were sat there, other people came and asked if they could see and stroke the dogs and puppies. We had quite a little gathering. All strangers but taking the time to stop and chat. After they had left, Gail and John had decided which puppy they were taking home and wrapped her up comfortably in the carrier to take her home. Having had a quick bite to eat and a drink I set back off on the journey home, rested and then came to the service and watch we held here.

Think about the times when you have encountered people you don't know on a journey, where you have taken the time to stop and chat, or simply smile or nod. What impact did that have on you and on them. You may have been the only person that has spoken or smiled and acknowledged them in days. Think about the effect that will have had on you and on them.

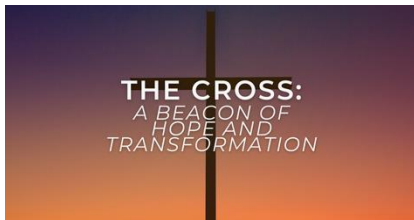


Our lovely gospel from Luke on the journey to Emmaus, reminds us of journeys we have been on where we may not know those that we meet on our Journeys, but we can share our experiences, hopes and fears. This gospel reading reminds us that we may not know who we are walking with but they may help us on our journey to understand things we may not understand. Imagining travelling on that journey and at the end of it being invited to share a meal with those

travellers, how special that would be. We don't know if Jesus is one of those travelling with us on our journey. The disciples and many followers were changed over time as they came to realise Jesus was still

walking amongst them. We too can be changed if we take the time to open our hearts and minds to the love of God through Jesus and listen to what he has to say to us and this is something we can try to do through daily prayer and reflection .

In Jeremiah 29 there is a lovely verse that reminds us about the plans God has for us. It says 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.' We have all been through many trials in our lifetime that may have tested our faith and endurance, but we each can live in a hope that the faith we have is growing daily in the lives we live, and this is truly a living hope.



Jesus dying on the cross for our sins is a beacon of hope and transformation for each one of us. We thank God that we can meet and take the time to learn a bit more about Jesus and the messages he has for us to help us live a life of faith and transform us into new and revitalised individuals. This can help us have the courage to not be afraid to talk to those around us about how our church life and family have

helped transform us and deepen our faith. **Amen**

Tina Titley