

**“From the Heart”**

1st Pres San Bernardino

**Luke 24:13-35, 1Peter 1:17-23**

4/6/08 3Easter

Rev. Dr. Sandra R. Tice

So here are these two guys, walking down the road.  
Forlorn, Miserable  
Talking over, as we so often need to do,  
the thing that has distressed them, has disoriented them,  
has broken their hearts.

Perhaps you have walked down a road like that one,  
with someone who knows why you are weary,  
someone you can share the story with.

**And you are talking- for once- about what really matters:**

What you don't understand  
What you'd give anything to undo.  
What makes you frightened, or sad.

Maybe you are talking about your regrets,  
**And wondering where God can be in this whole mess.**

If you have, then you know that such conversation is holy ground.  
That is what these two were doing:  
“Walking,” the bible says  
“And talking with each other about all these things..”

**And a stranger comes, and walks with them.**

And though he is, I imagine, the person they most long to see in all the world, “Their eyes are kept from recognizing him,”  
Though he is as near as he can be, they don't see him at all.  
And he asks-And they tell him-  
(with some impatience at his cluelessness,) the whole sad story.

I imagine the catch in their voices,  
the tears in their eyes as they tell the parts that are sacred and holy to them,  
**The expression on their faces as their hearts burn within them.**  
And I imagine his face, as he experiences their grief.

For me, the saddest line in the story is when one of them says:  
**“but we had hoped...”**

We had *hoped*.

We had hoped this treatment would work  
I had hoped he was the one I would spend my life with  
We had hoped that we could have children  
I had hoped she would grow up safe and happy  
We hoped this time would be different  
We know what this is like, I think, to hope and be disappointed.

It is easy to become **afraid to hope**,  
afraid that once again we will be made fools of,  
that we will again have our **hearts** broken.

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And the stranger does this really unusual thing:  
He calls them foolish, and **Slow of heart** to believe.  
Slow of heart.

**I think relinquishing hope makes our hearts slow.**

**Giving up hope** makes us unable to believe  
the ‘astounding stories’, or the reports that ‘He is alive’.  
**It makes our hearts slow**, makes us unable to see who is walking with us,  
even though it is the face we most long to see in all the world,  
blinds us to everything but our sorrow.

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We know, from what they say at the end of the story,  
**that their hearts were burning within them as Jesus spoke to them.**  
**Right then, in the middle of**  
their hopelessness, Their impatience, their blindness-  
They experienced some warmth, some change in their hearts.  
But they were so sure that he could not be there,  
So determined not to be disappointed,  
**That they were slow of heart**  
**And they missed it- they didn’t recognize it until later.**

So: what warms your heart?  
What lights a fire in you?  
What stirs up a tenderness or an urgency in you?  
Because it is likely that Jesus is walking with you right there,  
and speaking,  
and inviting you to hope. \*\*\*

***“Love one another deeply,” Peter says, “from the heart.”***

That’s his advice to new Christians,  
to those trying to find their way in a complicated world,  
to those looking for the Risen Christ:

**Love one another deeply. From the heart.**

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How do we do that?

Well, Walk the road together.

**Talk to each other, for once, about what really matters-**

Trust one another with our regrets,

With what we don’t understand,

What makes us wonder where God is in this whole mess.

**And Break bread together**

The Session is experimenting with what it means to eat together,  
to share our stories and sustenance as well as the business at hand,  
for we know that often he is made known to us in the breaking of bread.

**Walk and talk with each other.**

**Break bread.**

**But above all: Pay attention when your heart burns within you.**

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***Love one another deeply from the heart-***

From that heart that is slow to trust, that is afraid of being disappointed;

Love one another deeply, from that foolish and slow-to-understand heart.

Love one another deeply, from that heart that burns within us,

And our eyes will be opened

And we will see that he is right here, among us