

**Worship Material**  
**Joining the dots**  
**Materials from Roots Bible Study**  
**Sunday 23rd April**

**Begin with an opening prayer**

We gather together today, Lord,  
the events of Easter still fresh in our minds.  
We still have our questions.  
We wonder how we can join the dots,  
learn the best way to live the life we are called to.  
Open our eyes, Lord,  
so that we might see the stranger in our midst.  
Give us openness to listen to their stories.  
Remind us that we just never know when we might come across  
Jesus, our friend, our Lord and master,  
open our eyes and our hearts.  
Amen.

**Read Luke 24.13-35**

**Bible notes**

The two travelling companions (husband and wife, perhaps - they shared a house) are joined by a stranger. They assume he's a Passover pilgrim like them, and his questions draw out their story. What he hears is saturated with sorrow, dashed hopes and confusion. They'd hardly had time to get used to the execution of their beloved prophet before some women disciples said they'd found his tomb disturbed, and then were told by angels that he'd been raised from the dead. How were the companions to make sense of these contradictory stories of death and resurrection, to say nothing of their own jumbled thoughts and feelings?

When the stranger speaks, his words are sparing yet sharply focused. He uncovers a pattern in their Scriptures that reveals the divine way of suffering and glory to match the experience of Israel's messiah. Might this reframe the travellers' experiences? If verse 25 seems too harsh for grieving disciples, remember that Luke sees it addressed to his readers too, who must continue to make sense of the shameful crucifixion of Jesus in their world. But how?

The stranger's words make an impression, but their impact is only felt at the meal in the couple's home. Unusually, it is the guest who says grace before breaking and sharing the bread. But this is enough for the two to recognise him before he disappears from sight (v.31). His initiatives - asking questions that allow them to tell their story, opening up the deeper meaning of Scripture, using familiar words and actions at the meal - are like joining the dots of a picture that gradually reveals the new reality of resurrection. Luke's readers, then and now, discover that same reality by making those same connections.

### **A prayer of thanksgiving**

Lord, as we go out and about this week,  
may we recognise Jesus in everyone we meet.  
May our whole lives be a beacon of praise and thanksgiving,  
pointing to the one we love.  
May we take every chance we get,  
to talk about what you mean to us and show our love.  
As we share with each other we get to know each other better,  
and we grow stronger, and you, O God,  
are revealed in a multitude of ways.  
Thank you, Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **A prayer to conclude**

Lord, as we go from here, walk with us.  
Inspire us to join the dots of our faith  
to see more clearly the wonder of the Easter story.  
Motivate us to share that story with others,  
and encourage us to live and work with you and in you.  
**Amen.**