



Third Sunday in Easter Sunday, April 15th, 2018

Seeing and Living Beyond the Horizon



Composition VII - Kandinsky

The abstract art you see above is by the Russian, Wassily Kandinsky, referred to as “Composition VII”. Kandinsky was a devoted Christian of the Eastern Orthodox tradition and an abstract artist of enormous capacity and imagination. As a Christian he was especially interested in Christian interpretations of the “end times”; what in Christianity we refer to as ‘eschatology’. Composition VII is an artistic summation of a range of themes and stories from the Bible: Noah’s Ark, Jonah and the Whale, Christ’s resurrection and the four horsemen of the Apocalypse found in the Book of Revelation. What marked Kandinsky’s thought and art were the themes of death and rebirth, destruction and creation: what we might call “living beyond the horizon”, something he correctly sensed as he anticipated World War I but looked beyond to a resurrected Europe. Today’s readings, in particular, the story of the Road to Emmaus, where the resurrected Christ appears to some of his disciples, as they walk together in despair after the crucifixion, points to “living beyond the horizon” where resurrection appears when it is least expected, not even contemplated.

OUR GATHERING

Announcements

Greeting

Christ is risen!

Sing a new song!

Sing praise to our still-laughing Easter God;

who has rolled away the limitations of yesterday.

Immerse your anxiety and despair in the fountain of resurrection;
for God takes ordinary things;

and makes them extraordinary.

We turn our eyes to the Paschal Candle

We light the candle knowing that our faith in Jesus
is sometimes strong,

sometimes elusive,

Easter is the season when we thoughtfully celebrate

Christ breaking the bounds of death and hell

Christ breaking the limitations of yesterday

Hymn: And can it be (TiS 209, Sagina, Charles Wesley)

A Prayer, Confessing our Limitations on our Own Emmaus Road

Making sense of resurrection is very difficult, for it breaks apart those rational systems that we build to make sense of things. We can make so much more sense of Jesus and our own lives in the stories of his birth at Christmas, of his baptism (Epiphany) and of his work – what he teaches and what he does – but the story of resurrection takes us beyond our reasoning and comfort zones. It points us to a “beyond” that breaks into human experience, and of which it is difficult to make sense. Yet it stands there, questioning us and challenging us in its mystery and mysticism, but also in its ordinariness. What follows is a prayer based on today’s gospel reading, Luke 24:13-35, of the Road to Emmaus.

What do I know of the Emmaus road,
except that I think it passes not far from my church;
runs through the local shopping mall,

runs through the main street of town,
 through the neighbourhoods where the houses
 stand amid the trees and shade;
runs almost anywhere today.

What do I know of the Emmaus road,
 except that maybe those who walk on it;
 lonely in their grieving, stressed in their worrying,
 fearful and anxious and searching for hope,
 they look like me in the mirror some days,
 and sometimes they look like you,
like just about anybody today.

What do I know of the Emmaus road,
 except that the place where Jesus meets us;
 where he shows up to walk and talk with us,
 to come into our kitchens and break bread with us,
 or where he reveals himself to us in the stranger,
 in the person we can't imagine as God's beloved,
that place could be almost any-place today.

What do I know of the Emmaus road,
 except that I think I have some of the smell of it;
 soaking through to my skin when it rains;
 have some of the dust of it sticking right here
 on the leather of my worn-out shoes;
 and this morning, in this church, the light
 pouring in, ***isn't that Christ sitting next to me?***

Amen

The Peace

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

**A Story about Love that Shows Up even when Ignored:
 "Sometimes Love is Under your Foot" (Colin Thompson)**

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

A Way into the Readings

The theological virtue of hope is the patient and trustful willingness to live without closure, without resolution, and still be content and even happy because our Satisfaction is now at another level, and our Source is beyond ourselves. **Richard Rohr**

We have always held to the hope, the belief, the conviction that there is a better life, a better world, beyond the horizon.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The true significance of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination.

Albert Einstein

Common sense is the collection of prejudices acquired by the age of eighteen.

Albert Einstein

Acts 3:12-19 (Good News Translation)

Mike Tickell

This is a wonderful but troubling reading. Peter's words "You killed the one who leads to life, but God raised him from death", is the oldest interpretation in the Christian tradition of the crucifixion and resurrection. It speaks of God's victory over human malevolence. However, it also has served as the text that squarely places the blame for the crucifixion upon a particular group: the Jews. Christian history has been marked by a dark side – the scapegoating of Jewish people, ever since these words were written. At the end of our reading we hear the "peace" that Jesus introduces - the "*shalom*" of Christian faith which seeks to heal the brokenness of human history. This *shalom* can never embrace any form of anti-Semitism.

¹² When Peter saw the people, he said to them, "Fellow Israelites, why are you surprised at this, and why do you stare at us? Do you think that it was by means of our own power or godliness that we made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has given divine glory to his Servant Jesus. But you handed him over to the authorities, and you rejected him in Pilate's presence, even after Pilate had decided to set him free. ¹⁴ He was holy and good, but you rejected him, and instead you asked Pilate to do you the favour of turning loose a murderer. ¹⁵ You killed the one who

leads to life, but God raised him from death—and we are witnesses to this. ¹⁶ It was the power of his name that gave strength to this lame man. What you see and know was done by faith in his name; it was faith in Jesus that has made him well, as you can all see.

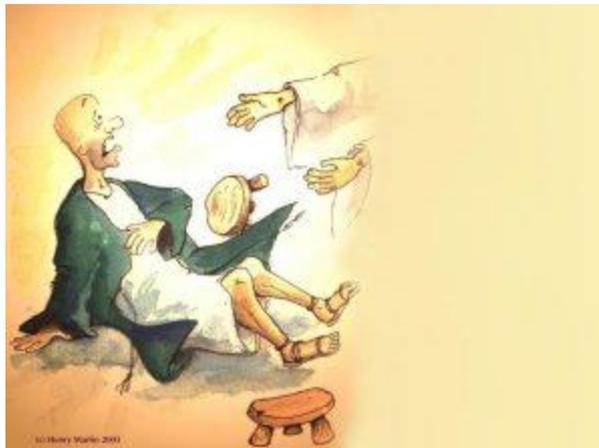
¹⁷ “And now, my friends, I know that what you and your leaders did to Jesus was due to your ignorance. ¹⁸ God announced long ago through all the prophets that his Messiah had to suffer; and he made it come true in this way. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that he will forgive your sins.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Luke 24:13-49 (Good News Translation)

Pam Tickell

The story of the Emmaus Road is about seeing reality differently. We can either understand the Scriptures as accounts, stories of things that once happened, but don't happen anymore, or as accounts, stories, that happened and continue to happen because God lives and loves. In essence, this story of the Emmaus Road is about seeing and living beyond the horizon, beyond the banality of modern life.



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¹³ On that same day two of Jesus' followers were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking to each other about all the things that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed, Jesus himself drew near and walked along with them; ¹⁶ they saw him, but somehow did not recognize him. ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, “What are you talking about to each other, as you walk along?”

They stood still, with sad faces. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only visitor in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have been happening there these last few days?”

¹⁹ “What things?” he asked.

“The things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth,” they answered.

“This man was a prophet and was considered by God and by all the people to be powerful in everything he said and did. ²⁰ Our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and he was crucified. ²¹ And we had hoped that he would be the one who was going to set Israel free! Besides all that, this is now the third day since it happened. ²² Some of the women of our group surprised us; they went at dawn to the tomb, ²³ but could not find his body. They came back saying they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. ²⁴ Some of our group went to the tomb and found it exactly as the women had said, but they did not see him.”

²⁵ Then Jesus said to them, “How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said! ²⁶ Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and then to enter his glory?” ²⁷ And Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures, beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther; ²⁹ but they held him back, saying, “Stay with us; the day is almost over and it is getting dark.” So, he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ He sat down to eat with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?”

³³ They got up at once and went back to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven disciples gathered together with the others ³⁴ and saying, “The Lord is risen indeed! He has appeared to Simon!”

³⁵ The two then explained to them what had happened on the road, and how they had recognized the Lord when he broke the bread.

³⁶ While the two were telling them this, suddenly the Lord himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”^[a]

³⁷ They were terrified, thinking that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ But he said to them, “Why are you alarmed? Why are these doubts coming up in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet and see that it is I

myself. Feel me, and you will know, for a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, as you can see I have.”

⁴⁰ He said this and showed them his hands and his feet.^[b] ⁴¹ They still could not believe, they were so full of joy and wonder; so he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” ⁴² They gave him a piece of cooked fish, ⁴³ which he took and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are the very things I told you about while I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the Psalms had to come true.”

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, “This is what is written: the Messiah must suffer and must rise from death three days later, ⁴⁷ and in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And I myself will send upon you what my Father has promised. But you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ

Hymn: Lord the light of your love (TiS 675, Shine Jesus Shine, Graham Kendrick)

Some thoughts...

Let's Give: Our Offerings

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People

Rob Mayrick

The one who prays after a series of petitions says, "Raise us Lord" and the people respond, "Make us a risen people".

Closing Hymn: O for a thousand tongues (TiS, 210, Lyngham Charles Wesley)

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is risen!

We see reality through resurrection

We seek to live lovingly, truthfully, inclusively

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

Sung Blessing: Father bless us as we go (TiS 781, Kookaburra, Robin Mann) *We sing twice*

Musical Postlude

Organist:

Jeanette Steer