

# Welcome to the Six-week Walk to Emmaus!



**This is a six-week experience  
of learning more about Jesus, yourself,  
and the people in your community.**

This brief introduction will share the rhythm of the next six weeks so that you know what to expect and how to plan your experience. Please know that this is a framework you can follow just as written or adapt to fit your life needs—there is no wrong way to take this journey!

For example, in the rhythm of this practice, Thursdays are the days you are invited to consider your community or nature. If you have a regular life rhythm of walking on another day of the week, just shift things around. There is a famous quote attributed to a Catholic man named John Chapman that says, “Pray as you can, not as you can’t.” This time, this journey, is an opportunity for you to look for God in everyday spaces and daily life.

## What will we do?

Each week, on Sunday, read the short description of the week along with the suggested scripture. If it’s helpful, write or print out the text to post in a place you often encounter throughout the week (maybe on a bathroom mirror, a refrigerator door, or the screen of your computer or phone).

Then, on Monday through Thursday, let the text speak into your daily life in the focused ways suggested through the questions. If other opportunities bring the text to mind, take notice—there’s no telling where Jesus may show up in your day or week!

On Friday, take some time to reflect on your experiences and notes from the entire week. If you are doing this with a friend or small group, this would be a great time to connect for conversation; if you do this on your own, a journal works well, too.

# Daily rhythm

This will take approximately 5 minutes 3-4 times per day

## Take a few deep breaths

Then take a minute or so to concentrate on your breathing, noting how your chest/stomach rises and falls or how the temperature of the air feels as it enters and exits your nose. This helps to focus your thoughts on the present and gives your brain a break from all the world's worries. After this short preparation, read the week's scripture passage and the prompts for the day. Repeat this 2-3 times throughout the day.

## Look for opportunities to wonder

About the suggested question and be aware of what might come to your attention throughout the day.

## Write a brief note

Using the prompt provided, write a brief note of how the day went before you go to bed at night. A couple of words or sentences is enough if journaling isn't your thing.

## Try to focus

On only one prompt each day.

## What resources do I need to do this?

- **This guide**

- **Access to a Bible**

the actual book or an online version such as biblegateway.com

- **A willingness**

to set aside five minutes three to four times per day at a time of your choice (spreading them throughout the day works best).

- **A curiosity to learn**

something new about yourself, God, or others

- **A journal or way to keep short notes**

either in digital or paper format.

- **Companions**

a friend, small group, mentor—optional but helpful.

## Why six weeks?

**After all, the disciples made this journey in one day!** The purpose of this experience isn't a goal or destination but the journey itself. Just as traveling to a destination by airplane is a very different experience than making the same trip by walking (or cycling, or driving), taking time each day to look at slightly different aspects of scripture or your life invites you to a deeper understanding of your faith and spirituality.

Each week will have a different reading from scripture with four slightly different questions to explore how the reading might interact with your daily life. Six weeks also gives the process time to breathe when things get in the way. If you find yourself unexpectedly missing a day here and there due to life's needs, each week has multiple ways of engaging the text to allow you to rejoin the process however and whenever you can.

## Ready to get started?

# Week One: Who is Jesus?

## Thoughts for Sunday

As we begin this experience, let's explore what brought you to this journey. You might have known about Jesus for your entire life through family or church and are ready to go deeper into your faith. Maybe you've heard about Jesus through friends or the media and wonder what the big deal is. Or, you may have had a relationship with Jesus in the past, but you don't have one now for various reasons, and you wonder if it's worth picking up again.

No matter your story, you are welcome and encouraged to join in this experience. We will all start this journey in slightly different places for different reasons. Because we come for different reasons, this week will have a slightly different process than the ones that follow.

For this week, I invite you to read the text each day to see what that text shares about who Jesus is. As you read the text, pay attention to what Jesus does and says and notice what comes to mind. What does this text say about who Jesus is? If a particular text doesn't catch your attention, feel free to use another one in the list, or one that is a favorite of yours or someone you know. If, at the end of a day, you feel there is more to gain from the text, use it again the next day.

### Readings<sup>1</sup>

#### Matthew 5:1-12

5:1 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**If this text does not speak to you right now, consider reading one of these other texts for this week:**

- Option 2: Luke 12:22-34
- Option 3: Romans 8:31-39
- Option 4: Luke 15:11-24

<sup>1</sup>Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

## Daily reflection questions

Remember that these daily prompts are merely suggestions; if something different, or perhaps nothing, comes to mind for the day, don't be concerned. Just commit to engaging the text three to four times per day, and then close out the day with a brief note about what did happen, then continue to the next day and see what it may bring.

**Monday: What do you notice as you read the text? What words or phrases catch your attention?**

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**Tuesday: What might the text be drawing to your attention as you go through your day?**

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**Wednesday: What are you learning about Jesus as you read?**

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**Thursday: Has paying attention to scripture this week given you insight into yourself?**

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**Friday: Share with your conversation partner, small group, and/or journal - What have you learned about God and yourself this week?**

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# Week Two: Longings and Losses

## Thoughts for Sunday

Today, we begin exploring the text for our journey, the Road to Emmaus. Two disciples are walking along a road, talking about all they have recently experienced; the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. While we may be living in different times, plenty of things around us are concerning, confusing, and unsettling. As Jesus joins their conversation as an unrecognized stranger, he invites them to share everything they are thinking, even though he does—personally and deeply—know what has been going on the past few days.

### Readings

#### Luke 24:13-24

24:13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

17 And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" 19 He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

22 "Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him."



### Spiritual Practice

"Longings and Losses" helps you create space for grieving losses and build trust in God's future direction for your life.

<sup>2</sup>If you have experienced trauma in your life, remember that spirituality is a part of your mental health, but may not be enough. Finding a professional counselor or therapist may be a needed companion for you during this journey.

## Daily reflection questions

As you read the text and prompts for this week, remember that Jesus does not desire suffering for you, nor are you forgotten in your experiences. Jesus comes alongside to listen, accompany, and guide you to the other side.<sup>2</sup>

**Monday:** As you go through your day, where do you see brokenness or a need for healing in your own life?

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**Tuesday:** As you go through your day, where do you see brokenness or a need for healing in your family or network of friends?

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**Wednesday:** As you go through your day, where do you see brokenness or a need for healing in your place of work or neighborhood today?

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**Thursday:** As you go through your day, where do you see brokenness or a need for healing in creation or your wider community?

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**Friday:** Share with your conversation partner, small group, and/or journal—What have you learned about God and yourself this week? (For the invitation to write a psalm, see the worksheet highlighted at left, changing wording from "clergy and congregations" to "people.")

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# Week Three: Paying Attention to God

## Thoughts for Sunday

Last week, we explored life's hardships and losses. In this week's text, Jesus encourages the disciples not to despair but to see how these events have unfolded even as God has been present and active. This week, set an intention of looking for God's presence as you go through your daily life—even when things are hard. This may seem like a challenging assignment; after all, how do we know what God is up to? The Book of Galatians gives us a hint: "By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).

### Readings

#### [Luke 24:25-31](#)

24:25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight.

### Daily reflection questions

Keep your eyes, ears, and mind open for these experiences, and wonder if God might be at work.

**Monday:** Notice where you experience God's presence in your daily life. Where does God feel most present? What gets in the way?

**Tuesday:** Notice where you experience God's presence in your family or close friends. Where does God feel most present? What gets in the way?

**Wednesday:** Notice where you experience God's presence in your place of work or daily life. Where does God feel most present? What gets in the way?

**Thursday:** Notice where you experience God's presence in creation or your extended community (e.g., as you shop, ride the bus, or supervise a playground). Where does God feel most present? What gets in the way?

**Friday:** Share with your conversation partner, small group, and/or journal—What have you learned about God and yourself this week?



### Spiritual Practice

The Daily Examen (also known as the Ignatian Examen) helps you reflect on your day and sense where you felt God's presence in your life.

# Week Four: Learning to Listen to God, Each Other, and Neighbors

## Thoughts for Sunday

Last week you spent time personally looking for where you experience God in your life and in the lives and spaces of those around you. This week, we invite you to engage with other people to discover what experiences make their hearts burn with love and joy. If you are with other people who practice their faith, you might want to share that you wonder how God is present in our daily lives and would like to know more about their experiences. In the questions below, we've kept the language neutral, first asking about life, joy, and healing rather than experiences of God. If this seems like a scary conversation, start here. Whether you use neutral language and wonder about God's activity or allow others to name where they see God at work, there are things to be learned and discovered.

### Readings

#### [Luke 24:25-32](#)

24:25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"



### Spiritual Practice

"Listening for Spiritual Stories" helps you identify the challenges and opportunities in your neighborhood

## Daily reflection questions

This week, focus on what it is like to hear and share stories that wonder about God's presence in our lives.

**Monday:** Notice what brings life, joy, and healing in your daily life. What might God be up to in these experiences?

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**Tuesday:** Ask a family member or friend what brings them life, joy, and healing. What might God be up to in these experiences?

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**Wednesday:** Ask a work colleague or neighbor what brings them life, joy, and healing. What might God be up to in these experiences?

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**Thursday:** Ask someone you encounter where they've experienced life, joy, and healing, or to share their favorite part of the day. Or, look deeply at the natural world around you—Where do you see life and healing? What might God be up to in these experiences?

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**Friday:** Share with your conversation partner, small group, and/or journal—What have you learned about God and yourself this week?

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# Week Five: Movement and Action

## Thoughts for Sunday

You've made it to week five! We pray that you've been inspired by learning more about yourself, God and your neighbors. What now? In our reading for this week, the disciples are so excited by their encounter with Jesus that they run all of the way back to Jerusalem—we believe this would have been about seven and a half miles—after dark.

As you think about the last few weeks, has there been something that inspired you to action? Something you learned that made you feel that you might have something to offer the situation? Or is there something that you are currently doing that needs to stop in order to bring healing and peace?

### Readings

#### [Luke 24:33-35](#)

24:33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. 34 They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.



### Spiritual Practice

"Walking your Neighborhood" encourages you to look for the ways God is connecting with neighbors.

## Daily reflection questions

This week, focus on how God might be inviting you to join with God's work, moving beyond noticing to action to share your unique gifts with the people around you.

### Monday: Where might God be inviting you personally into action (or inaction) today?

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### Tuesday: Where might God be inviting you into an interaction with a family member or friend today?

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### Wednesday: Where might God be inviting you into an interaction with a work colleague or neighbor today?

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### Thursday: Where might God be inviting you into an interaction with an acquaintance, stranger, or creation today?

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### Friday: Share with your conversation partner, small group, and/or journal—What have you learned about God and yourself this week?

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# Week Six: Establishing a Habit of Loving God, Neighbor, and Each Other

## Thoughts for Sunday

For the final week of this journey, we invite you to reflect on what you have experienced over the past five weeks. You've practiced listening to God through scripture, and your neighbors through conversation. You may have found yourself helping others more or seeing things in nature that need your care. In a new scripture reading for this week, Paul and other disciples are trying to listen to God and connect with people.

Even though sometimes things don't go as planned (they can't go where they thought they wanted to, and while a man invites them to Macedonia, they end up meeting Lydia, a woman), they continue to look for the invitation and try things out.

### Readings

#### Acts 16:6-15

16:6 They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. 7 When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; 8 so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

11 We therefore set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. 13 On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. 14 A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. 15 When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

### Daily reflection questions

This week, you'll notice that the questions are all the same. Rather than focusing on one set of people or situations each day, open yourself up to whatever you sense God is doing, and join in as best you know how, keeping in mind that description of the fruit of the Spirit from week three (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control).

**Monday:** After reading scripture, what invitation do you hear for your day?

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**Tuesday:** After reading scripture, what invitation do you hear for your day?

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**Wednesday:** After reading scripture, what invitation do you hear for your day?

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**Thursday:** After reading scripture, what invitation do you hear for your day?

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**Friday:** Share with your conversation partner, small group, and/or journal—What have you learned about God and yourself this week?

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### Spiritual Practice

"Trusting God and Taking a Risk" helps you identify where God may be asking you to trust in order to move forward in your life.



# Next Steps

Be sure to use the QR codes to download the five spiritual practices listed above on Weeks 2-6. If this experience has ignited your interest in doing more, here are some options to consider:



If you did the Six-week Walk to Emmaus on your own or with a friend, consider going through this discipleship experience again with a small group. This will expand your experience of how God works in the lives of others, and may allow you to try communal actions to address larger issues in your community. If you are doing this as a faith community, consider reading the book [Leading Faithful Innovation: Following God into a Hopeful Future](#) by Dwight Zscheile, Michael Binder, and Tessa Pinkstaff.



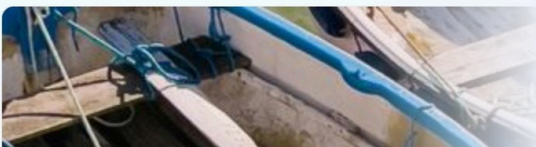
Take a self-paced class to deepen your faith and understanding of God further. (For example, access Faith+Lead Academy's course, Taste and See, with instructor Tessa Pinkstaff.) You can choose from more than 30 self-paced courses designed to equip people inside and outside of the church to love God and neighbor with online theological education for everyone.



If this experience made you more curious about the Bible, check out Enter the Bible, Luther Seminary's website that explores the Bible through courses, podcasts, and other resources developed by trusted faculty and scholars. You can find more insights on the Road to Emmaus passage or listen to an episode answering the question: ["Can I read the Bible as metaphor AND believe that Jesus rose again?"](#)

FEB 4  
**Dwelling in the Word**  
**Epiphany**  
February 4 @ 11:55 am - 12:30 pm

Would you like to engage in prayer and the exploration of Scripture with others? Join Faith+Lead for [Dwelling in the Word](#) weekly on Tuesdays at noon Central Time (GMT-06:00)



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