

Let us pray together: **Open our eyes to see your Spirit in our life. Open our hearts to receive the blessings you send each day. Guide us with your wisdom so that through us Christ may walk on the earth once again. Amen.**

Do any of you have trouble with your memory? I know I often forget where I put my cell phone. Do you have any tricks to help you remember something? I had a friend who moved her wedding ring from her ring finger to a finger on her other hand when there was something she wanted to remember. That's like tying a string around your finger to help you remember.

When it's something important you want to remember, probably each one of you has a trick to help you remember something important.

In the business world there are lots of these 'helps.' One 'help' often employed is using a set of words all beginning with the same letter. For those who loan money, there are the five C's of credit: character, capacity, capital, collateral and conditions. If you want to buy a diamond, there are the five C's to help you select a diamond: carat-weight, color, clarity, and cut...and the most important C of all, confidence in the jeweler. In education, there are the five E's used by teachers: engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate.

Staying with this idea of using repetitive letters to help us remember, let's think about Luke's scripture lesson as the 5 E's. No, Luke didn't write a text book and tell us how we could remember today's Gospel lesson! But if you want to remember this Bible story and apply it to your life, you might just want to think about this story as Luke's five E's.

Luke's Five E's are: encounter, explain, eating, enlightenment and exit. Let's see how these five E's are in today's scripture lesson.

Encounter: The gathered disciples were full of conflicting emotions. They were confused, doubting, afraid – and then they encounter Jesus, but do not understand what is happening. The person that appears in the room looks like their crucified leader, but they think Jesus is a ghost.

Explain: Jesus then explains to them what has happened to him and asks them to touch him. He is a body, not a ghost. **“Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”**

Eating: Jesus goes one step further to prove he's not a ghost by eating a piece of fish. You may well remember that Jesus liked to share a meal with

friends. There are multiple stories of Jesus dining with friends, sharing stories, sharing life. I would think that seeing Jesus eat might just trigger comforting memories for the disciples who are frightened of Jesus, whom they think is a ghost.

What happens next in the story?

Enlightenment: Jesus enlightens the disciples, “**These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.**” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “**Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day,**” Jesus opened the minds of the disciples, cutting through the fear and confusion, enlightening them as to why he had to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.

Exit: Jesus leaves them with these words: “**repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.**” As he departs, Jesus gives the disciples a charge, marching orders, so to speak. They are to be witnesses to all they have seen. They are to proclaim Jesus to all nations, all the world.

And we learn in the Book of Acts in the Bible how the disciples carried out Jesus’ commission.

Luke’s Five E’s: encounter, explain, eating, enlightenment and exit. How do they apply to you today?

Most of us come to worship God on Sunday, eager to see our friends, but also, maybe, just maybe, with a few doubts, fears and misunderstandings. When we worship, we **encounter** the risen Christ. As you say the liturgy – the confession, the prayers – as you listen to the scriptures read, we hear and are offered **explanation** of what being a Christ-follower means. Today, we will **eat** with Christ, breaking the communion bread and tasting the fruit of the vine. Yes, we share a meal with Christ, the one who enjoyed the hospitality of others and offers that hospitality to each of us today. Through the encounter, the explanation and the eating, the Holy Spirit brings **enlightenment**, opening our minds and hearts to the love of God in Jesus Christ. Finally, we **exit**. We leave the church with a charge and a blessing. We leave to carry out Christ’s commission. We are to be witnesses to all people, sharing the experiences of our faith journey.

I mentioned that the Book of the Acts in the Bible is the story of how the disciples carried out Jesus' directions for them to share Jesus' story about his life, death and resurrection. Today's reading from Acts is but one example in this book of the Bible where the Disciples shared the news about Jesus' death and resurrection and what it meant for the world.

How do we, today, carry out Jesus' directions to share Jesus' story about his life, death and resurrection? We are Jesus' disciples and Jesus has told us we are to share the Good News about Jesus' death and resurrection. How can we do that?

Tell others what Jesus means to you. Work for peace, feed the poor, heal hurts, love the unlovable, love your enemy, love your neighbor. The risen Christ said, "**Peace be with you.**" Just as we shared the Lord's peace this Sunday morning, share that peace all week long by incorporating the living Christ's peace in your life – and showing others that peace.

The world today presents challenges to Christians. Wars, poverty, hate, greed – to name a few – mark the world we live in. But each of us can do something to share God's love with others. One example: A group of women who were 9/11 widows were so grateful for the love and support they had received after losing their husbands that they started thinking about how they could help other widows in the world. The group found that widows in Afghanistan lost social status and their already difficult lives became more difficult when they lost their husbands. The women wanted to help in response to the help they had receive. This group of women raised money and formed a foundation called Beyond the 11th to support Afghani widows. They visited Afghanistan to meet the widows they were helping. These women modeled the gift of open and understanding minds and hearts.

What in our community needs the presence of the risen Christ? How can each of us participate in God's work on earth?

Jesus commissioned us to declare his presence and power wherever there is tragedy, despair, death, poverty, hunger, . . . Perhaps the last E, exit, is the most important to remember of the Five E's. After encountering Christ, understanding he was raised from the dead, sharing a meal with him, and receiving enlightenment, our task is to exit and carry out Jesus' commission.

May God bless your every effort.