

October 5, 2025
Luke 24:13-35

World Communion Sunday

“World on fire”

1. On this World Communion Sunday, we look around, and we know the world is on fire
 - a. We are aware of the literal warming of the planet, extreme weather
 - b. Active wars are ravaging nations, each of these with over 10,000 dead a year
 - i. Russia–Ukraine War – Ongoing since 2022
 - ii. Israel–Palestine Conflict – Escalated in 2024
 - iii. Civil War in Sudan– Widespread violence and humanitarian crisis.
 - iv. Civil War in Myanmar– Multiple ethnic and political factions involved.
 - v. Ethnic and political violence in Ethiopia
 - vi. Not to mention the bloody internal conflicts in DR Congo, Nigeria, Haiti
 - c. Multiple countries are dealing with millions of people from displaced populations and migrants trying to escape violence or environmental catastrophes.
 - d. Our country feels more politically and socially fractured everyday
 - e. Is all this getting worse? Maybe.
 - f. Many of you can also probably remember other decades in our recent history with wars in other places, with natural disasters of different magnitude, with racial oppression spilling into violence on our streets.
2. For the two clueless disciples who ran into Jesus hours after his resurrection, their world felt like it was on fire
 - a. Not only had their teacher been brutally executed by the Romans, they were feeling the heat politically and socially from religious authorities who had targeted Jesus.
 - b. It all felt insecure, scary, like something big had just ended.
 - c. Yet when Jesus spoke to them, and finally when Jesus sort of took over the hosting duties even though he was the guest, and he offered the grace at the meal and started sharing the bread, they realized it wasn't just their world that was on fire, but it was also their hearts.
 - d. Jesus was teaching them, encouraging them, as he had done so often, and their spirit recognized that presence, even if their eyes were slow to realize it.

- e. Jesus spoke of his ministry in terms of what had been said in the past about him in the Bible, but also of how it was impactful in the present.
 - f. Jesus could have told them early on in their walk “It’s me, silly!” but instead he chose this one moment to let his actions open their eyes. The table. A simple meal. A prayer.
3. It is true: our world is on fire. I wonder if Jesus can make our hearts also feel like they’re on fire in our gathering, in our praying, in our eating together, in our loving.
- a. When we gather at the communion table, I begin with the words “This is the joyful feast of the people of God... people will come from North and South, East and West to gather...”
 - i. That’s not how all churches approach it, by the way.
 - ii. Many concentrate on the death of Jesus the day after the Last Supper
 - iii. The sacrament feels really heavy, like a funeral. It’s very serious.
 - b. I wonder if when we gather today at this table, and even as we consider the rubble of war and of loss, the food which those who are starving do not have,
 - i. I wonder if we can really take in the light on that candle that shines humbly but brightly,
 - ii. the openness of the table which doesn’t ask for your passport or your gender identity to find food,
 - iii. the grace which doesn’t ask us about our sins but reminds us about forgiveness.
4. If, like the disciples, our heart is on fire, if our inner being is bursting with the call to serve our neighbor and to put our lives on the line to channel God’s love, then the world which is itself on fire will also have its eyes opened to the radical message of Jesus: God’s table is open for all throughout the world.