

risen



**“And God raised
us up with Christ”**

Ephesians 2.6

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cedar

The Bible talks about the strong tall Cedars of Lebanon (Psalm 92.12-15) as trees with healthy roots, used in the building of the temple. At Bow Church many of us meet midweek (in Cedar groups) to strengthen our roots in the Christian story, and to encourage each other to allow God to build us up by his Spirit. Cedar consists of Sunday Sermons, Midweek Meetings and Daily Devotions. Please do join with us in this journey of faith in Jesus. If you aren't already in a Cedar group, email us at hello@bow.church, we would love to find you one.

risen

In John 11, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, and he walks out of the family tomb. Also, all three synoptic gospels record Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5, Matthew 9, Luke 8). Clearly Jesus has authority over death. However, both Jairus' daughter and Lazarus would one day die again.

With Jesus it is different - after he is cruelly crucified on the cross, his Father raises him to a new 'risen life'! There is consistency in that he is recognisable and continues to eat with his friends, but there is also difference and renewal as he is no longer bound by locked rooms and distance. Following his resurrection, he appeared with ease amongst his friends and disciples, before they witnessed him ascending into heaven, never to die again.

This series we are exploring that risen life. Firstly, through some of the encounters Jesus had with his friends and disciples during the 40 days between his resurrection and ascension. Then, we look briefly at two of Paul's letters that reflect on what the risen life of Jesus means for us. Ephesians 2.6 describes us as having already been raised with Christ – this series asks: **in what way is my life renewed through my being 'raised with Christ?'**

"And God raised us up with Christ"
Ephesians 2.6

sunday sermons

20 April	Luke 24.1-12	The GARDEN
27 April	Luke 24.13-35	The EMMAUS ROAD
4 May	John 20.19-31	The LOCKED ROOM
11 May	John 21.1-14	The BEACH
18 May	1 Corinthians 15.1-11,20-28	The RISEN ONE
25 May	Colossians 3.1-17	The RISEN LIFE
1 June	Acts 1.1-14	The ASCENSION
8 June	Acts 2.1-21	The DAY OF PENTECOST

daily readings



week one

Saturday 19th April	Luke 24.1-12	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 20th April	Luke 24.1-12	The GARDEN
Monday 21st April	Genesis 2.4-17	Eden I – humanity placed in God's Garden
Tuesday 22nd April	Genesis 3.1-24	Eden II – humanity expelled from God's Garden
Wednesday 23rd April	Matthew 26.36-46	Gethsemane begins the drama of crucifixion
Thursday 24th April	John 19.28-42	Garden Tomb – the burial place of Jesus
Friday 25th April	Revelation 22.1-21	Garden City – the day of completion

week two

Saturday 26th April	Luke 24.13-35	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 27th April	Luke 24.13-35	The EMMAUS ROAD
Monday 28th April	Luke 24.1-8	The women discover the empty tomb
Tuesday 29th April	Luke 24.9-12	The women tell of the resurrection
Wednesday 30th April	Luke 24.13-24	The disciples tell Jesus about his own death!
Thursday 1st May	Luke 24.25-29	Jesus opens the scriptures and shows them the truth
Friday 2nd May	Luke 24.30-35	Jesus breaks bread at the disciples' table

week three

Saturday 3rd May	John 20.24-31	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 4th May	John 20.24-31	The LOCKED ROOM
Monday 5th May	John 20.1-18	John tells of the women at the tomb
Tuesday 6th May	John 20.19-23	Jesus appears through locked doors to the disciples
Wednesday 7th May	John 20.24-25	But Thomas wasn't there... and is filled with doubt!
Thursday 8th May	John 20.26-29	Jesus appears a second time through locked doors
Friday 9th May	John 20.30-31	The reason John wrote about Jesus

week four

Saturday 10th May	John 21.1-14	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 11th May	John 21.1-14	The BEACH
Monday 12th May	John 21.1-3	That night the disciples caught nothing
Tuesday 13th May	John 21.4-9	The moment Peter realises it is Jesus on the beach
Wednesday 14th May	John 21.10-14	Jesus invites the disciples to breakfast with him
Thursday 15th May	John 21.15-19	Follow me and feed my sheep
Friday 16th May	John 21.20-25	Jesus did many other things!

week five

Saturday 17th May	1 Corinthians 15.1-11, 20-28	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 18th May	1 Corinthians 15.1-11, 20-28	THE RISEN ONE
Monday 19th May	1 Corinthians 15.1-8	Paul reminds us of the gospel
Tuesday 20th May	1 Corinthians 15.9-19	How can some say there is no resurrection?
Wednesday 21st May	1 Corinthians 15.20-28	Christ is the first fruits
Thursday 22nd May	1 Corinthians 15.29-41	There are heavenly bodies just as there are earthly ones
Friday 23rd May	1 Corinthians 15.42-58	The body sown is perishable, raised it is imperishable!

week six

Saturday 24th May	Colossians 3	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 25th May	Colossians 3	THE RISEN LIFE
Monday 26th May	Colossians 3.1-4	Fixing our minds on things above...
Tuesday 27th May	Colossians 3.5-7	Putting to death our former ways...
Wednesday 28th May	Colossians 3.8-11	Ridding ourselves of unloveliness...
Thursday 29th May	Colossians 3.12-14	Being clothed with compassion, forbearance & forgiveness
Friday 30th May	Colossians 3.15-17	The peace, the word, the name of Jesus

week seven

Saturday 31st May	Acts 1.1-11	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 1st June	Acts 1.1-11	The ASCENSION
Monday 2nd June	Acts 1.1-5	"Do not leave the city but wait for my Father's gift"
Tuesday 3rd June	Acts 1.6-8	"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you"
Wednesday 4th June	Acts 1.9-11	Jesus ascends alive...
Thursday 5th June	Acts 1.12-14	The disciples obey Jesus and wait in the city...
Friday 6th June	Acts 1.15-26	Two lessons in Christian leadership

week eight

Saturday 7th June	Acts 2.1-21	Read ahead tomorrow's passage
Sunday 8th June	Acts 2.1-21	The FEAST OF PENTECOST
Monday 9th June	Acts 2.1-4	All 120 of them were filled with the Spirit
Tuesday 10th June	Acts 2.5-13	"How is it these people speak in our languages?"
Wednesday 11th June	Acts 2.14-21	'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'
Thursday 12th June	Acts 2.22-28	Death could not hold him!
Friday 13th June	Acts 2.29-36	God wins!

cedar sessions



week 1

the garden

Luke 24.1-12

Four Gardens frame the Bible story and its theology: Eden, Gethsemane, the Garden Tomb and the Garden City. They speak in turn of creation, crucifixion, resurrection and the final restoration of all things. (Genesis 2.8, Matthew 26.36, John 19.41, Revelation 22.1)

questions

In what ways does it help you to think about the Bible story in these four great garden moments and motifs?

The first witnesses to the resurrection were women, in a time when their testimony was not usually accepted – how does that inspire you?

Sundays and Sunday worship are a weekly reminder and celebration of the resurrection, how much is that a reality for you personally?

week 2

the emmaus road

Luke 24.13–35

This famous story has for centuries inspired sermons, paintings and Bible studies the world over. The recognition of Jesus by the two disciples during the breaking of the bread, calls to mind the two occasions when Jesus miraculously fed thousands and the last supper shared by Jesus with his disciples.

questions

What aspect of this Emmaus Road story strikes you the most?

Jesus firstly opens the scriptures to the disciples and shows them who he really is, in what ways have you recently been learning about Jesus through the Bible?

Jesus breaks bread and in that moment the disciples recognise him, what goes through your own mind when you receive communion at church? And how does it edify you?

week 3

the locked room

John 20.19-31

Twice Jesus meets with his disciples in the upper room, both times emerging in their midst a week apart although the doors were locked. The doors were locked because the disciples were fearful that they may be associated with Jesus and face a similar death sentence. Both times Jesus says, 'Peace be with you'.

questions

Jesus resurrection body is clearly different to ours (in that he can appear through closed doors!) how does that help our understanding of eternal life?

Jesus words "Peace be with you" have a real authority as he has conquered death – how do these words of Jesus impact your life today?

How do you relate to Thomas and his need for evidence of Jesus identity? When did Jesus become real for you?

Week 4

the beach

John 21.1-19

This is perhaps the best loved of Jesus resurrection appearances. The disciples seem to have forgotten their mission or perhaps they were just doing what they thought they were good at – sea fishing. When Jesus meets them for breakfast on the beach his very presence must have shocked them into remembering the words he spoke three years prior to this, when he called them to put down their nets and become fishers of men.

questions

What do we learn about the character of the risen Jesus in this story?

How might you identify with the disciples in their fishing, in their breakfast with Jesus or as they overheard his conversation with Peter in verses 15-19?

Peter has clearly been given leadership qualities. What qualities and character do you look for in those whom God calls to lead in his church?

week 5

the risen one

1 Corinthians 15.1-11, 20-28

This week we move our focus from Jesus resurrection appearances to Paul's theological reflection on Jesus the risen one. We read that Jesus appeared to well over 500 people after God raised him from the dead.

questions

How might it help us to read that Jesus, after he had been raised from the dead, appeared on one occasion to over 500 people?

The bible describes our life before coming to faith as life in the old Adam; the first creation. Jesus is the new Adam who by his resurrection brings new creation and renewal. Can you see signs of both your old life and your new life in Jesus showing through? Where?

Jesus is described as putting all enemies under his feet, who and what do you think Paul might be thinking of as enemies of Jesus?

Week 6

the risen life

Colossians 3.1-17

This week we are looking at 'the risen life' that we get to live in the here and now. For we have already been raised with Christ (Eph 2.6). **What does this 'risen life' look like when lived to the full by those who believe and trust in Jesus?** Paul gives us a picture and at least six different aspects of the 'risen life' to consider.

questions

What does this risen life look like? And what does it look like in your life?

What might it mean for you to set your mind on things above? (v1)

Paul tells us to put to death our old ways, to rid ourselves of un-lovely attitudes and behaviours, what has helped you to do this? (v5-11)

In verses 15-17 Paul encourages us to take hold of the peace of Christ, the Word of Christ and the name of Jesus Christ. How might we do this more fully?

week 7

the ascension

Acts 1.1-14

Ten days before the feast of Pentecost and 40 days after the resurrection, Jesus ascended into the heavenly realms, never to die again. He is risen, ascended and alive today, seated at the right hand of God the Father. This year the church celebrates that on 29 May. And it really is a celebration, Jesus was not raised to life just to die over again, like Lazarus or Jairus' daughter, he was raised to life for evermore.

questions

Acts 1.3 says that Jesus appeared over a period of 40 days and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive – why was that important and how was it significant?

Luke (the author of Acts) tells us in v9-11 that the disciples saw Jesus leave them and ascend, followed by an angelic visitation – why should we celebrate this today?

Before Jesus ascended he told his disciples to wait for the gift his father had promised. What gift is this? What does it bring and what difference will it make?

week 8

the day of pentecost

Acts 2.1-21

The disciples waited in the city for God to clothe them with power from on high and this last weekend we celebrated the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on God's faithful people. It happened on the feast of Pentecost, 'pente' meaning fifty. It was fifty days after the Passover, a Jewish harvest festival called the 'Feast of Weeks.' At this point however, a new harvest began, and it will not end until 'all are safely gathered in' or at least until Jesus returns to usher in the fullness of his kingdom.

questions

Few biblical stories have quite the drama and timing of this one, it is quite a celebration. What does Pentecost mean to you?

It is highly significant that God would pour his Spirit on the fledgling church at a Jewish harvest festival. Today he wants each of us, in the power of the Spirit, to be gathering in a human harvest to enjoy God forever. Which (non-believers) are you praying for and talking to about Jesus?

In the power of the Spirit Peter stands up to preach. Why is this utterly remarkable and what does it tell us about the effectiveness of the Holy Spirit?



2024–2025

at bow church

Our vacancy vision has been to:

**LEAN IN
LIFT UP
LOOK OUT**


Our vacancy bible verse has been:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15.13

As our vacancy comes to an end, Romans 15.13 continues forever, to inspire us and give us hope, inviting us to be filled with the Spirit, so as to reveal God's love to his world.





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