

## **Devotion, Week of May 4, 2025—Third Week of Eastertide**

### **Rev. Jeanne Simpson**

Jesus just keeps showing up, throughout the 40 days from his resurrection to his ascension into heaven, in all kinds of strange ways and places. And when he does that, he never seems to be immediately recognizable. Not until he speaks, or calls someone's name, or blesses food, do his followers figure out who he is. And no wonder – he's not supposed to be there! He died, and if he was resurrected, shouldn't he be with his Father in heaven, and not popping up all over the place on earth? Well, that's a hard question – all we know from the Bible is that he supposedly was around in some form, teaching the disciples what they should do now that he was going away for good. This time of transition, from fully human to fully divine – this 40 days of liminal time and space – is a puzzle for us. But it had to be reassuring to his followers, who at first thought they would never encounter him again after Good Friday. It seems like a period of preparation for life without him was still needed, since the disciples never understood what he was trying to tell them about that before his death.

As we move through this time of Eastertide, in preparation for Pentecost, the formal founding of Christ's church with the coming of the Holy Spirit, we need to look at these post-resurrection appearances and see if we can figure out what Jesus was trying to teach his disciples. After all, it was all going to be up to them shortly to carry on. Their mission would depend entirely on testimony – "we saw, we touched, we heard, we listened, and we are here to spread the good news." We have over 2000 years of historical testimony to guide us in our faith, but think about how little time these early disciples had to incorporate their experiences and their beliefs into good news that would form a church. The miraculous thing is that they did it so successfully. May we remember these early Christians who made it possible for us to worship Christ today.

*Jeanne*