April 19 Worship
Reader- Gayanne Boyer

Announcements/Joys
Time Of Quiet Meditation- *"I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I gird you, though you do not know me."* Isaiah 45:5
.**Opening Scripture-** Psalm 116:10-17(page 531)

Opening Chorus- 173- His Name Is Wonderful

Responsive Call To Worship-
Leader: Praise the Lord.
People: We love you, Lord, for you hear our voices; you hear our cry for mercy.
Leader: How can we repay the Lord for all his goodness to us?
People: We will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. We will fulfill our vows to the Lord, in the presence of all his people.

Hymn of Praise- 416- Blessed Assurance

Unison Prayer/Lord's Prayer- Open our eyes, Lord. Without the gift of your revelation, our eyes are kept from recognizing you. Appear before us, suddenly, unexpectedly, in all your glory. So that we, too, may proclaim to a world in despair, that we have seen the risen Lord, The one who taught us to pray, saying...*Lord's Prayer...*
"Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

Gloria Patri- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end. Amen, Amen.

Old Testament Scripture- Exodus 3:1-6(page 47)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- Luke 24:13-35(page 920)

Children's Time/Echo Prayer/Passing of the Peace

Hymn- 197- What A Friend We Have In Jesus

New Testament Scripture- 1 Peter 1:17-23(page 1058)

Message

"Do You Know Who I Am?- Do I Know Who He Is?"

Do you know Jesus? Has anyone ever asked you that question? This is a question that, in the past, has irritated me when I know that it is being asked by someone who may mean well but does not understand that it is a question that presumes information that the person does not have. I used to simply ignore the question and walk away. Then I heard someone give the perfect response; "Yes, I do. Would you like for me to introduce you to Him?" This usually ends the discussion.

How many times have you heard stories about some so-called celebrity, when they find themselves in trouble with the authorities, saying; "Do you know who I am?" They obviously think that just because they are known that they deserve some kind of break. Sometimes you will hear this when someone tries to cut ahead in line or expect service before everyone else. What goes through your mind when you hear this?

There are those who think that they are more important or more deserving than everyone else. Somewhere in our DNA, there must be some sort of gene or disposition that urges some of us to think we are superior to others. We see it all around us in ways that may be subtle and in ways that downright forceful. In the Bible, it is described as pride. I gave a sermon not too long ago regarding humility and pride and this is not meant to be a continuation of that sermon.

What I wish to speak to today is an issue that we all have to struggle with at one time or another. Do we know Jesus or do we just know about Jesus? There is a difference you know and that difference is bigger and more important than we may think. When people speak of "knowing" Jesus, they refer to having a relationship with Him. Being a Christian is more than knowing about Jesus; being a Christian is knowing Him personally. Jesus spoke of the need to know the Savior when He prayed, "This is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).

We can all say that we "know" someone who is some kind of celebrity, but the truth is that we may know all about them but we never get an invitation to come over for coffee. There are those who can tell us all the statistics surrounding

someone's life, their likes and dislikes, what they eat for dinner, what their favorite car is and many other details. That does not mean that they know them. Knowing someone requires having a personal relationship with them, having conversations, sharing time and experiences, having mutual respect and caring for them. Knowing Jesus demands that we have an open and loving relationship with Him.

How about asking ourselves a special question? Does Jesus know us? Of course Jesus knows us. After all, Jesus is God and since God is all knowing, well DUH! There is nothing about us that God, Jesus, does not know. The real question should be; does Jesus have a working relationship with us, us as individuals, not as a group. If we are to be able to say that Jesus truly, intimately knows us we must develop a deep and meaningful relationship with Him.

I'd like to pose two questions: First, have you made yourself known to Jesus? As I said, Jesus knows you well. But there is also an invitation to make yourself known to Jesus in the spiritual life. Are you honest with Jesus in your prayer? Do you share your life with him? Are you honest about your sadness and frustrations and fears? And are you equally honest with what is going well in your life? Do you tell Jesus how grateful you are? Now again, we might think, "Well, Jesus knows all this, so why do I need to say it?" Well, think of it like a friendship. Let's say someone in your family has died. A few weeks later, you go out to dinner with a close friend, and they ask how you are. Now, they already know how you are: you're sad. But they still want to hear it, because they care about you, and their question helps you to share your innermost feelings with them. It helps you, and it deepens your relationship. It's something similar with God, with Jesus. Open your heart to him. Let him come to know you.

The second question is just as important: Do you know Jesus? Because if a person says, "I don't know you," it also means that you've not made the effort to know him or her. So, at the most basic level, have you read the Gospels? Have you read New Testament commentaries? Do you know Jesus as he has been revealed in the Gospels? Do you encounter him in the Eucharist, the bread we take in Holy Communion? Do you meet Jesus in other people? Remember that the Body of Christ is not just the bread or Body of Christ; it's also the People of God. And where does Jesus say we will find him most of all? In Matthew's Gospel, we're told very clearly: the poor, the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the migrant and refugee.

To be known by Jesus is not about religious performance or outward appearances. Scripture shows us that there are clear markers of a life that is truly in relationship with Him. First, we must have faith in Him, not simply rely on works. As Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Salvation begins with placing our full trust in Jesus Christ by

believing in His death and resurrection as the only means of being made right with God. Second, our faith should lead to obedience, not out of obligation, but out of love. Jesus said in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." Obedience is not about earning His favor; it is the natural response of a heart that loves the Savior. Third, we grow in being known by Jesus through intimacy with Him, cultivated by prayer and time in the Word. Jesus uses the image of the vine and branches in John 15:5, saying, "I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." Remaining in Him means abiding daily in relationship with Christ, communing with Him, seeking His presence, and living in dependence on His guidance. Lastly, a life known by Jesus will be marked by transformation. It will bear fruit that reflects His character. In Matthew 7:16-20, Jesus says, "You will know them by their fruits." A heart truly surrendered to Christ will produce evidence such as love, humility, integrity, and a desire to serve. All of that confirms the reality of our relationship with Him.

The greatest assurance we have is that Jesus knows His own. If we truly belong to Him, we do not have to fear that dreadful statement, “I never knew you.” Instead, we can look forward to hearing the words found in Matthew 25:23: “Well done, good and faithful servant.” So, in the end, the real question is not simply, Do you know Jesus? The question that truly matters is this: Does Jesus know you? Praise Be to God. Amen.

Prayers of the People- Risen One, like those disciples on the road to Emmaus, we struggle to recognize you in the everyday journey of our lives. We seek your wisdom in the midst of the questions we have about the circumstances we may find ourselves in, circumstances sometimes beyond our control, but often of our own making. As you opened the scriptures to the disciples and taught them everything, open our eyes to behold you in your Word, in the beauty of nature, the beauty of another human being and the beauty of sacred art. You were known to the disciples in the breaking of the bread. So often we forget, Holy One, that you invite us to abide with you; to have our lives hidden in you. We thank you that you travel with us in our joys and our concerns. Amen.

Closing Hymn- 528- Abide With Me

Benediction- As you go from here, remember this: you have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. So live lives of reverence and awe, trust in God, love one another deeply, and with all your heart. For you have been born again, through the living and enduring Word of God. Go with that assurance! Go in peace! Amen.