



## Homemade E-devos

May 12, 2022

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### Reflection— Rev. Karen Oehl

#### Strangers on the Road

*On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking to each other about everything that had happened. While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself arrived and joined them on their journey.*

*Luke 24:13-15*

Have you ever met someone while you were on a journey, or just in a random situation, who left an impression on you? Surely we all have those moments in life when we fall into conversation with a stranger and remember their story, or have the chance to share ours. Or, if you have not had that experience, is there a reason?

I am generally a reticent person, which actually makes it easier for me to speak to a stranger, whom I will never see again. I am grateful for the moments I have had to talk to strangers—they are like having the opportunity to see a tree in bloom in the springtime. There is a moment of experience and life that will never come in quite the same way again.

My family came to Iceland at the end of my year as an exchange student, and we spent some time there and then visiting a bit more in Europe. On our flight home, the four of us siblings (I have two sisters and a brother), were seated in the four middle seats of the airplane for what would be a long flight. Within minutes we discovered that four siblings were seated right in front of us—three boys and a girl—of similar ages. By the time we were in the air and getting snacks, the flight attendants were asking us if we had known each other already as we talked, played games, traded seats.

In my first job following college I worked in an office in downtown Cleveland, riding the bus every day. My friend met on the road was a woman who caught the same bus—at one of the gates of Lakeview Cemetery! We commiserated in the snow and heat and started each day with words of support and friendship.

Early in my time in Mt. Vernon, I was sitting in a waiting area while my car was being serviced. Another woman waiting began a conversation about the book that I was reading. (I never go anywhere that I might wait without a book.) We ended up in a long conversation. She was recently widowed and I was new in town. We had things to share.

Strangers can be friends. Friends can be strangers. The friend we have in Jesus may meet us in strangers. We are brought together by the Spirit, the spark of life and divinity in each human being. We can often miss it—the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, the story that we will read this Sunday, almost did. Yet if we listen, take a little bit of time, and pay attention, we discover these moments of sweet and surprising friendship.

*God, open my eyes to see where there might be a friend in a stranger. May I be a friend to others, and expect to meet Jesus sometimes on the road of my life. Amen.*