

Twenty-first Sunday C August 24, 2025 Greenwich .

A special welcome to any visitors who have come from afar to join us today at the Supper of the Lamb!

Jesus frequently pictures the Reign of God as a feast.

He says the Kingdom is like the Master's great banquet, and the guests invent excuses to stay away.

Or Jesus says that God will play host to those wise ones who had invited to their table the poor and the sick, who could not repay them.

Or Jesus says, divine forgiveness is like the Father providing for his prodigal son the sumptuous meal of a fatted calf.

Luke regularly portrays Jesus as reclining at table as if anticipating the eternal Supper of the Lamb.

Jesus eats, with disciples, with Pharisees, with sinners, so that people even call him a glutton and a drunkard.

Perhaps that is why I like Luke's Gospel so much. Good food is proof of God's existence, and you should remain agnostic until the end so you can try every kind many times.

Each gospel tries to tell us something about who Jesus is, by telling us where to find him.

In John, when the disciples asked Jesus, "Where do you dwell? Where do you remain?" they are not asking his street address but "Where will we find you? Where do we look for you?"

Each of us asks that same question, especially when the gate seems too narrow, the evidence too slim: Where can we find Jesus?

John says, Jesus both dwells with the Father in glory, yet reveals himself with us in every act of humble service, because he is forever the Incarnate Word of God who has pitched his tent among us and washes our feet.

In Mark, you find Jesus on the road, forever crossing and recrossing the lake, entering or leaving towns, always on the move, because he is forever on the way, the way to Jerusalem, the way to the cross, the way to the Father's glory.

Indeed, the earliest name for Christianity was People of the Way. And we find Jesus, we only understand who Jesus is, if we join him on that same way, to that same Cross.

In Matthew, first you find Jesus in Galilee, heathen Galilee, where Jews and Gentiles have nothing to do with one another, but finally you find Jesus in the Church, where Jesus reconciles longtime enemies, to one another and to God. In Jesus, and in his Church, Jews discover their ancient hopes are fulfilled, and Gentiles find unimagined and unmerited grace, as Jesus leads them together into the Promised Land of the coming Kingdom.

So: with the Father in glory yet in humble service, on the way to the Cross, in the midst of the Church. That's where the other evangelists tell us where to find Jesus, and who he is.

But Luke says, Look for Jesus at a feast.

Why there? And what does that tell us about who Jesus is?

At dinner parties, Jesus gathers friends who share stories and meals together.

And ever since, disciples do the same: We gather the folks, tell the story, and break the bread. And the Risen Lord is with us.

For Luke, the key resurrection appearance is Emmaus.

After the crucifixion, two disciples fleeing Jerusalem meet a stranger walking beside them, but they don't recognize him.

They confide to him their hopes, that Jesus was the Messiah, and then the crushing defeat of his murder when all seemed lost. And they admit their confusion about the incredible reports that Jesus is alive.

And he listens.

Then Jesus tells them His story, beginning with Moses and all the prophets. And he weaves together all the stories they have shared into the one great story of God's deliverance.

But the two still don't quite see.

Finally, at table, as the stranger recounts all the mighty deeds of God, the disciples give thanks--they Eucharistize--as Jesus breaks the bread.

And that's when their eyes are opened, and they recognize Jesus in their midst.

Why? Why do we now find Jesus when we gather, re-member,
give thanks and share the bread and the cup? And what does that tell us
about who Jesus is?

At least three things: first, the Pascal meal links us to our
communal past, back to the Exodus, the Passover, and God's covenant
with the Israelites.

Our sacred supper with Jesus the Jew links us in re-membering and
giving thanks with that tribe of slaves set free by God's saving arm.

It links us with that remnant who kept the Covenant promise alive
in the face of persecution and death.

The meal links us with the Chosen People into whom, in God's
mercy, we have been grafted. The meal roots us in our history.

Second, when we find Jesus in the midst of this community
gathered for stories and a meal, we begin to recognize that every meal,
every gathering of friends and family, every time we take the risk to
share our hopes and defeats and confusions, can bear the presence of the
divine.

Our family dining tables become sacred space when we share our
real selves, and glimpse the holy in each other, and offer thanks for the
gift of one another.

The grace we pray at our family table echoes the prayer we make
at this table, the altar, and we recognize Christ in our midst, in both
sacred spaces.

Finally, for Jesus, the Kingdom is that great coming future banquet, where he will gather us from east and west, north and south.

If Jesus dwells in our re-mem-bering the past, and in our giving thanks for the present, it is because He most fully comes as our absolute future, when he will fulfill and exceed our every hope and dream and expectation.

That's why we don't need to fear the future; Jesus is already there.

There, our longed-for reconciliation,

----with our own schizoid selves,

----with the whole tribe of humanity,

----with the entire cosmos itself,

will be completed, and our every hunger satisfied.

There, at last, all our stories, with their tragic twists and apparent absurdities, will come out right.

And we will finally understand that all this time, our lives really been part of a much bigger story, the one great story that started, “in the beginning.”..... “because God so loved the world.” And each of us has an indispensable role in the saga.

There, at that unending Supper of the Lamb, we won't be “famous for fifteen minutes;” we will be celebrated forever.

The Lord has gathered us here today, so that we can look back to the sources of faith, and re-member;

and look around, to glimpse the Divine dwelling in our midst, and give thanks;

and look ahead to God's coming Kingdom, and have hope.

And if sometimes you have trouble finding Jesus, if sometimes the gate seems too narrow, take Luke's advice:

Gather the folks, share the stories, break the bread and pass around the cup.

And as you re-member, and give thanks, you will recognize Jesus. in your midst.

And the people of God said, Amen.