

April 18th Worship
3rd Sunday in Easter

Introduction to the Day

The gospel for the third Sunday of Easter is always one in which the risen Christ shares food with the disciples, meals that are the Easter template for the meal we share each Sunday. In today's gospel, Jesus both shares the disciples' food and shows them the meaning of his suffering, death, and resurrection through the scriptures, the two main elements of our Sunday worship.

Thanksgiving For Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,

for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ,
that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church
when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey
as we share your life.
Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God,
now and forever.
Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Holy and righteous God, you are the author of life, and you adopt us to be your children. Fill us with your words of life, that we may live as witnesses to the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Lesson – Acts 3:12-19

¹²[Peter] addressed the people, “You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?¹³The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. ¹⁴But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, ¹⁵and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

¹⁷“And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.”

Gospel – Luke 24:36-48

³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ³⁷They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, “Why are

you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.”

Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

Today’s Gospel text, this encounter that we hear about, offers two beautiful sermon opportunities, and we are going to do what every preaching professor I ever had said not to do. We are going to hear both of those sermons, and eventually they will connect.

Sermon number 1

If someone showed up to your house, hung out for a brief moment, before inviting themselves to your table for a meal with, “have you anything to eat?” What would you have readily available in your home to feed them?

In the Toufar house there is a good chance that there will be leftovers of some kind of pasta dish from meals past, probably taco meat, and maybe another meal. If we feel like really preparing something we’ve always got chicken nuggets and corn dogs in the freezer that can be ready in anywhere from 2 minutes to about a half hour, depending on if you want them quickly, or if you want them done perfectly.

If we really want to get extravagant I’d be able to, without taking too much time, have the best grilled cheese this side of the Mississippi for you or a couple of eggs prepared to your liking with a side of wheat toast.

All of that is to say, if you walked into my home, and propositioned me with “have you anything to eat?” we’d have options.

Jesus. After appearing to his disciples on day three after the crucifixion, amid their joy, disbelieving, and still wondering, invites himself to their table. He invites them into a moment and experience that he has shared with them many times over. He invited them, in their joy, disbelieving, and wondering into something they knew.

“Have you anything to eat?”

And they did!

They offered him broiled fish. At our midweek Bible Study this led to a bit of wondering. Did they just have a pan of broiled fish sitting on the fire? Or, did they have to start from scratch? Did they have to head out and snag a fish from the sea? Or, was it just there? We don’t know the answers to those questions. And, we’re not even sure they matter. What matters is, hearing his invite to their table, they fed him.

It's safe to wonder if perhaps this was a test that Jesus was giving them. After all they had been following him for 3 years hearing stories of how it was that they were to treat the ones among them whom they did not expect. They saw, for 3 years, instances of Jesus stopping to reach out to those he perhaps didn't expect to reach out to on any given day's journey.

But, so often they witnessed those in need cry out for his healing touch, his compassion, the hope that is him, and he responded. Perhaps this was indeed a test to see if they had been paying attention.

Again, we don't know those things. We have those questions and can only come up with our own answers. So, we return to what we do know, what we are told, the telling of the interaction that is right in front of us.

““Have you anything here to eat?”⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence.”

His disciples, his followers, those who had heard for 3 years what it is that he is about, were confronted with a need, and they met it. That is important.

Sermon number 2

A question that frequently comes up when discussing the resurrection and how Jesus appears to his followers is, “What did he look like?”

Artistic recreations of that day and those encounters would have you think that he appeared in dazzling white with an assistant holding a fan to create the perfect look of his beautiful brown hair blowing in the breeze.

Artistic retelling of this day would have you believe that he appeared to them looking perfect. Even in the images where his followers are placing their hands in his wounds, he is looking perfect. You'd never guess by those images that he had endured the gruesome death that he did 3 days prior.

The text, however, would tell you a different story.

“Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.”

Jesus does not appear to them perfect.

Jesus does not appear to them put back together. Perhaps that is why they are afraid and in disbelief. Having seen what he went through 3 days prior it is hard for them to believe that he could possibly be with them again.

But. Here we are. “Look at the holes in my hands and my feet. Place your hands in my side. A ghost does not have flesh. It is me!”

The risen Christ appears to them broken. Bruised. Battered. And wounded.

If they had believed that it would happen at all, this certainly isn't what they had in mind.

And the same goes for us.

We wouldn't expect the risen Christ to confront us in the imperfection and brokenness of the world. But, here we are.

In our minds we are going to experience the resurrected Christ in the perfection of the world around us. We seek the living Christ in all that is right. We see something good and wonderful and credit God and God's action in it. We see something broken down and beaten and wonder, "what happened there?"

But. That is not how the risen Christ comes to us. The risen Christ had to die to rise again.

The risen Christ was bruised, beaten, and battered. And he came knocking on that day and in our world today seeking food.

The broken and beaten Christ appeared to his followers that day with wounds still fresh asking for something to eat.

So, people of God. How are we doing?

When HAS the risen Christ appeared to us asking for something to eat? When HAVE we missed Christ in our presence? What ARE we expecting it to look like?

And...

Is he being fed?

Because, people of God. Not only does the broken and bruised Christ appear to his disciples in his own brokenness, he appears to them in their brokenness.

The risen Christ doesn't look for his disciples to be "ready" for his resurrection. He doesn't wait for them to have their wounds healed. He doesn't wait until they've fully grasped the promise of the story.

Instead. He shows up. "Look! I am wounded, too. And here I am."

Are we able to admit that in our own lives? Can we come to grips with the fact that the risen Christ breathes life into our brokenness and doubt, demanding to be fed?

Because that is how it happens.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Living God, in the midst of Easter joy we are still filled with questions and wondering. Open our hearts and minds as we encounter the scriptures, so that the church embodies repentance and forgiveness in the name of Jesus to all nations. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, like a master artist you have fashioned the universe out of your love and delight. Heal your creation where it is in need of restoration. Provide all the inhabitants of earth a peaceful and sustainable home. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all, the nations hunger and thirst for your righteousness. Many call on you for guidance and strength. Answer their hopes with the peace of Christ and give your lovingkindness to national, state, and local leaders of people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Healing God, you hear the cries of those in need and answer them in their distress. Grant to those who are sick and suffering your compassion and nurse them back to health and wholeness (*especially*). Be close to the hearts of the lonely. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving Parent, you have given us such love that we should be called the children of God. Reveal yourself to us so that we in this community of faith will become more and more like you in our mutual love and bold witness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all times and ages, those who have died in you now see you as you are. We thank you for their lives among us. Assure us of the peace you have promised, that we may join them in everlasting life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of love,
you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.
Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.
Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;
for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Words of Institution – We invite you to find bread and wine or juice and partake in this Holy Meal.

(Holding the bread) In the night in which we was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and broke it, gave thanks and gave it for all to eat saying, “This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

(Holding the cup) Again after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it for all to drink saying, “this cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. So often as you do this, remember me.”

Once you’ve taken the elements say, “Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord’s Prayer

Blessing

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,

Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS!

PLANS TO RE-OPEN FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP

At their most recent meeting, the Leadership Team of Good Shepherd approved plans to hold in-person worship starting on May 2. By now you should have received further details regarding those plans and what that return will look like. The hope is to make this the safest worship option for those who choose to use it. For now, make your plans to join us in person for one of two services on Sundays for the month of May!

Re-Connect Opportunities

We hope you will join us for any, or all, of these Re-Connect Opportunities throughout the week!

Stop in for coffee and conversation at 9 am on Mondays

TUESDAYS be sure to stop by for Bible Study starting at 11, followed by Lunch and Laughter at noon.

Wednesdays will continue to be our Faith Formation Days

Thursdays we will have the sanctuary open for prayer for 8 am to 3 pm.

Building/Grounds Spring Clean-Up Work Days

Join your church family THIS WEEKEND to spruce up the church for when we re-open. We will have a work project weekend, April 17 (9 am – 4 pm) and April 18 (Noon – 4 pm). Help get the Good Shepherd property looking beautiful for when we welcome you back through our doors!

You will need to bring your own tools, rakes, gloves, etc. You may get dirty. It's even possible that you'll get some paint on you! Come prepared! And, if you'll be here all day on Saturday, you will want to bring a sack lunch.

If you would like to contribute monetarily to these efforts there are some costs associated with these efforts. One of those costs is bags of pothole filler for the parking lot. Pothole Patch is currently on sale at Menards for \$7.99 a bag or \$10.65 a bag.