

**“Have You Anything Here to Eat?”**  
Sustainable Food in a Changing Climate  
Earth Day 2015

**Sermon Preparation**

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**Revised Common Lectionary Readings for Sunday, April 19, 2015, the Third Sunday of Easter  
(Year B): Gospel Luke 24:36b-43**

*Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”<sup>37</sup> They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost.<sup>38</sup> He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?<sup>39</sup> 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.”<sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.<sup>41</sup> While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”<sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish,<sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate in their presence.*

**General Notes of Interest**

- The Gospel of Luke is full of references to food and meals, and through the food something important is communicated to us. See Luke 5:27-32, Banquet at Levi’s house; 7:36- 50, Dinner at Simon’s house; 9:10-17, Feeding the 5,000; 10:38-42, Mary and Martha’s House; 11:37-52, Dinner at a Pharisee’s House; 14:1-24, Sabbath Meal at a Pharisee’s House; 19:1-10, Dining at Zaccheus’ House; 22:14-38, The Last Supper; 24:28-32, Breaking Bread at Emmaus.<sup>1</sup>
- There are parallels between this Luke passage and the post-resurrection passages of John 20:19-29 and John 21:1-14 (he stood among them, said peace be with you, showed his body (hands and feet/side), invited them to touch, and ate fish).<sup>2</sup>

**Notes on Theological Themes**

**FOOD**

- The resurrected Christ would not *need* to eat. His eating was proof that he is not a “spirit.” A fully human and fully divine Jesus Christ, was, in human nature, a physical and material being who needed sustenance like all other living parts of creation. The

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<sup>1</sup> <https://theologicalsweets.wordpress.com/2011/07/24/meals-in-lukes-gospel/> and <http://cafn.us/2011/01/11/the-gospel-of-luke-different-yet-similar-to-other-two-synoptic-gospels/> speak to the prevalence and meaning of food in Luke’s gospel.

<sup>2</sup> Culpepper, Alan R. The Gospel of Luke: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections. Volume IX of The New Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes, Senior Editor Leander E. Keck. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995, 483-490.

incarnational/resurrection aspects of this story speak to the Christian understanding that the material world is sacred and that God is Creator, Redeemer and Savior of the whole cosmos. The story also notes that we aren't to be tempted to leave the world behind "at the end of the age" but rather to integrate the thriving of all beings on a healthy planet (see Revelations 22 vision of God coming down to the city, with the river running through it, trees growing on either side).

- Jesus' eating recalls the Last Supper. His eating recalls Luke 8.55 when Jarius' daughter was raised and Jesus tells her parents to give her something to eat. His eating recalls the road to Emmaus when he was recognized in the breaking of the bread. How do food stories nourish bodies, spirits, and relationships between people? How can they increase faith?
- In our time, if Jesus shows up at our home or church and asks "what do you have to eat," what could we say? What would we feel good about offering Christ? How does the food speak (for good or ill) to the health of the human body, the planet, and our relationships? How can food that is offered sustain not only body but also the relationship between giver and receiver? What if Jesus visited the church food pantry or a meal being served to the homeless? Would our answers change?
- What makes eating food a holy moment? Is God present in all meals?

#### PEACE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- In a time of grief and loss and fear (Jesus' death), the disciples look inward, tend to their own business, and then are surprised and scared by a stranger. Is this familiar to us? In our own corporate time of grief and loss and fear (climate change), we too are tempted to look inward and tend only our own nets. Yet Christ calls us beyond this self-protective instinct.
- Jesus greeting of "peace" was startling, almost unwelcome. What is it about Christ's peace that makes us afraid? Peace demands justice and we know how hard that can be. Our Resurrected Savior's call shakes up the cynicism and apathy that are strange comfort zones for us. The fact is: Jesus died. Climate change is here. We have to learn to live in this new reality. *However*: Jesus lives. Climate justice and peace calls. God calls us to action.
- What kind of response other than fear can we make to Jesus' call for peace and request for food? We can feed (giving good food to others), eat in community (Jesus ate in the disciples' presence), create hope (sharing the news that there is life after death), and give nourishment to God (through our just relationships with God, one another, and all creation).