

3 Easter, Celtic Luke 24:36b-48
Christ and Grace April 15, 2018
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Raising children is, for the most part, about keeping up with them. Mostly it's about keeping enough food in the house. If you've had children, especially teenagers, you know this. How many times have you heard, "I'm hungry! Is there anything to eat in this house?" Or on worse days you might have heard, "There's never anything to eat in this house, I'm starving!" Hunger is an essential human need. We all get hungry.

What I love in tonight's Gospel is that the risen Jesus is hungry. He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence. Jesus knew that by doing this very human thing, the disciples might begin to comprehend the truth of his resurrection. That he was not a ghost or a figment of their imagination, but that he was the Jesus they knew and loved, risen from the dead. They could identify with Jesus because they knew what it was like to be hungry.

We know what it's like to be hungry too. Or at least we think we do. We've had to miss a meal or two from time to time, right? Or perhaps we have known what it's like to be hungry for something other than food, like acceptance, compassion, or love. Maybe we have hungered for a place of safety or relief from suffering. These days most of us can admit to being hungry for the truth. Every media source claims to have it but we cannot seem to find it anywhere.

When we are hungry, it's hard to think straight or be objective. It's easy to find ourselves startled or terrified or disbelieving or wondering. The disciples were hungry too. They were in shock and grief over the loss of their beloved leader and friend, and didn't even know what it was that they were hungry for. But Jesus knew. He came and stood among them bringing peace. He showed them that even with the very human wounds in his own hands and feet he could give them peace.

Jesus stands among us here, now, in this place, and in every place where we find ourselves startled or terrified or disbelieving or wondering. And when Jesus meets us where we are, his words to us are "Peace be with you".

When we let that peace wash over us, fill us, and lift us up, we can walk into a resurrected life, even if we have some wounds in our hands and feet. It's those very hands and feet that can go out and find the hungry in this world and feed them the food they are starving for. They may be hungry for a meal, a safe place to live, or acceptance. Whatever it is, when we feed them, what we know is that Jesus will be standing among us, giving us peace. Amen.