

**Luke NRSV**

"Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?' (24:36b-38) " While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, 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." (24:41-43). The Jerusalem Bible says "their joy was so great, they still could not believe it!"

What a day it has been! The women had gone to the tomb, the stone was rolled away; just listen to the descriptors in this day; terrified, perplexed, Peter, not believing the report given by the women, ran to the tomb to see for himself and was amazed! Later that day walking on the road to Emmaus Cleopas and one other of those who loved Jesus were talking about all of the events, so deep in conversation within their sorrow and their confusion, when a stranger joined them on the walk. The two were astonished that this walking companion didn't seem to be aware of the astonishing events of the last days. They stopped for a bite to eat and invited the stranger to stay. "When he was at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him and he vanished from their sight." (24:31) They describe their hearts as "burning within us" because of his presence. And descriptors in today's passage; startled, terrified, joy, disbelieving.

My, oh my, lots going on this day. So much in the midst of the mystery and the table; much in the midst of the remembering happening in the sharing of the nourishment provided at the table.

"The world begins at a kitchen table. No matter what, we must eat to live.

The gifts of earth are brought and prepared, set on the table. So it has been since creation, and it will go on.

We chase chickens or dogs away from it. Babies teethe at the corners.

They scrape their knees under it.

It is here that children are given instructions on what it means to be human.

We make men at it, we make women.

At this table we gossip, recall enemies and the ghosts of lovers.

Our dreams drink coffee with us as they put their arms around our children.

They laugh with us at our poor falling-down selves and as we put ourselves back together once again at the table.

This table has been a house in the rain, an umbrella in the sun.

Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of terror  
a place to celebrate the terrible victory.

We have given birth on this table, and have prepared our parents for burial here.

At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse.

We give thanks.

Perhaps the world will end at the kitchen table, while we are laughing and crying,  
eating of the last sweet bite."

**"Perhaps the Word Ends Here"** Joy Harjo from **The Woman Who Fell From the Sky**  
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Table memories! Right? Many of us grew up in a time when aunts and uncles, cousins, grammas and grampas, parents and siblings came together on special occasions. Table memories. Many of us raised our children during a time when as parents we gathered together with our children at a meal or two a day. Table memories!

At our tables “we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse. We give thanks.” (Harjo) Table memories!

And at the Passover meal, that last evening as he prayed for and with those he loved, as they shared table to together. “Do this in remembrance of me!” (Luke 22:19b) The other gospels do not have these particular words “Do this in remembrance of me” ... only Luke.

In my family my dad, great grandfather of my grandchildren becomes alive to them in the stories we share around the table ... and there are favorites of him. He becomes alive before his great grandchildren. He becomes present. He becomes re-membered in a mysterious, physical way. He becomes resurrected.

At the invitation of Jesus Christ communities of faith are invited to His table where he becomes alive to them in the stories shared around the table through scripture ... and each has favorites of Him. He becomes alive before the generations. He becomes present. He becomes re-membered in a mysterious, physical way. He becomes resurrected.

We are children of the Table.

Theological Frederick Buechner says, “We become ‘stewards’ (keepers) of the wildest mystery of them all.” “Do this in remembrance of me”

Remember? Remember that Sabbath day – at the pool in Jerusalem? All gathered around the blind, bodies crupled paralyzed. I thought I saw you there. Remember the guy who told Jesus he couldn’t get to the healing water because he had no one to put him in ... remember? And Jesus said, Get up, come on, you can do it! It may not be the gait of a strong athletic man, but you can do it. Come in the way that will get you to me. And he did! Yes, the man re –membered himself in the presence of Jesus. “Do this in remembrance of me!”

Remember all those people? You were there on the hillside that day – I know you were there; you turned to me and mumbled, “Where is he going to get bread to feed all these people? But he knew! Remember – thousands of us sat on the grass with no food, but Jesus fed us all. He fed us and restored our inner peace. I remember the time he told us “My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.” (John 14:27). I remember. That was at the Passover meal. That was the last time we shared table together with Him. Remember, it was an evening full of love but we also were full of fear; But he reassured us, he became so present to us in his love and abated our fear. The love permeated the space, filled the air. Remember? Then he said, “I have a commandment for you... Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize you are my followers – when they see the love you have for each other.” Do this in remembrance of Me. Table memories. We become stewards of the wildest mystery of them all!

It was the last night we were all together. And yet, he died, and yet, he was on the road to Emmaus. He died, and yet when we gathered back in Jerusalem and Cleopas told the story about sharing a meal with a stranger who was Jesus. He came to us all again. “Peace be with you he said again.” We become stewards of the wildest mystery of them all! Do this in remembrance of me. He is

re-membered in a mysterious, physical way. He becomes resurrected. He is the Body of Christ in the world.

We love to tell the stories of Jesus and his love. These stories are told so that the experiences they narrate are the touch stones of our own stories. They invite us to participate in a world where victory over the struggles of lives are possible, and help us to recognize the greatest of our joy in the presence he provides for us even as we struggle with our belief in the mystery of that presence.

May we have the eyes to see beyond what is in front of our eyes. May we see the divine presence in our midst. He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old. He comes to those who know Him not. He comes in the sorrows, the conflicts, the joy! And as in that ineffable mystery he is re-member before us and lives before us and loves before us.

My Dad loved his grandchildren. And he had a tradition with them that embodies all we have talked about this morning. When Mom and Dad babysat for my brother's children and my children there was a bedtime tradition. He would set them down in their "jammies" at a little metal chair in the kitchen and put on his cloak (the huge beach towel) and get out his dagger (the big wooden spoon) and say to the child. You stay here in the light of this room for I am going into the darkness (the darkened dining) to slay the evil dragon. Do not fear for I am here and will keep you safe! And this brave grampa would go into the darkness and take care of the evil. Such noises would be emitted from the darkness. Grunts and groans, and words of distress and victory. At some point he would emerge from the darkness, cloak segue and tell the prince or princess that all was good and they were safe. Then with great grace he would spread the meal before them as he joined them at the table to share together a peeled and quarter apple. Dad died 37 years ago and 37 years later I cannot pick up an apple without his presence being with me in my remembrance. He becomes alive before the generations. He becomes present. He becomes re-membered in a mysterious, physical way. Embodied in the memory of the story. Table memories

We become stewards of the wildest mystery of them all. This table (our Communion Table) has been a house in the rain, an umbrella in the sun. Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of terror, a place to celebrate the terrible victory. We have given birth on this table, and have prepared our parents for burial here. At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse. We give thanks.