

Welcome to Just Church: Lunch

Some of the elements of this meal are taken from the food and faith journeys of Urban Seed, Seeds Network and Newmarket Baptist Church in Melbourne, Australia.

At Newmarket Baptist, eating is one of the core practices we have adopted as a means of renewing our small inner city church. We have been experimenting with eating, sharing food and the Lord's Supper in a variety of ways.

We are also asking how the idea of 'Slow Food' can help reframe our understanding of what it means to be church. The "Slow Food" Movement arose in Italy as a response to the negative impact of multinational food companies and its influence is spreading around the world – slowly!

Slow Food opposes the standardisation of taste; protects cultural identity tied to food; and seeks to safeguard processing techniques inherited from tradition. It involves valuing time to prepare, eat and build community through food.

It is sometimes critiqued as being an elitist pursuit, however Jesus himself would often seek out the best feed in town! Far from idolatrous or extravagant eating, we believe Slow Food can be about the celebration of the connections that food can make with sustainable production, justice and the hunger of those often impoverished in our economy.

Together we are discovering that from Genesis to Revelation, the biblical story suggests our true religion is revealed by where and to-whom we turn when hungry.



Images from Newmarket Baptist's 'People's Pantry' Food Rescue and Redistribution Project a weekly community of welcome, work and worship

That if we read the gospels without getting hungry we aren't paying attention!

That the how, what, where and with whom Jesus eats is a central point of gospel conflict and that, (in the words of Robert Kariss) "Jesus is crucified because of how he eats."

That for would be disciples, "...understanding about the loaves" (Mark 6:52) is presented as essential to participation in Jesus' kingdom ministry of reconciliation, justice and peace.

This new 'economy' is symbolised in the offer of bread in the wilderness and of his body and blood in the Eucharist. Our prayer is that like his frightened refugee followers on the road to Emmaus; it would be in the offer of hospitality to strangers, and at 'the breaking of the bread' that our eyes will be opened and that Christ may be made known among us.



MENU

"The simplest and most necessary reform of the Lord's Supper in our congregations is that it must become a meal for the nourishment of the physical body... a sign of the grace of creation and preservation... where there should be bread and wine in abundance, so that everyone may have as much as he or she needs."

- Arthur Cochrane



welcome/grace

Blessed are the hungry...
Take a moment to become aware of your hunger...

confession/affirmation

Leader: The prophet Isaiah writes: On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare for all peoples a feast of rich food, a banquet of well-aged wines – the best of meats and the finest of wines. God will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; God will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces, and take away the disgrace of the people from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. In that day they will say

ALL: This is our God; the one in whom we trusted, the one who saved us. This is the Lord for whom we waited, let us rejoice and be glad.

sharing of bread

On the night that he was betrayed, while his followers were at table Jesus took bread and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying "Take; this is my body given for you. Do this to remember me".

Leader : Be grateful when you touch bread

**ALL : Let it not lie uncared for, unwanted.
There is so much beauty in bread;
Beauty of sun and soil, beauty of patient toil.
Winds and rain have caressed it.
Christ often blessed it.
Be grateful when you touch bread**

Thank you God that ordinary things can become special when placed in your hands. Thank you that that which is broken may be made whole, and that which is given is not wasted.

Let us receive what we are, Let us become what we receive, The Body of Christ

(In the Baptist tradition, as priests to one another, we serve one another. The bread will be handed to you by the person next to you. Break off a piece for yourself and then hand the remainder of the loaf to the next person, saying "The body of Christ, given for you and all creation")

If this way is not according to your tradition or you do not wish to offer yourself to Christ and his people in communion you may sit back from the table or simply serve the person next to you without partaking.)

table talk

Leader: Hear the cry and promise of Jesus who said ;

"Listen, I stand at the door and knock: if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you and you with me."

In the gift of Jesus and through the presence of his Spirit, we have tasted God's gracious hospitality to us. And so we extend this grace to each other...

(In groups of 3 or 4 Each person learns the name of the person seated beside them saying....

Welcome to this table in the name of Christ...

Response: **Amen. I bring to the table...**

*physical food and dietary needs/content.
knowledge of the the sacred connections from creation,
production, distribution of food.
expressions of personal feelings/ prayer requests
debrief of events from the conference morning.*

last drinks

Leader: In the same way Jesus took a cup of wine, and gave it to them. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood - poured out for many. Do this, whenever you drink it, to remember me"

Wine is poured and glasses are charged.

**ALL:
Be loving when you drink wine-
Let its colour, life and joy be appreciated.
There is so much beauty in this wine
Beauty of self-giving, beauty of forgiving
Winds and rain have caressed it.
Christ often blessed it.
Be loving when you drink wine.**

Freedom Bound: A Tale of Two Meals Ched Myers
*stand with glasses charged for Benediction : Different voices
read a sentence each around the table.*

Leader: As we eat this day we remember Passover and Eucharist.

- *The foundational meals that gave birth to our people...*
- *Meals that commemorate the journey of faith...*
- *"Which make a way out of no way."...*
- *The Exodus march and the discipleship path...*
- *Last meals of memory for communities on the run, hunted by the powers of empire...*
- *Meals that acknowledge the blood (of the Lamb), as the power of life over death...*
- *Meals for a people "Freedom bound."...*
- *Where the Exodus reminds us we are "Bound for Freedom"; Eucharist reminds us we are bound to the freedom struggle and its cost...*
- *That God's freedom calls us to self-restraint, servanthood and justice for all...*
- *It reminds us that the "first supper" for a free people was wilderness manna...*
- *A feast of God's gracious provision but also of testing...*
- *Revealing freedom is contingent upon gathering only enough; sharing the gifts of creation; taking time to rest and to remember...*
- *Jesus re-enacted this story when, surrounded by hungry masses, he "took bread, blessed it, broke it and distributed it" among the people...*
- *Using the same ritual words at his Last Supper he made the feeding of the multitudes the bridge that connects these two meals...*
- *Standing ever between Exodus and Eucharist are poor folks hungering for bread and for the Bread of Life...*
- *And Jesus' word to disciples remains: "You feed them!"...*
- *The tale of these two meals is God's extraordinary invitation to turn the world right side up, coming in the form of the most ordinary thing we do: sharing food together around a table...*
- *Let us not imagine these meals as a religious entitlement, or empty ritual, or for strictly private spirituality...*
- *Rather, when we take this Bread and lift this Cup, let us understand that we are part of a legacy that invites our embrace...*
- *For we, too, are part of the ongoing struggle to take back the Freedom story from empire-builders and profiteers, and to restore it among Kingdom-seekers and prophets...*
- *Upon these two memorial feasts, we can confidently stake our lives, our aspirations, our vocations...*
- *On a faithful practice of meal and memory we can rebuild a church that will truly be Freedom Bound,*
- *That the history of liberation may also have a future.*

Leader: Until he comes. The blood of Christ keep you Bound for Freedom!

(Raising Glasses)! ALL: Freedom Bound! Amen.

Sources:

Marcus Curnow: newmarketbaptist.wordpress.com

Anne Wilkinson Hayes: [Tablelife Oxford](http://TablelifeOxford.com)

Nathan Nettleton: [South Yarra Baptist](http://SouthYarraBaptist.com), laughingbird.net

Ched Myers: chedmyers.com



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