

Together in Christ

A letter from Bishop Devadhar

April 3, 2021

Beloved in Christ:

Greetings in the precious name of our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As you may recall, the incidents during Jesus' final days of suffering and death, leading to his extraordinary resurrection, were amazing. Each moment was powerful and touched the lives of many.

Today, as we celebrate Easter, I want us to focus on the two meals Christ had with his disciples.

The first meal was the Passover meal ([Luke 22: 14-23](#)), where he instituted the Lord's Supper as he celebrated with his disciples. He was direct and honest with them, sharing what was about to happen to him in the days to come.

Though the disciples learned God's plan from him, they lost their focus after the Resurrection and went back to their previous livelihoods before their calling into ministry with Jesus.

The Risen Christ went to them as they were fishing off the shore of Galilee ([John 21: 1-24](#)) and prepared a breakfast. Again, he was honest with them. After the breakfast, Jesus asked them pointed questions, allowing them to catch the vision he had taught them. He asked Peter three times if he loved him. After that powerful dialogue, Jesus asked Peter to "follow him" ([verse 19](#)).

Two meals – a dinner and a breakfast. Why is it important to Jesus to share these meals with his disciples? I believe that it was the breaking of



 Our Website

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Bishop's Office

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

Erica Robinson-Johnson Assistant
to the Bishop/DCM Phone: (978)
682-7555 ext. 251
erica@neumc.org

Brenda Borchers
Administrative Assistant

bread together that brought them into deeper dialogue. What is the relevance of these meals to you and me who are asked by Jesus to tell the Resurrection story?

Phone: (978) 682-7555 ext. 250
Fax: (978) 682-9555
BishopsOffice@neumc.org

Today we live in a very different context from Jesus' time in the Upper Room and on the shores of Galilee, but the reality of the society in which we live is not that different from that of the first Easter.

As we sing Easter hymns, there are people who are lonely – this loneliness is not age-related. The old and young suffer alike. We do not take time to talk, celebrate, share meals, and enjoy one another and life, and this reality has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

The first Easter reminds us it is in breaking bread and sharing meals that we hear one another more intently, dialogue more freely, and experience our communications through body language and interaction.

We celebrate that COVID-19 vaccinations are becoming more widely available, and we are beginning to see a possibility of gathering together again someday. Some who are already vaccinated will be able to join with family in reunions and meals this Easter.

In the meantime, as we continue to practice safe physical distancing, let us also find ways to use the tools we have grown accustomed to in this past year to reach out and connect with one another. Pick up the phone, schedule a family Zoom, gather together for an online or outdoor worship. And when we can do it safely, let us break bread together in thanksgiving.

Because only Christians celebrated Easter, when I was growing up many hungry people would show up at Christian houses begging for help. As we shared food, no matter what we shared with them, these people could not contain their gratitude and joy. Any meal can change a person. It is a chance to spread joy! We can make this Easter season more joyful!

Bishop Violet Fisher's mother used to say, "Put another leaf in the table!" when unexpected guests arrived. She had learned from her mother's hospitality and openness to extend the table to all! With so many still out of work because of the pandemic, this year more than ever, our area food pantries need our generosity. Please do what you can to extend your table by giving to your area food pantries.

As our global community celebrates Easter, so many of us still cannot meet together in person to sing the Easter hymns together and proclaim the joyful message of Easter. However, as followers of Christ, we cannot stop doing the work of the Easter! As Easter people, we are constantly called to keep extending our tables, adding more and more leaves.

As Easter people, we live between two meals — meals where Jesus is the host. Supper at the Upper Room and breakfast on the shores of Galilee. At the meal in the Upper Room, Jesus did not leave behind anyone — not even the one who was going to betray him. At the breakfast on the shores of Galilee, he included even those who denied him.

Friends, may this Easter be a challenge to all of us to keep searching and making every effort to share our meals with everyone, adding more and more leaves to our tables as Easter people.

May God fill us with Easter grace. May Christ fill us with Easter love. May the Holy Spirit move us forward with Easter power!

Prema joins me in wishing you and your loved ones a happy Easter!

In Christ's love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sudarshana', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

Transformed by the Holy Spirit, united in trust,
we will **boldly** proclaim Christ to the world.