



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Communion Week 2 / Question 2

Each week we will provide a sheet with the main question for the week, questions for reflection, scripture passages for your reflection and preparation, and background information. Please bring this sheet and any notes you have to your listening session. Choose whichever fits your schedule:

Session 1

Tuesday, February 22

7:30-9:30pm

Zoom (if needed, call the church
before Thursday for assistance)

Meeting ID: 839 6799 1263

Passcode: 111560

301 715 8592

Session 2

Thursday, February 24

6:30-8:30pm

Condon Hall

Session 3

Sunday, February 27

10:00am-12:00pm

Condon Hall

Main Question: How is God calling us to be a Christ-centered Church that is a welcoming, Eucharistic community?

Questions for prayer and reflection during the week, before attending a listening session...

- How is God calling us to be a Christ-centered Church that is a welcoming, Eucharistic community?
- Who are the people attending and actively participating in Mass? Who is missing?
- At St. Ann's (and as a global Church), how do our liturgies promote active participation at Mass and then encourage everyone to go forth and live lives of faith?
- At St. Ann's, across the country, and around the world, how is the Church welcoming those on the margins?
- At St. Ann's (and as a global Church), how do prayer and our liturgies inspire our most important decisions?
- What actions could really help us to move forward as a Christ-centered Church that is a welcoming, Eucharistic community?

John 15:12-17

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper,

saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Luke 10:21-37

At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." Then turning to the disciples, Jesus said to them privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."

Background on Question 2

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” (Matthew 18: 20) The early Christians were known for how they loved each other. They shared faith over meals in their homes; moreover, they shared all they had with one another. Local people would recognize God’s love in the Christians and then seek to join their small communities of faith, before being invited to the Eucharistic table. This early Church experience acts as both inspiration and challenge for us today.

At the Eucharist, we gather together as one body, unified as God’s people, and extend a welcome to all. Our parishes face the challenge of supporting people to incorporate the Gospel into their daily lives. Intimate, prayerful communities and experiences help people to engage deeply with scripture, God, and one another, thus complementing attendance at Sunday Eucharist – but they are rare, especially as we move through the pandemic.

Pope Francis’ image of Church as a “field hospital” offers a challenge for us to become a community which offers people space to rest, heal, and recover their vitality.

As a prayerful and Eucharistic Church, we recognize Christ present with us in various ways. We also recognize that within the Church’s practice there are many prayer forms and liturgical traditions. As we celebrate the Eucharist, “the source and summit of the Christian life,” (*Lumen Gentium*, 11) we draw on the heritage of many cultures. Yet we are responding to the one call of God.

The Emmaus story helps us to hear God’s call to be a Eucharistic and welcoming community.

(You are encouraged to take a few minutes to read the full text of the Emmaus story, Luke 24: 13-35)

The two disciples who encounter Jesus on the road are shaken, confused, and grieving. This story begins in their disillusionment and discouragement, but it ends with the rekindling of hope.

At Emmaus, the Risen Lord offers Eucharistic hospitality and expands our understanding of the Eucharist as seen in the accounts of the Last Supper. Like the two disciples, when we come to the Eucharist, we are often a community of the disillusioned and disheartened. The heart of our confusion and discouragement may lie in not fully understanding that God’s love remains even in suffering and death, and consequently in our own forms and experiences of dying.

The Risen Lord forms the two disciples through meeting and journeying with them. In his “accompaniment” Christ walks with the two and listens to the fullness of their human experience. We may seek to imitate Christ’s way of relating and find in this story a model for formation in the “art of accompaniment.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 169) Our pilgrim Church can learn from Christ how to walk with all those who yearn for his company. “Unless we train ministers capable of warming people’s hearts, of walking with them in the night, of dialoguing with their hopes and disappointments, of mending their brokenness, what hope can we have for our present and future journey?” (Pope Francis during a meeting with the Bishops of Brazil) This charge falls not just to trained and ordained ministers, but to the whole of the Church.

Our crucified and risen Lord remains with us today, calling us to find new ways to bring hope through the Good News. We are challenged to welcome all, no matter their circumstances or experiences, and to accompany them on a journey of encounter with the Risen Christ. This mission is entrusted to us at Baptism, nourished in the Eucharistic celebration, and enlivened by prayer.