

EAT





PAUSE



EAT



ASK



COMMUNE



EXAMINE

*Aching to delight in the unseen moments
Alone in my kitchen under His condolence
My worried heart and hurried mind
Slow down while kneading the dough He provides*

*I remember the One who truly sustains me
Observing the ingredients that He gave me
Accepting that I cannot go further
Until having rest and food that nurtures*

*Scooting up to the table to a prepared meal
I take a moment to just be still
You give us a seat at Your table Lord
Today always and forevermore*

— Louanne Elliott,
Gotham Class of 2021

EAT

When we Eat with others, we reflect the joyful hospitality of Jesus, elevating ordinary actions into an expression of Christ's restorative kingdom. Eating allows us to enjoy what God has so graciously given us, delighting in the food we eat and the people around us. This enjoyment is meant to be shared, and we're in the company of the Triune God when we're present with those who look, think and believe differently than us (Mark 2:16–17). By doing this, we reenact God's love for us and upend social boundaries, working toward the reconciling society that God intends for the world. It should be no surprise, then, that a central aspect of Christian worship is a communal meal, the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:26), where God's grace is experienced in bodily form. Once nourished, we're sent out to the world, inviting others to experience God's grace alongside us. Thus, the way Christians eat prefigures heaven itself: the eternal banquet where we finally and forever enjoy perfect communion with God and all of creation (Revelation 19:9). This was the way Jesus ate when he walked this earth, and so we walk with Jesus when we eat, drink and enjoy time with others.

*So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do everything for the glory of God.*
— 1 Corinthians 10:31

DAILY HABITS

TO HELP US PRACTICE PEACE:

CHALLENGE

Each month we focus on a new practice (Pause, Eat, Ask, Commune, Examine) while building on those from previous months. These practices are meant to be practical, fitting into the flow of our daily lives as we invite the Holy Spirit to change us and create new, sustainable habits.

Experience and spread hospitality with someone in your usual sphere and someone outside of it.

Pray about who God wants you to be intentional with in the practice of Eat.

Twice a week, reimagine a meal or other activity as a regular way to Eat with (1) someone different from you and (2) someone near to you.

Tips to succeed:

Schedule ahead of time.

Do something that you already enjoy and invite others into that activity or space.

Consider taking a coffee break with someone over a video call.

COMMITMENT

Prayerfully commit to small, sustainable steps in the practice of Eat, as Jesus invites us to be transformed together.

Pray for people. Who is near you that you will enjoy intentional time with? Who is different from you — in faith or culture — that you will enjoy intentional time with?

Plan ahead. What will you do with your people once a week?

Limit distractions. What most distracts you from the practice of Eat?

DAILY HABITS_{CONT.}

PASS THE PEACE

Practicing PEACE fills us with the peace of Jesus, so we pass his peace to others. Because our city is in deep need and we are made to share peace with our neighbors, adopt one Hope for New York affiliate for the entire duration of practicing PEACE to extend the mercy that we have received to others.

Dream Center: Pack & distribute food boxes to families every third Friday of the month.

Young Life: Connect with & mentor teenagers on the Upper East Side.

Safe Families: Offer hope and encouragement to overwhelmed families through virtual connections.

The Bowery Mission: Meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness and hunger in the city.

The Open Door: Teach English or become a conversation partner with adult immigrants through virtual connections every third Saturday.

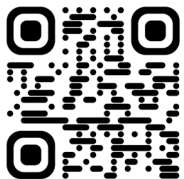
Ask yourself these questions:

Which ministry most resonates with me?

What does my schedule allow?

Do I feel comfortable with in person or virtual?

Scan to sign up to volunteer or donate online.



GOINGS ON

PEACE: An Invitation to Eat, with Aarti Sequeira

Sun, March 7, 8–9 p.m.

Come join us as Food Network host Aarti Sequeira explores the joy and sacred nature of breaking bread together, showing us that extending the hospitality of God turns the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Online Community Lunch

Tuesdays in March, 12:45–1:15 p.m.

Looking for people to practice Eat with? Bring some lunch and enjoy a meal together virtually with our church family. Join via Zoom with Meeting ID: 846 7207 9921 and Passcode: 268888.

Online Family Dinner

Sun, March 14, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Parents, join us for an online dinner where we'll discuss what the practice of Eat means for your family.

Help Our Neighbors: International Food Tour

Sun, March 21, 1–3 p.m.

Come enjoy the gift of food and the vibrancy of human cultures as we serve our neighbors through an in-person international food tour in the Upper East Side, supporting these restaurants that have been hurt so much by the pandemic.

Circle the offerings that most interest you.

PEACE: AN INVITATION TO EAT

with Aarti Sequeira, Sun, March 7

How has your perspective on the practice of Eat changed by what you heard?

What does this practice reveal to you about the reality of the Christian life?

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Reflection

Each week we'll reflect on the practice of Eat through a new lens: Enjoyment, Hospitality, Healing and Communion. The following pages are meant to enrich your practice and prompt prayerful reflection. Journal, doodle, write a recipe; this space is yours..

ENJOYMENT

PRAYERS AROUND A MEALTIME

As you Eat this month, consider praying in new ways with these mealtime prayers used by Christians around the world.

Unknown Author unless otherwise stated

God is great, God is good;
and we thank Him for our food.
By His hand we all are fed.
Thank you for our daily bread. Amen.

You, Master almighty, created all things for Your name's sake;
You gave food and drink to men for enjoyment, that they might
give thanks to You; but to us You freely gave spiritual food and
drink and life eternal through Your Servant.
— The Didache, first century

For the infinite variety of your creative expression, I praise
you, O God. You have made even the necessary act of eating a
nurturing comfort and a perpetual delight.
— Douglas Kaine McKelvey, *Every Moment Holy*

Be present at our table, Lord,
May this food restore our strength, giving new energy to tired
limbs, new thoughts to weary minds. May this drink restore
our souls, giving new vision to dry spirits, new warmth to cold
hearts. And once refreshed, may we give new pleasure to you,
who gives us all. Amen.

Be here and everywhere adored.
Your people bless, and grant that
we may feast in paradise with you.
Amen.
— John Wesley

Grace before Meals

Give us grateful hearts, our Father, for all thy mercies, and
make us mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.
— *Book of Common Prayer*

The ordinary, mundane act of eating is an expression of God's
ability to bring meaning and nourishment into all areas of life.
Let's accept this gift with thanksgiving.

Lord Jesus, our brother, be with us today.
Bless our happy gathering,
and bless this meal that we share.
Protect us all, and help us to grow in your love.
Lord Jesus, we praise your holy name for ever.
— Canadian Conference of
Catholic Bishops, *A Book of Blessings*

We give Thee thanks, our Father, for the Resurrection which
Thou hast manifested to us through Jesus, Thy Son; and even
as this bread which is here on this table was formerly scattered
abroad and has been made compact and one, so may Thy Church
be reunited from the ends of the earth for Thy Kingdom, for
Thine is the power and glory for ever and ever. Amen.
— St. Athanasius, fourth century

Bless the food before us
The family beside us
And the love between us
Amen.

For those struggling with or recovering from eating disorders
O God of restoration, we pray for those whose relationships
with food are fraught. Make us sympathetic to the deep-seated
nature of this struggle with such a constant and fundamental
part of life. Touch these thy beloved, and for them make food a
sacrament whereby they take in the fruit of thy world and turn
it back into worship of thee. We ask thee to rebuke, dismantle,
and destroy all powers and principalities of distorted self-image,
unhealthy beauty conventions, and self-harm. Give them treatment,
therapy, support, and endurance for the long road of recovery, that
they may taste and see that the Lord Jesus Christ is good, in the
sweetness of the Holy Spirit and the satisfaction of the Father, one
God, now and forever. Amen.
— Terry Stokes

For food in a world where many walk in hunger;
For faith in a world where many walk in fear;
For friends in a world where many walk alone;
We give you thanks, O Lord.

Week 1: How can eating be a sacred act? How might prayer around a meal increase our enjoyment of food?

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HOSPITALITY

AARTI SEQUEIRA'S NAAN RECIPE

Pillowy Indian flatbread, yields 4 to 6 servings

Set aside some time this week to prayerfully prepare this bread and consider how you might use it to extend hospitality, whether by inviting someone over, dropping it off at a friend's place, or sharing it with one of our unhoused neighbors.

Ingredients

¾ cup lukewarm water (~100° F)	2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp active dry yeast	2 tbsp plain yogurt
1 tsp sugar, plus 1 tsp extra	1 tsp fennel seeds (optional)
2 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for rolling	1 tsp kalonji (nigella seeds, optional)
1 tsp fine sea salt	Melted butter for slathering on the finished naans
½ tsp baking powder	Coarse sea salt for sprinkling

Gluten free: substitute 2¼ cups of a gluten-free all purpose flour mix for the regular flour, and add 1¼ tsp of xanthum gum.

In a glass, dissolve dry yeast and 1 teaspoon sugar with warm water. Set for 10 minutes, until frothy.

Meanwhile, sift flour, salt, 1 teaspoon of sugar and baking powder into a large bowl. Once yeast is frothy, stir oil and yogurt into it. Pour into the dry ingredients, add the seeds if desired. Using a fork, mix the ingredients. When the dough is about to come together, use your hands. Pray as you are kneading the dough, that Jesus would show you he is the bread of life. It will feel like there isn't enough flour at first, but keep going until it transforms into a soft, slightly sticky dough. As soon as it comes together, stop kneading. Cover with plastic wrap or a damp tea towel and let it sit in a warm, non-drafty place for 2 to 4 hours.

Share the sacredness of a meal, recognizing the humanity of all people and the opportunity we have to invite others to experience God's grace alongside us.

When you're ready to roll, place two bowls on your counter: one with extra flour and one with water. The dough will be soft and sticky. Separate into 6 equal portions and lightly roll each one in the bowl of extra flour to keep them from sticking to each other.

To shape naan: using a floured rolling pin on a lightly floured surface, roll each piece of dough into a teardrop shape, 8 to 9 inches long, 4 inches wide at its widest point and ¼ inch thick. As you roll, thank God that he is working in your life and the lives of those you love and those who are different from you. Once you've formed the general shape, you can pick it up by one end and wiggle to stretch it out a little. Repeat with the rest of the dough (with the gluten-free version use your fingertips instead of rolling it).

Warm a large cast iron skillet over high heat until it's nearly smoking. Have a large lid and melted butter ready. Dampen your hands in the bowl of water and pick up one naan, flipping it from one hand to the other to lightly dampen it. Gently lay it in the skillet, and set your timer for 1 minute. The dough should start to bubble. After 1 minute, flip the naan; if it has blackened, that's traditional! Cover the skillet and cook 1 more minute. Remove from the skillet, brush with butter, sprinkle with coarse sea salt and place in a towel lined dish. Repeat with the remaining naans and serve. In this act of hospitality, you go with Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life for everyone you are serving.

Week 2: What have you learned from others through a shared meal or activity? Who can you be inviting to Eat with you?

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HEALING

A PRAYER LOG FOR MEALS

Use this space to take note of and reflect on those you Eat with this month. This isn't meant to be a burden or checklist, but rather a space to more intentionally consider and pray for those we invite into our lives. Consider especially seeking out those who are different than you.

Cross divisions to include others in the nourishment and healing that happens around a meal, following the way Jesus consistently invited others into a restorative dinner.

Date:	Who did you Eat with?	What was enjoyable about the time together?		Where might they need healing?	Write a short prayer for them.

Week 3: What sort of healing occurs when you share a meal with those different than you? Where do you think God is bringing healing to you?

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COMMUNION

COMMUNION AS STORY & PROMISE

Theologian Robert Jenson once described the gospel, or “good news,” as a story and a promise. It is a story of what God has done and is doing with his people. And it is a promise that the world is going somewhere — to a future defined by love, justice and beauty where God and humans live together at last.

The Bible tells us that part of this future will be God eating with us: the perfect host is whipping up a feast so lavish that the finest wedding banquet on earth is but a shadow of its joyousness (Isaiah 25:6). So when Jesus partakes of the bread and the wine with his disciples on the eve of his crucifixion, he promptly reminds them that he will dine with them again in his Father’s kingdom (Matthew 26:29). According to Jesus, the end of all things is actually the beginning of eternity (Revelation 19:9). God promises that’s where the story of the world is headed: a wonderful, everlasting party. Should we think this is just a metaphor for pie-in-the-sky bliss, the resurrection says otherwise. Because Jesus lives, we anticipate that the food and festivities will be even more real than any we can partake in now.

Thus, when Christians gather for worship, it isn’t just a lecture with some singing — it is the rehearsal of this story and promise. This is why eating is a central part of our worship services: “The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread...” Whether we call this Eucharist (meaning “thanksgiving”), Holy Communion or the Lord’s Supper, it is a meal taken together where we vividly recall what happened with Jesus and look forward to what will one day occur: one big family party.

Commune with God and others, recognizing the past, present and future significance of a shared meal.

COMMUNION AS HEALING: A TESTIMONY

God created food as necessary and good (Genesis 1:31), yet for many people the joy of food has unraveled and become lost in shame, control or some unnatural symbol of worth. What about you? When you are invited to the spiritual practice of Eat, what do you feel — delight, dread or something in between?

For me, I experienced food and eating as the enemy. I knew I needed healing from this in body, mind and spirit, and over years tried lots of good tools, as we all should, to help combat my eating issues. But along my journey, the Lord’s Supper was one surprising avenue toward healing. The physical experience of taking the bread and the cup slowly opened my mind. Something that was undeniably good, the bread of his grace, was linked to something that I had considered an evil enemy. For his love embodied in the bread is not small or meant to be controlled — it is an extravagant feast. Since physical communion with God was given through an earthly meal and pointed toward unfettered communion at a wedding supper with Jesus, would I dine with him in joy now, or would I hide and control? Could I practice joy in eating, rehearsing our ultimate meal with him? Over time, God’s love expressed in the bread of communion penetrated my hatred of “bread” and my body. His love overwhelmed the enemies of shame, guilt and fear and gave freedom.

We are invited to the table in the practice of Eat. We are invited to taste God’s abundant healing and grace. We can walk toward healing together, for Revelation 19:9 reminds us, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

Week 4: How have you experienced God's grace through Communion? How could you pass the PEACE through Eat?

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AT MONTH'S END

How did God extend peace to you and through you as you practiced Eat?

How will you continue the practice of Eat?

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One of the most transformingly surprising things about holy communion is that it obliges you to see the other person next to you as wanted by God.
— Rowan Williams

KIDS ON



MARK 2:16-17

When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners? On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

For the practice of Eat, we take a daily practice like eating and think about ways in which we can be loving, friendly and welcoming to those around us, just as Jesus did. In the Bible, we see that Jesus was always coming from and going to different meals. He sat and ate with people who were considered outcasts in society (the poor, women, those who were sick, tax collectors, etc.) and in turn he faced criticism from religious leaders for his behavior. Yet, this did not matter to Jesus. Why? Because he loves and cares for all his people, even those who are considered outcasts. Through Jesus’ example, we see that through sharing a meal with family, friends and those who are different from us, we are showing his love, compassion and care for them. We also show that we are interested in that person’s life. So, who will you invite to eat with you?

Have dinner with your whole family 1 to 2x a week.

Assist in setting the table or washing the dishes.

Help your parents or other family members cook a meal or plan meals for the following week.

Eat a meal without distractions (such as looking at your phone, iPad, tablet, etc.).

Think about who you are eating with at school (if you’re attending school in person).

WONDER TIME

In this passage, we see Jesus eating with others who might feel lonely or left out. Ask God to give you ideas about who in your life might be feeling lonely or left out. Draw or journal about one thing you can do with them to spend time together.



GOODIE BAG DROP-OFF

Is there a neighbor in your building that you know is lonely or in need of a kind word? Prepare a goodie bag (granola bars, candy, etc) along with a note to your neighbor that says, “I’m thinking of you” “You are special” or “Jesus loves you.”

ZOOM DINNER

Schedule a Zoom dinner with a friend or family member outside of your home. You can make it fun by asking questions like:

- “What did you do that was fun today?”
- “What was something that frustrated you today?”
- “What do you have for dinner?”

Even though these questions sound very simple, they demonstrate that you are listening to that person and want to spend time with them, just like Jesus.

FAMILY TIME

Memories are made at the dinner table and also in the kitchen. Below is a fun recipe that you and your family can make together in your practice of Eat.

SUPER SOFT BANANA BREAD COOKIES

Ingredients *makes 24 cookies*

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| ½ cup sugar | 2 ½ cups flour |
| ¼ cup brown sugar | ½ tsp baking powder |
| 1 tsp vanilla extract | ½ tsp baking soda |
| ½ cup butter, softened | 1 pinch salt |
| ½ cup greek yogurt | 2 tsp cinnamon |
| 1 egg | ½ cup chocolate chips |
| 2 ripe bananas | |

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

In a bowl, whisk sugar, brown sugar, vanilla extract, and butter together until creamy.

Add Greek yogurt, egg, and bananas. Mash bananas and mix thoroughly.

Gently fold in the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon just until combined.

Add chocolate chips and stir in gently.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place spoonfuls of dough 2 inches (5 cm) apart.

Bake for 15 minutes and cool on a cooling rack.

Enjoy!

PRACTICES OF PEACE

PAUSE

One day each week we Pause from our labors so that we can delight in Jesus (Matthew 11:28–30).

EAT

When we Eat with others, we reflect the joyful hospitality of Jesus, elevating ordinary actions into an expression of Christ’s restorative kingdom (Mark 2:16–17).

ASK

We Ask questions the way Jesus did, with a curious and compassionate posture, to spark rich, authentic spiritual conversations (Genesis 3:9).

COMMUNE

We Commune with at least two other Christians, committing to a small community that shares the mission of Jesus (Hebrews 10:24–25).

EXAMINE

We invite Jesus to Examine us daily through prayer and the reading of God’s word (John 15:5).

