

**“Come to This Table Hungry”
Isaiah 55:1-3; Revelation 22:17**

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Communion Devotion

When I was growing up, I lived less than ten miles from my mother’s parents. How fortunate I was to spend a lot of time in their home because they were such good people and truly grand grandparents.

When I would enter their house in the evening after playing outside all afternoon, I would walk through the kitchen and announce that I was starving to death and ask how long it would be before dinner would be ready. To this day, I recall my grandmother’s standard reply. “I am so glad you are hungry because I like to feed hungry people. It won’t be long until I call you.” I liked her answer and always felt at home around her table.

Today, we are invited to gather around another warm and welcoming table and I hope you have come hungry. This is the sentiment on a poster that is hanging in the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Morristown, New Jersey. It says, “The only prerequisite to receiving communion in this church is that you come to this table hungry.” I like what this says about the kind of people that worship there.

As I thought about that poster, I could not help but ask the question, “**Hungry for what?**” The words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount come to mind first. “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Used in this context, those words hunger and thirst are not kind words. They are intense and harsh. They are words which describe a man that will starve without something to eat or die without water to drink.

Righteousness infers goodness. It is the pursuit of truth, justice and peace that builds healthy and safe communities. I think all who come to this table on their journey toward building a better life for them and their neighbor will be filled.

You are also welcome to this table if you hunger for faith, hope and love and want to build your life and relationships upon them.

You are welcome to this table if you are on a quest for spirituality and want a close relationship with God.

You are welcome to this table if you are facing an intimidating challenge and need courage and confidence.

You are welcome to this table if you are confused and bewildered and need wisdom and understanding.

You are welcome to this table if you are restless and worried and need peace.

You are welcome to this table if you are aimlessly wandering and need guidance and direction.

You are welcome to this table if you are facing strong temptations and need strength.

You are welcome to this table if you are reeling from mistakes, feeling guilty and need forgiveness.

You are welcome to this table if you are sick and need healing.

You are welcome to this table if you are lonely and need companionship.

You are welcome to this table if you are burdened and need someone to help carry your load.

You are welcome to this table if you are dying and need the assurance of eternal life.

You are welcome to this table if you are ready to learn and grow, help others along their journey and make a difference in the world by doing God’s will, but you must bring with you the appetite of a dying man. If you do, you will be met by One who has walked where you walked and knows what it is like to hunger and thirst after righteousness. He will eagerly share with you who satisfied his hunger and nourished his soul.

Listen to the words of Isaiah to his hungry and thirsty people. “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me and eat what is good and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David” Isaiah 55:1-3.

I hear the dinner bell ringing. I hope you have come hungry.