



Diocese of the
MID-ATLANTIC
Anglican Church in North America

April 16, 2015

Dear Friends,

“When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.” (Luke 24:30-31)

It is significant to me that there are just two places in Scripture where eating is followed by the opening of eyes.

The first is in Genesis 3, where Satan tempts Eve and then Adam to eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In their sin and rebellion against God, they eat the fruit and “then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked” (3:7).

The second is on the road to Emmaus on Easter evening, when the two dejected disciples encounter the risen Jesus, who breaks bread at table with them “and their eyes were opened, and they recognized him” (Luke 24:31).¹

There are a number of parallels in the two events, but what is most significant is the glorious reversal of the human condition through Jesus that is revealed at Emmaus.

In both events, two people are offered food by a supernatural “host” at their meal. In the first, it is Satan tempting Adam and Eve. But in the second, it is Jesus giving bread to his disciples.

In both events, when they eat, their eyes are opened and they know spiritual reality. In the first, they know they are naked, and because of their sin they are afraid, feel shame and hide themselves from God (3:8-10). But in the second, they know that it is Jesus who is with them, their “hearts burn,” they return to fellowship with the other disciples, and they rejoice (24:32-34).

In both events, God comes to them afterwards and they are frightened. In the first, God confronts Adam and Eve and exposes their sin. But in the second, Jesus comes to the disciples in the Upper Room and reassures them.

In both events, God then sends them out. In the first, God sends them away from the Garden and from his presence in consequence of their sin (3:23). But in the second, God sends them out into all the world, “that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (24:47).

The devastating consequences of sin—Adam and Eve’s and ours—are reversed by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Our alienation from God and one another is overcome. Our fear is gone. Our guilt and shame are wiped away.

And so with opened eyes and minds and hearts, we rejoice in our Risen Lord and carry the good news to all who need to know his saving love.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a plus sign followed by the name 'John' in a cursive script.

The Rt. Rev. John A. M. Guernsey

¹My understanding of the connection between Genesis 3 and Luke 24 was enriched by an article by Dane C. Ortlund, “And Their Eyes Were Opened, and They Knew: An Inter-Canonical Note on Luke 24:31” in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, December 2010, pp. 727-728, found [here](#).