

Advent Devotional December 13, 2018

Scripture

Luke 22:1-13

¹Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. ²The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people. ³Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; ⁴he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. ⁵They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. ⁶So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present. ⁷Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." ⁹They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" ¹⁰"Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters ¹¹and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" ¹²He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there." ¹³So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

Devotional

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For Jesus, meals have a sacramental quality. How we eat together matters, regardless of Judas's pending betrayal of Jesus. Jesus instructs the disciples to prepare the Passover meal in a stranger's guest house. The disciples are to rely on the hospitality of others even as they prepare for one of the most important meals of the year.

I believe Jesus' insistence on relying on a stranger's hospitality is what allows him, a few verses later, to feed his betrayer. Part of the disciples' preparation for Passover is to learn from Jesus how to receive and give hospitality. Part of our preparation for Advent is learning how to rely on the hospitality of others. We prepare to be with others as we prepare for the birth of Jesus—our Savior, who chose to be with us. When we talk about preparing our hearts for Christmas, we're talking about preparing ourselves to receive the hospitality of Jesus so that we can share that hospitality with the world.

Prayer

Loving God we thank you for creating us so that we have to depend on you, and each other, for our daily sustenance. We pray that that in giving of our time, our talents, and our resources you would strengthen our faith in you and our bonds to our communities. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.