

Children's Activities

5. Feeding the Body of Christ

1. Food Pictionary (6-12)

Hand out pens and paper and ask everyone in the group to draw their favourite food on a small piece of paper. Then go round the circle one at a time, showing the pictures and guessing the kind of food, asking them, if they could share that food with anyone in the world, who would it be?

What do I need?

- Pens and Paper

2. Bible Background:

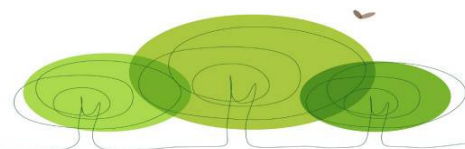
Luke 14:1 & 7-24 (The Message)

One time when Jesus went for a Sabbath meal with one of the top leaders of the Pharisees, all the guests had their eyes on him, watching his every move.

He went on to tell a story to the guests around the table. Noticing how each had tried to elbow into the place of honour, he said, "When someone invites you to dinner, don't take the place of honor. Somebody more important than you might have been invited by the host. Then he'll come and call out in front of everybody, 'You're in the wrong place. The place of honour belongs to this man.' Red-faced, you'll have to make your way to the very last table, the only place left. When you're invited to dinner, go and sit at the last place. Then when the host comes he may very well say, 'Friend, come up to the front.' That will give the dinner guests something to talk about! What I'm saying is, if you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face. But if you're content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself."

Then he turned to the host. "The next time you put on a dinner, don't just invite your friends and family and rich neighbors, the kind of people who will return the favour. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks. You'll be - and experience - a blessing. They won't be able to return the favor, but the favour will be returned - oh, how it will be returned! - at the resurrection of God's people."

That triggered a response from one of the guests: "How fortunate the one who gets to eat dinner in God's kingdom!" Jesus followed up. "Yes. For there was once a man who threw a great dinner party and invited many. When it was time for dinner, he sent out his servant to the invited guests, saying, 'Come on in; the food's on the table.' Then they all began to beg off, one after another making excuses. The first said, 'I bought a piece of property and need to look it over. Send my regrets.' Another said, 'I just bought five teams of oxen, and I really need to check them out. Send my regrets.' And yet another said, 'I just got married and need to get home to my wife.' And yet another said, 'I just got married and need to get home to my wife.' The servant went back and told the master what had happened. He was outraged and told the servant, 'Quickly, get out into the city streets and alleys. Collect all who look like they need a square meal, all the misfits and homeless and wretched you can lay your hands on, and bring them here.' The servant reported back, 'Master, I did what you commanded - and there's still room.' The masters said, 'Then go to the country roads. Whoever you find, drag them in. I want my house full! Let me tell you, not one of those



originally invited is going to get so much as a bite at my dinner party."

Discuss:

- Who does Jesus say we should invite to the banquet?
- If the banquet is God's new creation – when Jesus returns and all is good – what will be different? In particular, what will be different about how and what we eat?
- What are you looking forward to most about the banquet?
- How could we make our Communion service at church a bit more like the heavenly banquet?

3. Picturing the New Creation

Put on some inspiring music – perhaps Haydn's 'Creation'. Get the children to think about what they most hope will be there in God's new creation ... first ideas may well be about family and pets, but then encourage them to think about food-types, and where it will grow, where it will come from and how it will be produced in God's new creation.

Using a large piece of blank paper (lining paper would be perfect), start to create a picture of God's new creation – with a large meal table in the middle on which the children draw (or stick) pictures of good food. Around this should be the places where the food is produced – fields, gardens, forests, oceans, with people and wildlife.

4. 'Thinking the Impossible' (10-16)

Identify one key issue on which you want to focus; for example, our food system is damaging the earth, how can we make it sustainable so that we can look after all God has created? Then give out cards with imaginary presents on them (e.g. the ability to look like anyone you want, £1 million, a minute of primetime TV, a key that unlocks any door, and invisibility cloak, a guarantee you'll never get caught) and ask people to describe how they would use their present to solve the problem.

What do I need?

- Imaginary present cards

5. Prayer: Salt dough sculptures

Create some salt dough and ask the children to shape it into 'heavenly food'! Once complete children can take their food sculptures and use them to pray that 'God's kingdom will come and God's will be done on earth as in heaven'.

What do I need?

- Flour, fine salt, water and dough tools. Cook if possible at 180C for about 20 minutes.

