

## Week 5: Making Room at the Table

1. What stood out to you from the message this past Sunday? Was there anything that seemed timely or relevant to you? Was there anything that made you uncomfortable, or with which you disagreed?
2. Have you ever felt excluded by other people's actions and/or views about you? Describe the experience and its impact on you. Can you describe a time when you felt a deep sense of belonging in a community or with someone? What impact has this had on you?
3. Read the passage in Luke 14:1-14 and discuss the following:
  - Jesus was being "carefully watched" by the Pharisees (verse 1): What are they watching for? Have you ever felt "watched" by people or authorities?
  - Jesus is also watching (verse 7): What is Jesus looking for and what does he notice? How could we pay more attention in this way?
  - Jesus references "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind" (verse 13) not as people who are lower than others in his view, but as people who the authorities often deemed to be a lower class, responsible for their own plight, and blamed as problems for society in general. What might be modern-day examples of the people with whom Jesus expresses solidarity? What challenge does that pose us for inclusion and equity, both personally and structurally?
4. In Ephesians 6:12 and Romans 7:14-20, Paul writes about the impact of powers on our lives in ways that might not always be apparent to us or even readily within our control. How do you relate to this on a personal level (Romans 7:14-20)? How might this influence how we consider the impact more cosmic or structural powers (Ephesians 6:12) have in society, and that we might not always see clearly?
5. Read Colossians 1:15-20. What does this passage say about how Jesus takes on the structural powers? How does this relate to what Jesus does personally in John 13:1-5? How might this challenge us to use whatever power we have?
6. What struck you most about what Sarah and Hubert shared about diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the message on Sunday? Take a moment to review this week's Lenten Justice flyer ([www.crc.org/Lenten-justice-DEIB](http://www.crc.org/Lenten-justice-DEIB)). Discuss how you feel compelled to respond and then spend some time praying for one another in these endeavors.

### Practice for the week: Breaking down barriers of exclusion and inequity

Make a point this week to take action on the issues you personally identified with in the Lenten Justice flyer ([www.crc.org/Lenten-justice-DEIB](http://www.crc.org/Lenten-justice-DEIB)). Take a moment each day to prayerfully take the posture of Jesus as one who breaks down barriers of exclusion and inequity. Invite God to open your eyes to what is both visible and invisible so you can participate in justice and healing.