

**Panther Valley Ecumenical Church**  
**November 9, 2016 Food & Faith: gathering at the table to talk**  
**about what brings us together.**  
**"A Place at the Table"**

**Food for thought:**

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.  
The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

~ Isaiah 58:9-11 New Revised Standard Version

**Butter** By Elizabeth Alexander<sup>1</sup>

My mother loves butter more than I do,  
more than anyone. She pulls chunks off  
the stick and eats it plain, explaining  
cream spun around into butter! Growing up  
we ate turkey cutlets sauteed in lemon  
and butter, butter and cheese on green noodles,  
butter melting in small pools in the hearts  
of Yorkshire puddings, butter better  
than gravy staining white rice yellow,  
butter glazing corn in slipping squares,  
butter the lava in white volcanoes  
of hominy grits, butter softening  
in a white bowl to be creamed with white  
sugar, butter disappearing into  
whipped sweet potatoes, with pineapple,  
butter melted and curdy to pour  
over pancakes, butter licked off the plate  
with warm Alaga syrup. When I picture  
the good old days I am grinning greasy  
with my brother, having watched the tiger  
chase his tail and turn to butter. We are  
Mumbo and Jumbo's children despite  
historical revision, despite  
our parent's efforts, glowing from the inside  
out, one hundred megawatts of butter.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Butter" by Elizabeth Alexander. From Body of Life, published by Tia Chucha Press. Copyright 1996 Elizabeth Alexander. Used by permission of the author.

Source: Body of Life (Tia Chucha, 1996)

**Questions to chew on:**

Q – Table fellowship makes possible genuine encounters with others. How does your table reflect