

Virtual Communion liturgy



Invitation to the table

As we prepare to celebrate the Lord's Supper,
I invite you to look at the elements before you — the bread . . . the juice.
There is probably nothing all that special about them.

(If you have provided communion elements to your congregation describe them at this time. Otherwise use below words.)

Maybe you have this morning's left-over French toast,
a piece of Wonder bread,
a bagel from the grocery store.

Maybe you had to scrounge at the back of the refrigerator
for juice with a questionable expiration date,
or you're hoping no one notices you're celebrating
with cranberry.

But there is beauty in the ordinary,
because in the work of the Spirit, the ordinary becomes holy.

As we break bread from miles apart,
Christ invites our ordinary selves, with our ordinary bread.
As we break bread from miles apart,
we bear witness to something we imagine from our sanctuary
(or insert other space where you worship)
but we cannot see — the expansive, far-reaching table of God.

Siblings in Christ, your table may look like your kitchen table,
your coffee table,
your very own lap,
but it is an extension of the Lord's great banquet,
and from east and west and north and south,
you are invited to bear witness to an extraordinary meal
in ordinary packaging —
a feast of grace, love, and hope
at the table in the kingdom of God.

Let us share in the feast that Christ has provided.

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

(Note that for call and response, you may need to remind your congregation that even though we may be muted to one another, we are not muted to God, so "trust as you join your voice in the words in bold, God hears it as a chorus of the faithful sharing in the dinner prayer." A single liturgist may lead the entire call and response or another participant may join in.)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

While we long to return to normal,
to just be together, tasting the same bread,
 sharing the same cup,
we cannot deny that there is still and is always
reason to bring our thanks and praise to you, abiding God.
Just look at us, right here in this moment.
Even apart, we are together — your people, a community of
 mutual support and love.
Even separated from our church home, we are never separated from you.
As you guided the Israelites through their wilderness and wandering,
never forgetting or failing them, despite their fear and
 impatience at the long journey to "normal,"
we trust that you are with us, too, laying a pathway to a new day.
Thank you for today's visible reminder that
 no building can contain the promises
 of your reliable presence with us and for us.

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As our world yearns for stability and longs for the easing of ache,
we wait in the quiet confidence of a people who know your Son.
Jesus Christ, our Savior, modeled compassion for all.
He paid attention to suffering —
the anguish of health declined, and hearts broken, and hope waning.
And he extended healing.
He formed a community of disciples, a rag-tag bunch like you and me,
whom he gathered in — to teach and to love; whom he sent out —
to teach and to love.
So whether we are gathered or whether we are scattered,
we are entrusted to the eternal promises,
of the one who lived, and died, and lived again,
to set us free from suffering and sin.
And so, we give thanks that, in Christ, new beginnings are possible.

Remembering your constant faithfulness across the tumult of all days,
we give thanks for the signs of you, O God, with us —
in these ordinary gifts of bread and juice.
Pour out your Spirit upon us, wherever we may be,
And stir amidst these gifts of bread and cup
that they may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, unite us at your table, across the miles —
with one another, with your children in every time and place,
with the living Christ.

May the taste of grace on our tongues jog our
memories of your faithfulness
and energize us to live out your love for us,
through whatever tomorrow brings,
until we break bread at your table in glory.

And hear us as we pray in the quiet of our homes,
or our hearts, wherever we may be,
the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray saying,

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of institution

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread,
and after giving thanks to God, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat.

This is my body, given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, saying:

This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.

Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup
you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord,
until he comes.

Communion of the people

You are now invited to take a bite of your bread and a sip from your cup
and to taste the mystery of God's grace.

Prayer after communion

Let us pray.

Holy God, even when all of this is over,
may we not forget how you held us together while we were apart,
how you built a table across the miles,
how you call us to continue the work of table-building.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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