

A MEALTIME LITURGY

Words in **bold italic** are said or sung together.

THE WELCOME

Luke 14:16-17

Jesus said: "A landowner was giving a big dinner and sent out many invitations. At dinner time, he sent his servant with a message for the guests: 'Please come; everything is now ready.'"

(sung to Old Hundred)

***Be present at our table, Lord.
Be here and ev'rywhere adored.
These mercies bless and grant that we
may feast in paradise with thee.***

God welcomes us, and so we greet one another.

***[Name], we welcome you to this table
in the name of Christ.***

Response: Amen. It's good to be here.

We remember those present in our hearts
though not in this circle.

(names may be mentioned aloud)

***Whatever table welcomes them today,
may they know the blessing of Christ
who broke bread with all comers.***

CONFESSION

Let us confess the excuses we have made
for not living in the reality
of the kingdom of God.

(silence)

For neglecting your offer of love
***and ignoring the cries of the poor,
Lord, have mercy.***

(sung response: Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon us.)

For speaking harsh words to our friends
***and failing to love our enemies,
Lord, have mercy.***

(sung response)

For evading our responsibilities to care for the earth
**and our call to combat injustice,
Lord, have mercy.**

(sung response)

For confusing our priorities
**and seeking success instead of faithfulness
or prayer without action,
Lord, have mercy.**

(sung response)

THE GIFT OF BREAD

Luke 24:30-35

And when he had sat down with them at table, he took bread and said the blessing; he broke the bread, and offered it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him. Without a moment's delay, they set out and returned to Jerusalem. There they found that the Eleven and the rest of the company had assembled, and they were saying, "It's true: the Lord has risen."

Then they gave their account of the events of their journey and told how he had been recognized by them at the breaking of the bread.

Bread is passed around. When all are served:

Be grateful when you touch bread.
***Let it not lie uncared for, unwanted.
There is so much beauty in bread—
beauty of sun and soil,
beauty of patient toil.
Winds and rain have caressed it.
Christ often blessed it.
Be grateful when you touch bread.***

We eat bread together.

THE GIFT OF WATER

Luke 3:21-22

During a general baptism of the people, when Jesus too had been baptized and was praying, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove.

A voice from heaven said, "You are my Own, my Beloved. On you my favor rests."

Water is poured.

Be grateful when you drink water.
Let it not go unnoticed or squandered.
There is so much life in water—
springing, gushing, flowing,
living, cleansing, healing.
God gave it.
The Spirit hovered over it.
Christ transformed it.
Be grateful when you drink water.

We drink water together.

THE PROMISE OF TRANSFORMATION

Luke 13:18-21

“What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with? It is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his garden; and it grew to be a tree and the birds came to roost in its branches.”

Again he said, “The kingdom of God, what shall I compare it with? It is like yeast which a woman took and mixed into sixty pounds of flour until it was all leavened.”

The meal is served.

Thank you, Lord, for this meal.
But we cannot live by bread alone.
We have shared it together
because we need each other.

[Name], we need you.
Reply: And I need you.

INTERCESSION

Generous God, as we bring our prayers,
we thank you that we can share in your kingdom
of justice and peace.

We come in our poverty, not in our wealth,
in our fear, not with great faith,
in our weakness, not in our strength.

We trust that you want your house to be full,
so we are bold to bring to you
those who, like us,
need your love and transformation.

(Candles may be lit as we name people or situations aloud or silently)

Through Jesus, who taught us to do so,
we pray for the coming of your reign:

Our Father. . .

Dessert is served.

PRAYER FOR A NEW EARTH

God of all places and this place:
you promised a new earth
where the hungry will feast and the oppressed go free.
Come, Lord, build that place among us.

God of all times and this time:
you promised a new day
when the fearful will laugh and the sick find healing.
Come, Lord, speed that time among us.

God of all people, our God:
take what we have and what we hope for
to make this a world where all people find good news.
***We come, Lord,
to share in the work of your kingdom,
until the new earth is created among us. Amen.***

Luke 24:50-52

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and blessed them with uplifted hands. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and spent all their time in the temple praising God.

(sung to Tallis' Canon)

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
in heav'n above and earth below;
one God three persons we adore.
To God be praise forever more.***

adapted 2015 by Rachel Miller Jacobs from the Oxford Group, 2000

“Be present at our table, Lord” *HWB* 457, verse 1

“Jesus Christ, Son of God” *There is one among us* (GIA Publications,
1999, p. 30)

“Praise God from whom” text, *HWB* 119, version B; tune, *HWB* 658