



This service is designed for use by a small gatherings of God's people outside of the assembly of the full community. It draws from the Eucharistic tradition, but it is not a sacramental meal. All Christians are called to bless, and this includes blessings of food and drink shared and the people gathered.

The people assemble with greetings and conversation. Candles are lit by individuals as they arrive, accompanied by a moment of silent prayer. One person acts as the leader to keep the flow of the worship moving. Prayers and readings are divided among the rest of the group.

The leader opens with Call to Worship

Call to Worship

One Give judgment for me, O Lord,
for I have lived with integrity; *
I have trusted in the Lord and have not
faltered (Psalm 26:1 BCP)

Opening Prayer

An appropriate prayer is offered to set the tone for worship. Collects from The Book of Common Prayer, especially the collect appointed for the day, are always appropriate.

Music Offering

Please feel free to hum along! Singing in a mask is discouraged by health officials due to concerns for higher CO2 rebreathing when singing.

The First Reading: Philippians 4:1-9

One My brothers and sisters,
whom I love and long for, my joy
and crown, stand firm in the Lord
in this way, my beloved.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche
to be of the same mind in the Lord.
Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal
companion, help these women, for
they have struggled beside me in the
work of the gospel, together with

Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

The Second Reading:

Matthew 22:1-14

One Once more Jesus spoke to the people in parables, saying: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding

robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

Teaching

*In small groups of approximately three, remaining at appropriate physical distance, choose **three** questions to discuss for approximately twenty minutes.*

In the First Reading, verses 4-9 are instructions on how to experience God and God's peace in the community. Here, Paul urges the community, not individuals, to rejoice always, to be unworried, and to pray constantly so that God's peace may rest on them. The tension between the individual and the communal experience of the church was as real for the early Christian communities as it is today in our culture of individualism.

How might the modern believer characterize the "peace of God" described in verse 7?

In times of hardship or in the midst of struggle, how do you practice spiritual self-care or encourage those around you?

Paul suggests to his readers that they should be of the same mind in Christ. What does it mean for you, personally, to be of the same mind in Christ, and how do you cultivate this practice in your own life?

It is rare in traditional cultures for people to share table-fellowship across status lines. (Even Paul ran into this issue, see 1 Cor 11:17-34). How do you understand the reign of God? What metaphor would you use for it?

"Many are called, but few are chosen." What does this saying mean to you?

Are there times when you have made light of God's invitations?

Prayer of Blessing

Before leaving your small groups, standing and remaining at appropriate physical distance, spend approximately five minutes praying for one another in turn. Begin by asking what each person would like prayers for and then have the other members of the group lift them to God.

Prayers of the People

The whole group gathers for prayer. Prayers may be formal and prepared ahead of time, or come forth from the group at the time of worship.

Prayers are always offered for:

- *The Universal Church, its members, and its mission*
- *The Nation and all in authority*
- *The welfare of the world*
- *The concerns of the local community*
- *Those who suffer and those in any trouble*
- *Those who have died*

This prayer from Praying the Scriptures, by Jeremiah D. Williamson, can be used if desired.

One Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let us humbly approach our God, saying, "Remember us with favor, O Lord; *visit us with your saving help.*"

God our Savior, strengthen your Church to stand firm in your love. May we struggle not *with* one another, but instead struggle *beside* one another in the work of the gospel. *Silence.*

Remember us with favor, O Lord;

All **Visit us with your saving help.**

One God our Savior, you make happy those who act with justice. May the

leaders and people of the nations dedicate themselves to pure and honorable dealings. Let your justice reign on this earth. *Silence.*

Remember us with favor, O Lord;

All **Visit us with your saving help.**

One God our Savior, you are good to us. You have blessed us with a rich creation and a beautiful planet for our home. May we cherish the gifts you have given us. *Silence.*

Remember us with favor, O Lord;

All **Visit us with your saving help.**

One God our Savior, deliver our community from worry. Make us a people of prayer, a congregation who intercedes for our neighbors. *Silence.*

Remember us with favor, O Lord;

All **Visit us with your saving help.**

One God our Savior, you are always near. Assure the lonely; heal the sick; do mighty acts in the lives of the downcast. With thankful hearts, trusting in your mercy, we make our requests known to you. *The people are invited to add their petitions and thanksgivings, followed by silence.*

Remember us with favor, O Lord;

All **Visit us with your saving help.**

One God our Savior, your mercy endures forever. May those who have

died glory in your inheritance and feast at your heavenly banquet for all eternity. *Silence.*

Remember us with favor, O Lord;

All Visit us with your saving help.

Confession

One Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

All Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. **Amen.**

One Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

All Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Blessing of the Meal

This portion of the service follows the shape of the Last Supper, and therefore may sound familiar and much like the Eucharist. However the elements are not consecrated, they are blessed, something all Christians are called to do. In times of pandemic, each person brings their own bread and wine. It is the time of prayer together that is shared, not the food. Begin by having the person who will lead the prayer over the bread to invite each person to make ready the food they brought. When all are ready, the prayers are offered.

One On the last night that Jesus gathered with his friends he took bread and he blessed it and shared it with his friends, for God who loves us, feeds us. As God's people ate manna in the

wilderness and were satisfied, so we share this bread with Christ, and with one another. May it be for us bread from heaven, strength for our bodies, balm for our souls, and may it empower us to be Christ's body in this world. *Silence.*

One On the last night that Jesus gathered with his friends, he took wine and he blessed it and shared it with them. God who made us delights in us, and gives us good gifts to delight our tongues, and give joy to our souls. As Jesus offered the Samaritan woman water that would not fail, so Jesus offers us the same. May this wine be for us the holy drink of heaven, and may quench the thirst of our souls.

All **Holy and life-giving God, we thank you for the bounty of your Creation laid before us. We ask you to bless it, that it may be to us a holy meal. We give thanks for all those who labored so that it might sustain us. Through it may you give us the strength to be your good stewards; to care and tend your creation, and to care especially for our siblings – all the people of this world. We ask these things by the grace of Jesus Christ and in power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The gathered join in eating. As this requires removing mask, care must be taken to ensure proper physical distancing continues. Music may be appropriate

Sending Blessing

One person offers a blessing on the group gathered as they are sent into the world to do the work God has given each to do.

All **Amen.**

Music Offering

Please feel free to hum along!

One Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

All **Amen.**

This service includes the work of The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA and Renew Community House Church.