



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:

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

One Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians
in God the Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord

Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

The Second Reading:

Matthew 22:15-22

One The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap Jesus in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

Teaching

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

What will people notice about your faith when they meet you? How will they see the gospel in your life?

How can we be happy for others?

How can we strengthen our bond with fellow believers? How can we encourage and comfort our brothers and sisters?

If there had been a modern press pool following Jesus and the Pharisees' exchange, an enterprising journalist might have asked the follow-up question: "What *are* the things entitled to the emperor? And what are the things entitled to God?" How would you answer?

How does one effectively discern when one should cooperate with governmental authority and when one should resist?

How do you use the scriptures to inform our actions?

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 Brothers and sisters, beloved by God: Grace to you and peace. Let us pray to the Holy One, saying, "Be gracious to us, O God; *show us your mercy.*"

We always give thanks to you, O God, for the Church, constantly remembering before you its work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Inspire us by the Holy Spirit. *Silence.*

Be gracious to us, O God;

All **Show us your mercy.**

One Almighty God, make us more like your Son, Jesus, who did not regard people with partiality. May we love justice. May we be gracious with all people. *Silence.*

Be gracious to us, O God;

All **Show us your mercy.**

One God our King, the earth shakes in your presence. All that is belongs not to us, but to you. May we be good stewards of all you have created. *Silence.*

Be gracious to us, O God;

All **Show us your mercy.**

One Holy One, you answer those who call upon you. Hear the voices of the weak and wronged. May this city know and experience your presence. *Silence.*

Be gracious to us, O God;

All **Show us your mercy.**

One Great Lord, give your people rest. Cover the sick and sorrowful

with your healing hand. May the lonely and forgotten find favor in your sight.

The people are invited to add their petitions and thanksgivings, followed by silence.

Be gracious to us, O God;

All **Show us your mercy.**

One Living God, you have rescued the dying and dead from the coming wrath through the death and resurrection of your Christ. May our voices blend with theirs as they proclaim your greatness and worship around your throne forever.

Silence.

Be gracious to us, O God;

All **Show us your mercy.**

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.