



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 2:1-8

One You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just

as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

The Second Reading:

Matthew 22:34-46

One When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as

yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." He said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

"The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies
under your feet"?"

If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?" No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Teaching

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

- Sometimes when we are doing the work of God, the reception we get from others is not what we hope or

expect it to be. In those times, how do you react? What fuels you and keeps you going in those moments?

- With whom do you want to share the gospel? Who is near to your heart?
- Paul calls his listeners to participate in our present Christian community with bold speech, personal integrity, and soul-sharing. What other characteristics of a community builder would you add?
- How are the characteristics Paul describes to the Thessalonians relevant to today's church?
- How did you serve God this week? How did you love another?
- Jesus affirms these two commands are foundational. As long as we observe both we are on God's path, but if we ignore either we will find ourselves in a spiritual ditch.
- What spiritual ditches do you find yourself in. How might the love of God and neighbor help to dig you out?

- In what ways is love of God like love of neighbor? Do we do the second as a form of obedience to the first? Or do we do the second because it is indistinguishable from the first?

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 Friends, the Lord has been our refuge from one generation to another. Let us pray to our God, saying, "Show your servants your works, O Lord, *and be gracious to us.*"

We pray for the leaders of the Church. Give bishops, priests, deacons, and lay leaders gentle loving hearts. Empower us to share the gospel and ourselves with those in need. *Silence.*

Show your servants your works, O Lord,
All **And be gracious to us.**

One We pray for all humankind. Prosper the work of our hands. May all those who work earn a fair wage. May those without work find strength and encouragement in your love. Give us hearts to respect the dignity of every human being. *Silence.*

Show your servants your works, O Lord,
All **And be gracious to us.**

One We pray for all creation. You brought forth the mountains. You gave birth to the land and the earth. Give us the desire and will to care for all you have made. *Silence.*

Show your servants your works, O Lord,
All **And be gracious to us.**

One We pray for the areas in which we live. O God, we want to obey what you command. Help us to love our neighbors as ourselves. *Silence.*

Show your servants your works, O Lord,
All **And be gracious to us.**

One We pray for the afflicted and the suffering. And we pray for those who weep and mourn. Nurse them back to health as a mother tenderly nurses her children. *The people are invited to add their petitions and thanksgivings, followed by silence.*

Show your servants your works, O Lord,
All **And be gracious to us.**

One We pray for those who have died. Though we are swept away like a dream in this mortal life, you promise to raise us to life immortal through your Son. May your graciousness, O Lord, be upon us. *Silence.*

Show your servants your works, O Lord,
All **And be gracious to us.**

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.