



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 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased." – Mark 1:11

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:

Acts 19:1-7

One While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." Paul

said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied – altogether there were about twelve of them.

The Second Reading:

Mark 1:4-11

One John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in

the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Teaching

*In small groups of approximately three, remaining at appropriate physical distance, choose **three** questions to discuss for approximately twenty minutes. Who do you know who seems especially saintly in the way we talk about here? How do you seek to emulate them in your own life?*

– Do you remember your baptism and the vows you took? If you were baptized as a baby, do you remember your confirmation, where you affirmed those vows?

– How is your life shaped by your baptism?

– As this year begins, where might God be calling you to go deeper into your relationship with God?

– Sometimes Christians are accused of living as though they "have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit," or that there is little evidence of the Spirit's

renewing, creative and sanctifying presence in their lives, even though they were baptized into the name of the Trinity. How might we draw nearer as a Church and as individuals to the fullness of life in the Spirit given to us in our baptism?

– Have you heard God's voice telling you how loved you are? How does knowing God deeply loves you help you live your life on a daily basis?

– When have you experienced an epiphany, a sudden insight into something deeply real, deeply true? Where did that insight lead you?

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 Sisters and brothers, ascribe to the Lord the glory due God's name. Let us approach our great God with humble hearts saying: "Lord, give strength to your people; *bless us with peace.*"

Lover of souls, you seal us by your Holy Spirit in baptism and claim us as your own forever: may our offering of worship be acceptable in your sight.

Silence.

Lord, give strength to your people;

All **Bless us with peace.**

One Lover of souls, you sit enthroned as king for evermore: may the leaders of the nations do justice and govern with mercy. *Silence.*

Lord, give strength to your people;

All **Bless us with peace.**

One Lover of souls, you created the heavens and the earth: we praise you that you make holy such basic things of

earth – water for baptism, grapes and grain to sustain our souls. *The people are invited to add their thanksgivings, followed by silence.*

Lord, give strength to your people;

All **Bless us with peace.**

One Lover of souls, you forgive the sins of the penitent and care for the injured: be with all victims of gun violence; heal and convert the hearts of the violent. May our city know peace.

Silence.

Lord, give strength to your people;

All **Bless us with peace.**

One Lover of souls, your voice is a voice of splendor: speak healing and comfort to all the heartbroken and needy. *The people are invited to add their petitions, followed by silence.*

Lord, give strength to your people;

All **Bless us with peace.**

One Lover of souls, you called the light into being: let light perpetual shine on those who have died. May we all rest in the hope of life eternal. *Silence.*

Lord, give strength to your people;

All **Bless us with peace.**

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.

Music Offering During the Meal

Please feel free to hum along!

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.**

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.