



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 Answer me when I call, O God, defender of my cause; you set me free when I am hard-pressed; have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

– Psalm 4:1

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 3:12-19

One Peter addressed the people, “You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate,

though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

“And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.”

The Second Reading:

Luke 24:36b-48

One Jesus himself stood among the disciples and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” And when he had said this, he showed

them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you – that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

Teaching

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

In the reading from Acts, Peter and John are entering the Temple to pray (two Jewish men going to pray in a sacred Jewish place) when they see a man at the gate unable to walk. After healing the

man “in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth” the man jumps up and walks, praising God. Today’s passage picks up with Peter’s response to the shocked worshipers. He uses it as an opportunity to preach the good news of Christ, but in doing so, seems to blame the Israelites to whom he is speaking: “You rejected the Holy and Righteous One,” “You killed the Author of life.”

In reading this, we must remember that Peter himself is a Jew, testifying to other Jews about “the God of [their] ancestors,” the Jewish God. He is speaking to some of the most pious, religious people of his day in one of the holiest places in the world, and yet the people still seem surprised when God shows up and does something miraculous, just as they were tuned out to the work God was doing in and through Jesus. This passage has contributed to Christianity’s unfortunate anti-Jewish and antisemitic history of violence, yet, our Jewish siblings are no more guilty of this kind of thinking than we Christians who may faithfully attend church, recite prayers from memory and yet remain unaware of how God is moving.

- When have you been surprised to see God working?
- What are some other passages from Scripture which have been used in anti-Jewish ways?
- Think about your own prayer practices. Have they ever become obstacles to, rather than facilitators of, seeing God’s movement in your life?

Today’s gospel passage, includes Eucharistic elements. Jesus stands among the disciples saying to them, “Peace be with you”. He then eats a meal. And finally, he opens the disciples’ minds to understand the scriptures so that they may be proclaimed to all nations and ends with a charge: “You are witnesses of these things.” Each time we participate in the Eucharist, we, like the disciples, are coming to know the risen Christ. To be a witness means to share with others your experience – and that is the charge when we leave the Eucharist: “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.”

- How does this passage mirror the story of the Last Supper in Luke 22?

- What other passages of Scriptures can you think of that contain Eucharistic imagery?
- Is there a moment you remember when everything about the Christian faith came together and made sense, almost as if Jesus were instructing you, like in this passage? Or was your journey in faith more gradual?

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*

One See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. So let us appeal to the Lord, saying, “Answer us when we call, O God; *have mercy on us and hear our prayer.*”

Speak peace to your Church, Lord Christ. Open our minds to your truth. Open our hearts to your presence. Send us forth into the world as witnesses to your resurrection. *Silence*

Answer us when we call, O Lord;
All **Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.**

One Speak peace to our world, Lord Christ. Many are saying, “Oh, that we might see better times!” Lift up the light of your countenance; give the people of the world hope. *The people are invited to add their thanksgivings, followed by silence.*

Answer us when we call, O Lord;
All **Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.**

One Speak peace to the earth, Lord Christ. You entered into the created order and blessed it. Give us eyes to see signs of redemption. Give us courage to responsibly care for all that you have made. *Silence.*

Answer us when we call, O Lord;

All **Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.**

One Speak peace to those who work for the end of hunger and poverty, Lord Christ. You know the pangs of hunger; you know also the depth of our community's need. Comfort and encourage those who become discouraged in their work. Set free all those who are hard-pressed; fulfill all those in need. *Silence.*

Answer us when we call, O Lord;

All **Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.**

One Speak peace to the sick and sorrowful, Lord Christ. When we call upon you, you hear us. You do wonders for the faithful. In your name we pray that our loved ones would have their health restored. *The people are invited to add their petitions, followed by silence.*

Answer us when we call, O Lord;

All **Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.**

One Speak peace to those who are dying and those who are grieving, Lord Christ. Having been baptized into your death, O Christ, we await the day when we will be like you, experiencing the fullness of your resurrection. *Silence.*

Answer us when we call, O Lord;

All **Have mercy on us and hear our prayer.**

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.