

# Nourished in the Faith

## A Communion Liturgy

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### Invitation to the Lord's Table

Love ones, this is the abundant celebration and everlasting feast for the people of God!

According to Luke, Jesus said,  
“People will come from north and south  
and from east and west  
to sit at the table of the Lord.”<sup>1</sup>

We also remember that Jesus chose to eat with sinners and tax collectors. For Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a physician, but the ill and sick.” As such, we remember that Jesus did not come to call the righteous but sinners.<sup>2</sup>

My friends, this meal is not a right we have earned, but a blessing to all of us who are undeserving.<sup>3</sup> Otherwise, God's grace would not be grace.

All who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are welcome to the table. And certainly, if you feel the Spirit of God calling you to the waters of baptism, the overflowing waters of God's grace are always open.<sup>4</sup>

Let us come to this table to be nourished and feed by Christ.  
Let us come to this table to be assured and bless in Christ.  
Let us come to this table to be united to Christ in the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 13:29

<sup>2</sup> Mark 2:15-22

<sup>3</sup> W-3.0409

<sup>4</sup> G-1.0401, W-3.0409

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## The Great Thanksgiving

*Helpful written and spontaneous prayers have different tones,  
and do not always crossover well.  
I would never read this prayer.  
But have used some version of it for years  
as I work with the themes I have found through study,  
and consider the context of the day.  
Nonetheless, may these prayers be helpful to you  
as you plan to lead.*

*In this sense, it is probably best to use this prayer as a model,  
and not read it.*

*Nothing is new or inventive.  
Everything is based on the scriptures,  
and the historical interpretations of the church.  
For each footnote, there could be multiple references.  
When you create your own prayers,  
I encourage you to lean heavily on the saints who have come before us.*

*If you write your own prayers,  
It may be helpful for you to think in themes that are described at:  
<https://mvpresby.org/communion-training/>*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Let us pray:

Almighty God, we give you thanks for Christ and this table.

We thank you that you meet us here in the weakness and fragility of our faith.<sup>5</sup>

We thank you that you use this gathering to nurture and nourish us.<sup>6</sup>

We give you praise that Christ is both the host and the sustenance.<sup>7</sup>

In ages past you have shown yourself to be faithful.<sup>8</sup>

You have demonstrated that you are righteous and mighty to save.<sup>9</sup>

As you delivered Noah, his family, and the animals, deliver us today.

As you saved the Hebrew children, save us today.

As you protected King David, let us find healing in your wings.

As you granted Solomon your wisdom, grant to us your spirit.

Most of all, we thank you for Christ Jesus,

in whom, you have saved, delivered, and redeemed us;

and in whom you will create a new heaven and a new earth, a new Jerusalem.<sup>10</sup>

We thank you, that in the birth of Christ that you have proclaimed that you are *with* us.<sup>11</sup>

We praise you, that in the the life of Christ that you have proclaimed that you are *for* us.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book IV, Chapter 14, Paragraph 1

<sup>6</sup> Scots Confession, 3.21

<sup>7</sup> The Heidelberg Catechism, 4.075; The Confession of 1967, 9.52.

<sup>8</sup> Psalm 119:90

<sup>9</sup> The Epistle to the Church in Rome; Zephaniah 3:17; Isaiah 12:2; and Isaiah 63:1

<sup>10</sup> Revelation 21

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 1:23

<sup>12</sup> Romans 8:31

We celebrate, that in the death and resurrection of Christ that you have proclaimed that you have defeated both sin and death.<sup>13</sup>

We, all the more give you thanks as we recall the ascension and promised coming of Christ that you will gather us to yourself as there will be no more death or dying, sickness or pain. Where and when you will wipe away every tear from every eye.<sup>14</sup>

While we look for that great and glorious day, we ask that in this meal you will grant us a foretaste of your eternal reign of shalom and that you will nourish us as we seek to be in communion with you and one another.<sup>15</sup>

Today we thank you that you use common elements of bread and the fruit of the vine to unite us to yourself.<sup>16</sup> That in the abundance of bread and wine around us, that we might always be reminded of your free gift of salvation and that you are always read to feed us and give us what we need.

We thank you that you save us in the day.<sup>17</sup>  
And we praise you that you save us in all eternity.<sup>18</sup>

We ask that in these moments that your Spirit would be present in such away that we would experience what it means to be united to Christ<sup>19</sup>; that we would know that Jesus is the vine, and we are the branches.<sup>20</sup> That we would be bound to Christ. That we would touch, and taste, and know all the benefits of Christ.<sup>21</sup> That as you are in Jesus, and Christ is in you, that we would be intimately bound to you, your gracious love, your Spirit, and your son.<sup>22</sup>

We praise you that this is a table of assurance, and then a table of repentance.<sup>23</sup>  
We thank you that this is a table of nourishment, and then a table of our devotion.

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<sup>13</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:56-57

<sup>14</sup> Revelation 21:1-4

<sup>15</sup> Confession of 1967, 9.52

<sup>16</sup> Second Helvetic Confession, 5.178

<sup>17</sup> Psalm 37:39-40

<sup>18</sup> John 10:28

<sup>19</sup> The Heidelberg Catechism, 4.075

<sup>20</sup> John 15:5

<sup>21</sup> The Second Helvetic Confession, 5.195

<sup>22</sup> John 14:20

<sup>23</sup> Throughout the NT, Calvin's writings, the Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order we affirm that faith is a response to God's grace, not a precursor for it. God always acts first.

We glorify you that this is a table of wholeness, and then one of serving you with love.

We thank you that as we come as individuals, seeking your face, that we also see the faces of one another.<sup>24</sup> As we gather, we know that we do not come alone, but that we come as your people.

As we look across this table, we are reminded that you forgive us for the sins that we have committed against you, one another, and the world. As you have reconciled us to you, we ask that you would do the same among us.<sup>25</sup> Let us live in unity and care for one another as we share your good news in the world together. Help us to be your living, breathing body in the world, and may the world know that we are yours because of our love.<sup>26</sup>

In these moments of silence, help us offer to you our deepest needs, and our repentance, even as we offer the world to you, giving thanks for what is pure and whole, and asking you to heal what is sinful and broken.

Lord hear our prayers: [time of silent prayer]

Lord, in this time we thank you for Christ Jesus, the Great High Priest<sup>27</sup>, who picks up all of our feeble and imperfect prayers and offers them perfectly to you.<sup>28</sup> In this time we thank you that Christ is the Good Shepherd who tends to us.<sup>29</sup> In these moments, we ask that Christ Jesus would tend to our faith and lives, our devotion and our sin. Nourish us with your everlasting Spirit, and your eternal faithfulness.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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<sup>24</sup> The Second Helvetic Confession, 5.208

<sup>25</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

<sup>26</sup> John 3:35

<sup>27</sup> Hebrews 4:14-16; Heidelberg Catechism, 4.031

<sup>28</sup> Torrance, J. B. (1997). \*Worship, community & the triune God of grace\*. InterVarsity Press.

<sup>29</sup> John 10:1-21

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## The Words of Institution<sup>30</sup>

On the night Jesus was betrayed,  
he took the bread, and breaking it, he said,

“This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

In a similar manner, after the meal,  
Jesus took the cup, and pouring it out he said,

“This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”

Later the Apostle Paul wrote, “As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
we do proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes again.”

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## Communion

Whether people come forward, remain where they are, or gather around the table  
there are natural times to share the following:

Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever eats of me will never hunger, whoever believes in  
me will never thirst.”<sup>31</sup>

Jesus said, “I am the vine and you are the branches. Apart from me you can do nothing.”<sup>32</sup> My  
friends, this is the love of God for the people of God.

    Name    : This is the body of Christ which is broken for you<sup>33</sup>

    Name    : This is the blood of Christ which is shed for you<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Matthew 26:26-30, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

<sup>31</sup> John 6:35

<sup>32</sup> John 15:5

<sup>33</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:24

<sup>34</sup> Matthew 26:28

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## Prayer After Communion

Gracious God, we thank you that we could gather and communion with you, and with your people in every time and every place. Thank you have been present in a special way today.

We ask that you would send us as your people, to work along side of you to heal this broken world, feed souls who hunger for you, and praise you with all of our words, thoughts, and actions.

In Christ's name we pray.