

## **A Service of Worship**

*An introduction...*

You are invited to a feast.

This may look like your breakfast, eaten in front of your computer, or a large and sumptuous lunch shared with your family around an iPad.

It can be whatever you want it to be. You're invited to have this food ready, and to move through the motions of your meal as you move through the liturgy.

This may feel odd, and it may be awkward at times- that's ok.  
That's life.

Don't be afraid to stop what you're doing and talk about how you're feeling and, please, about how the food tastes. It would be great if there is something in the bread family on your table, but not necessary.

As you sit, and listen, and talk and pray and eat, try to pay attention. Notice how things feel and taste in your mouth. Notice how it all smells, and how that makes you feel.

Eat slowly, if you can. Savour every bite.

Friends, let's feast.

### **Call to Worship/Call to the table**

And here again we are invited to the table.

Are you lost? Come and eat

Are you hungry? Come and eat

Are you broken hearted, abandoned, hopeless? Come and be filled.

This feast is never ending.

We're here to eat.

Sit down, pull up a chair

Pour a coffee or a glass of wine.

Let's set the table.

### ***We pray:***

God who wants to feed us,

Who is present in taste and smell,

Come to us today in word,

And in the moments between the words  
Come to us today in bread  
And all else we consume  
Come to us today in song  
And in exchanges over tables  
Or in streets

We are here to feast on you  
God of Manna  
Of heavenly banquets  
Of tip top sliced loaves  
And fresh baked sourdough  
Let's tuck in.

**Amen.**

*As we gather for our feast we remember that we gather on ancient lands  
That have been loved by ancient peoples for an extraordinarily long time, and that were  
never ceded.  
Take a moment to remember the people on whose land you live by name, to wonder what  
reconciliation might look like and to pray for the chance to see.*

### **We sing as we set the table**

*(set the table- to the sounds of **Invitation**, linked in the email)*

God has laid a feasting table,  
all her guests are gathered 'round,  
from the highways and the byways  
All the lost have now been found.

When we hear the invitation  
will we lay our burdens down? (repeat)

At this table all are welcome,  
No-one need be left behind.  
God is greater than our difference.  
Christ can see where we are blind.

When we hear the invitation  
Will we love all humankind? (repeat)

God is crying out for justice.  
Christ is weeping in the street.  
When will be the time for laughter?

When will all have food to eat?

When we hear the invitation

Will we make God's will complete? (repeat)

### **A time of prayerful gratitude and noticing**

I hope you have settled, and have a bounty around you.

I pray you can smell it,

And that your mouth waters a little.

How many colours can you see?

What does the food look like?

What does it smell like?

Take a moment and be with this feast

This provision which will not only sustain,

But will delight.

Imagine God at your table with you.

What do you want to say?

Can you pass the coffee?

Would you like some toast, God?

Are you comfortable with God's presence?

### **Let's pray**

Oh Jesus come remind us of our need

Unravel our closed fists and show us again how to reach our hands out to you

Oh Jesus come remind us of our stomachs

Unravel our warped view of food, our disconnection and disgust

Remind us that pleasure is part of your plan

Oh Jesus come remind us of all who hunger

Unravel our indifference, and show us how to give of ourselves and our abundance

Oh Jesus come remind us of your body

Unraveled, human, bruised, bold, worn down, given to us as a meal

Oh Jesus come remind us of your promise

Unravel us when we get lost in our fears, remind us that this life is not the end

And also

That it's pretty good to eat with friends.

Amen.

### **Early word- we get ready to eat**

*(See video: God is food! This won't go for long, if you're watching, you're invited to look over your feast as you do so, maybe picking up bits of it, noticing how often you can eat what you want.*

*Maybe make sure you've all got a drink to go with your meal)*

### **We feast on scripture!**

*It's our habit to read this aloud- so please do so, even if you're alone. It helps the words come alive.*

### **John 6:35-51**

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

### **Reflection and a feast**

*(See video link in email: On Bread and Loss and Bodies.*

*If you haven't eaten yet, now is the time! Munch away!)*

### **We sing, reflect and digest**

*(See video link in email: Guide Me Oh Thou Great Redeemer, or Bread of Heaven)*

Guide me, O thou great redeemer,  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty,  
Hold me with thy powerful hand;  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven  
Feed me till I want no more;  
Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain  
Whence the healing stream doth flow;  
Let the fire and cloudy pillar  
Lead me all my journey through:  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer;  
Be thou still my strength and shield;  
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
Bid my anxious fears subside;  
Death of death, and hell's destruction  
Land me safe on Canaan's side:  
Songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee;  
I will ever give to thee.

### **We do the dishes/Bring our prayers**

*I really mean it. Clean up, if you're able.*

*As you do, you might like to listen to this song (see link in email: Yahweh),  
and bring your prayers for what needs cleaning up in the world while you get sudsy.*

*You might like to pray...*

That we would never cease to hunger and thirst for justice, peace, hope,  
righteousness  
That all who hunger for love will find it  
That all who feel a pang inside that seems like it can't be filled can find satiation  
and peace  
That our leaders will seek lasting nourishment, not the brief taste of power or the  
whiff of status.  
That all who hunger will be fed.

That we as a nation would learn to listen to the anguished voices of our First Peoples

That we can hear their lament

That all who have lost will know themselves accompanied and taste the kingdom banquet.

That we the church will never stop turning back to the table, that we will never cease in inviting all we meet to the feast where all are welcome.

### **We are sated, and sent out**

“When he said ‘I am the bread of life’ he must have meant he was scattering bits of himself like a trail of crumbs leading us to speak and act and scatter forgiveness in his name to the ends of the earth”

*Susan Springer*

Go from this table filled, to fill.

Go from this table having feasted, to find those crumbs God has scattered everywhere.

Go from this table longing for others to be similarly fed.

Go from this table transformed; be the body of Christ.

Eat, remember, invite.

**Amen.**