

Churches' Week of Action on Food 2019

“God’s Promise of Abundance”

Luke 14:15-24



The Best Supper © Jan Richardson (used by permission)

This service of prayer and supporting materials for reflection for the Churches' Week of Action on Food 2019 have been prepared by the World Methodist Council (WMC) in partnership with the World Council of Churches – Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (WCC-EAA). All materials can be accessed online at:

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/churches-week-of-action-on-food-2019>

The Churches' Week of Action on Food is part of the Food for Life Campaign of the WCC – EAA and incorporates World Food Day (16 October), International Day of Rural Women (15 October), and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October).

Prayer Service

Progress has been made over recent decades in reducing rates of extreme poverty, while access to healthy, sustainable food for the world's most vulnerable has improved. Yet, in our world today, over 820 million people are chronically undernourished and food insecure – despite the reality that enough food is produced globally for all to be fed. And so, the struggle continues. We lift up our churches' ministries that are tirelessly focused on food justice, sustainability, alleviation of hunger, and eradication of poverty.

In this time of worship, our focus is on the abundance of God's love and provision, as together we seek the realization of God's kingdom here on earth.

Gathering

As you settle in for worship, take a moment now to enjoy the food that you have just received, and consider the words for reflection that have been provided.

Opening Greeting

Hear these words of Jesus:

"I come that you may have life, and have it abundantly..." (John 10:10)

"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." (John 6:35)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Let us pray:

Hospitable God, you invite us to a great banquet, where no one will hunger, no soul will thirst; where the last will be first, and the humble and mighty will trade places. As we gather for worship this morning, nourish our spirits with the abundance of your abiding love.

Inspire us to share your abundance with no fear or sense of scarcity. Let us welcome those who are strangers with a spirit of hospitality that is radically loving, as you are to us. In the name of Jesus, we pray. **Amen.**

Music: "For Everyone Born (A Place at the Table)"¹

¹ Shirley Erena Murray © 1998 Hope Publishing Company

Prayer of Confession: “Enough”²

Loving God, you have provided enough.
Yet, so often in our quest for more
Others are left with less.

Lord, you have provided enough.

We are reluctant to share
Lest others take our generosity for granted
Lord, you have provided enough.

In believing that we have deserved it
We place our interests before those of others
Lord, you have provided enough.

Others doubt your goodness
Because we have forgotten how to share
Lord, you have provided enough.

We are afraid to be generous
Lest some receive what we do not consider them to deserve
Lord, you have provided enough.

In failing to trust you for tomorrow
We accumulate what we can from today
While others still face the debts of yesterday
Lord, you have provided enough.

Your likeness is obscured
As we refashion your world according to our own values
You have provided enough
To forgive us when we forget the ways of your kingdom
To challenge us when we forget your justice
To inspire us to strive for a world that is different
So help us by your grace
So to live and act and speak
That every human being
Might discover your “enough.”
Amen.

² “Enough: a Prayer.” Written by the Rev Phil Jump. www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/enough. Revised from original and used with permission.

Psalter Reading: Psalm 34:1-8³

Sung Response: *"Taste and See"* by James E. Moore, Jr⁴

ALL SING: *"Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord. O taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord."*

I will bless the Lord at all times;
God's praise shall continually be in my mouth.

**My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the humble hear and be glad.**

O magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt God's name together!

**I sought the Lord, who answered me,
and delivered me from all my fears.**

ALL SING: *"Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord. O taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord."*

Look to God, and be radiant;
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

**The poor cried out, and the Lord heard,
and saved them from all their troubles.**

The angel of the Lord encamps
around those who love God, and delivers them.

**O taste and see that the Lord is good!
happy are those who take refuge in God!**

ALL SING: *"Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord. O taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord."*

Prayer for Illumination

God of Abundance, your Word fills our souls with overflowing grace. As we listen to your Word, inspire us through the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may be faithful witnesses to the joy of your kingdom, on earth as in heaven. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading: Luke 14:15-24

Words of Reflection

³ United Methodist Hymnal, p 769, revised

⁴ Upper Room Worshipbook, p 258

Response to the Word: *(World Methodist Social Affirmation)*⁵

We believe in God, creator of the world and of all people; and in Jesus Christ, incarnate among us, who died and rose again; and in the Holy Spirit, present with us to guide, strengthen, and comfort.

We believe; God, help our unbelief.

We rejoice in every sign of God's kingdom:
in the upholding of human dignity and community;
in every expression of love, justice, and reconciliation; in each act of self-giving on behalf of others; in the abundance of God's gifts entrusted to us that all may have enough; in all responsible use of the earth's resources.

Glory be to God on high; and on earth, peace.

We confess our sin, individual and collective, by silence or action:
through the violation of human dignity based on race, class, age, sex, nation, or faith; through the exploitation of people because of greed and indifference;
through the misuse of power in personal, communal, national, and international life; through the search for security by those military and economic forces that threaten human existence; through the abuse of technology which endangers the earth and all life upon it.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

We commit ourselves individually and as a community to the way of Christ; to take up the cross; to seek abundant life for all humanity;
to struggle for peace with justice and freedom;
to risk ourselves in faith, hope, and love, praying that God's kingdom may come.

Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession⁶

God, at whose bidding the earth came into being
Who promised and provides seedtime and harvest
Who is faithful and loving to all he has made
Give us this day our daily bread

Christ, whose food was to do the will of the one who sent you
Inspire our hearts with desire to serve your purposes
That through us the poor and oppressed may be released
Give us this day our daily bread

Bread of life, Word made flesh
Make your truth known in places where injustice prevails
Speak through us to challenge greed and inequality
Give us this day our daily bread

⁵ Adopted by the World Methodist Council, Nairobi, Kenya, 1986. Used by Permission.

⁶ *Faith in Foodbanks: Resources for Churches, Joint Public Issues Team: on behalf of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and Church Action on Poverty.* www.jointpublicissues.org.uk. Used by permission.

God and Father of all humanity
May we welcome those whom others might call stranger
So that in plenty or need, no-one need be excluded
Give us this day our daily bread

The Lord's Prayer

All are invited to pray in one's own language.

Closing Music: "Until All Are Fed"⁷

Sending Forth / Benediction

You give us this day our daily bread, O God. As you have filled us with good things, may we never close our hearts to those who are hungry, the homeless, and the poor. Let us go forth in your love to abundantly welcome and nourish in spirit and body those who seek to know you. And, "now, to God, who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine," be all honor and glory, today and always. **Amen.**

⁷ Lyrics: Bryan McFarland & Tommy Brown. Music: Bryan McFarland. © General Board of Global Ministries t/a GBGMusik, Atlanta, USA.

Table Blessing⁸

To your table you bid us come
You have set the places, you have poured the wine,
and there is always room, you say, for one more.

And so we come.
From the streets and from the alleys we come.
From the deserts and from the hills we come.
From the ravages of poverty and from the palaces of privilege we come.
Running, limping, carried, we come.

We are bloodied with our wars,
we are wearied with our wounds,
we carry our dead within us,
and we reckon with their ghosts.

We hold the seeds of healing,
we dream of a new creation,
we know the things that make for peace,
and we struggle to give them wings.

And yet, to your table we come.
Hungering for your bread, we come;
thirsting for your wine, we come;
singing your song in every language,
speaking your name in every tongue,
in conflict and in communion,
in discord and in desire, we come,
O God of Wisdom, we come.

--- Jan Richardson

⁸ *The Best Supper* and "Table Blessing" © Jan Richardson from *In Wisdom's Path*. Used by permission. janrichardson.com

WORSHIP NOTES:

As people enter worship, they are offered some bread, grapes (or other fruit), and juice to take with them to their seat (including a gluten-free option as needed). Each person is given, along with this snack, a note card with a single, brief prompt for reflection, such as these examples:

Notice that these grapes grow together, in bunches. We are connected to one another by faith, and our growth is dependent on each other. Reflect on your connection with those who are in worship today... in your family or circle of support... in your community... We need to be connected with one another. We need to be connected with God. Who are the ones that may feel disconnected from others? From God? Lift up those circumstances to God in prayer.

“Taste and see, that the Lord is good!” One of the expressions of God’s abundant love for us is with food – tasty, nourishing, satisfying. As you take a bite, enjoy the taste, texture, and flavor of what you are eating. Offer a word of thanks for God’s goodness.

“I am the bread of Life,” Jesus declares. As you chew and swallow this piece of bread, invite Christ in to nourish your spirit during this time of worship.

God has so abundantly provided for all we could ever need. Yet, we so easily take our own abundance for granted. As you enjoy this snack, offer up a prayer of thanksgiving for those who have had a role in making food available to you today (from farm to market to table).

ADDITIONAL WORSHIP RESOURCES:

A Communion Liturgy: The Great Thanksgiving

(based on Luke 14)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, it is good, and it is a joy to give thanks to you, God of all abundance and love.

With a word, you welcomed light, and worlds were formed.

From the dust you created humanity, breathing into them your Spirit. Every sea, every source

of food was provided in abundance, so that what you created would flourish.
When your people were in the wilderness without food, you gave them manna.
You made an immigrant woman, Ruth, gleaning the fields after the harvest, the fore-mother
of King David.

You inspired the widow of Zarephath to give up her last bit of flour and oil to feed the
prophet Elijah - but the flour was never depleted and the jar of oil never dry.

In the fullness of time, you sent your beloved son Jesus, our Savior.
He came to his own, and his own knew him not. In this way you honored the stranger.

And so, with angels and foreigners, with strangers becoming friends in that great chorus that
never ends, we join in the hymn of praise.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in
the highest.**

We give you thanks for Jesus Christ,
who turned water into wine, as a lavish reminder of the outpouring of your grace,
who ate with tax collectors and sinners,
who sat at table with fishermen and disgraced women,
who invited the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind to his feast without end.

On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for
the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This
cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of
sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

To this table Christ invites us all, the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind. Without any
status or claim except the love of Christ, we receive the bread of life, the cup of salvation,
remembering whose we are and proclaiming the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Come Holy Spirit, so we see Jesus in this bread and wine,
but also in the stranger in the street.
Fill us with your love so strong that we can welcome others,
so they, too, know that they belong within your family.
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, now and forever.
Amen.

**Alternate Response to the Word:
A Companion Litany to Our United Methodist Social Creed**

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church. Copyright 2016 by The United Methodist Publishing House.

Additional Musical Suggestions:

“Se och smaka” (*Taste and see*) by Tomas Boström, Sweden

Hosanna – Ecumenical Songs for Justice and Peace © 2016 WCC Publications, p. 69

“I’m Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table”

African American traditional, public domain

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table

African American Traditional

The musical score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the melody. The lyrics are: 'I'm gon - na sit at the wel - come ta - ble, I'm gon - na sit at the wel - come ta - ble one of these days, Hal - le - lu - jah! I'm gon - na sit at the wel - come ta - ble, I'm gon - na sit at the wel - come ta - ble one of these days.'

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table,
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days,
Hallelujah!
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table,
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

I'm gonna eat with my sisters and brothers,
I'm gonna eat with my sisters and brothers one of these days,
Hallelujah!
I'm gonna eat with my sisters and brothers,
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

I'm gonna feast on milk and honey,
I'm gonna feast on milk and honey one of these days,
Hallelujah!
I'm gonna feast on milk and honey,
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus,
I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus one of these days,
Hallelujah!
I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus,
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

I'm gonna tell him how you treat me,
I'm gonna tell him how you treat me one of these days,
Hallelujah!
I'm gonna tell him how you treat me,
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table...

“Ven a la mesa”

Latin America, anonymous author

1. Ven a la me-sa que ya es - ta ser-vi - da; ven a la
6 me-sa que Je-sus in-vi - ta; Ven a la me-sa que es - ta ser-vi
12 da con pan y vi-no del Dios de la vi - da.
18 Ven a la me - sa con tu ra - za a cues - tas, con tu
22 len-gua ex-tra - ña, tus sue- ños, tus que - jas; que na-da im-
27 pi - da que es-te - mos u - ni - dos. No per - da - mos tiem -
31 po, va - mos a la fies - ta.

Ven a la mesa que ya esta adornada
con las frutas frescas de la Madre Tierra,
vienen pintadas de llano y montana,
del esfuerzo diario y esperanzas nuevas.

Que vengan todos de nuestra fabela;
el vendedor de diario, el profesor de escuela,
vengan los niños, vengan los ancianos,
la mujer cansada y la madre soltera.

Ven a la mesa que ya esta servida,
realicemos todos nuestra fantasia
de estar unidos, juntos, mano a mano
y que todos sepan que somos hermanos.

“La mesa de la paz”

Collective creation at a Red Crearte workshop in Cuba in 2008, sponsored by WCC

La mesa de la paz

Moderato

G A D G A D

1. En es - ta fies - ta de la paz te in - vi - to a ha - cer co - mu - ni - dad.
 1. In this great fes - ti - val of peace I bid you, build com - mu - ni - ty.
 1. Ich la - de dich zu die - sem Fest im Frie - den zur Ge - mein - schaft ein.
 1. A cet - te fê - te de la paix, oh! viens te joindre au Corps du Christ!

G A D G A D

Re - fres - ca hoy tu co - ra - zón con a - li - men - to de a - mor.
 Re - fresh your heart and soul to - day with food that's filled with ho - ly love.
 Komm und er - qui - cke nun dein Herz. Die Lie - be lebt in Brot und Wein.
 Que tout ton coeur soit res - tau - ré du pain, du vin de son a - mour.

Refrán G A D

Hay a - le - gri - a ya a - mor en es - ta me - sa.
 Yes, there is joy o - ver - flow - ing at the ta - ble,
 An die - sem Tisch gibt es Fröh - lich - keit und Lie - be
 C'est le re - pas de l'a - mour et de la fê - te,

G A D

Cris - to en no - so - tros se ha - ce rea - li - dad.
 and Christ is known as we sit down to eat.
 und un - ter uns wird Chris - tus Wirk - lich - keit.
 le Christ en nous de - vient ré - a - li - té.

G A D

Hoy le tra - e - mos los fru - tos de la tie - rra
 To - day we bring him the fruits of all cre - a - tion,
 Heut bring - en wir ihm die Früch - te die - ser Er - de
 Nous lui of - frons tous les fruits de no - tre ter - re,

Bm Em A D

y nues - tra vi - da con sin - ce - ri - dad.
 we bring our lives in true sin - ce - ri - ty.
 und un - ser Le - ben steht für ihn be - reit.
 et no - tre vie, qu'il vien - ne l'ha - bi - ter.

2. Compartiremos nuestra fe,
 gozo, alegría nos traerá.
 Los dones Dios recibirá;
 son nuestra entrega en libertad.

2. Ja, miteinander teilen wir
 den Glauben, der uns fröhlich macht.
 Auch Gott empfängt nun ein Geschenk,
 das wir ihm freiwillig gebracht.

2. With joy and gladness in our hearts
 we'll share the faith we have in God.
 The gifts that God receives from us
 are signs that we are truly free.

2. Tous nos fragments de vérité
 ensemble chantent notre foi;
 nos dons, nos chants et notre joie
 célèbrent notre liberté.

“Come Along, the Feast is Ready”

Music: Slovene folks song “Kaj boš, Janko, jutri delal”. Words and folk song adaptation © Áine Pederson Lee. See the 2019 World Day of Prayer resources:

<https://wicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019-WDP-Sheet-Music-in-English.pdf>

“Bendice, Señor, nuestro pan”

Music and text: anonymous from Argentina.

Anonymous, Argentina

Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan,
Ben - di - ze, Se - ñhor, nos - so pão;
Lord, bless the bread you have given,
Sei - gneur, viens bé - nir no - tre pain,
Gott, seg - ne uns un - ser Brot,

y da pan a los que tien - en ham - bre
e dá pão à - que - les que têm fo - me e
and give bread to all who are hun - gry, give
et nour - ris tous ceux qui ont faim. Don - ne
und gib al - len Brot, die hung - rig sind, und gib

y ham-bre de jus - ti - cia a los que tien - en pan.
fo - me de jus - ti - ça à - que - les que têm pão.
hun - ger for jus - tice to those with bread.
faim de jus - tice à ceux qui ont du pain.
Hun - ger nach Ge - rech - tig - keit den Sat - ten.

Ben - di - ce, Se - ñor, nues - tro pan.
Ben - di - ze, Se - ñhor, nos - so pão.
Lord, bless the bread you have given.
Sei - gneur viens bé - nir no - tre pain.
Gott, seg - ne uns un - ser Brot.

Music annotation and Spanish transcription: Federico Pagura © 2002 World Council of Churches
150, Route de Ferney, 1211, Geneva 2, Switzerland.
Portuguese: © Simei Monteiro. English: © Donald Wetherick. French: © Marc Chambron.
German: Dieter Trautwein. © Strube-Verlag, Pettenkoferstr. 24, D-80336, Munich, Germany

“Come to the Water”

Text: Isaiah 55:1,2; Matthew 11:28-30; John Foley, SJ. Tune: John Foley, SJ © 1978 John B. Foley, SJ, and OCP, Portland, USA

“O let all who thirst, let them come to the water.
And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord:
without money, without price. Why should you pay the price,
except for the Lord?...” (vs. 1 of 4)

“All Things Are Ready”

Charles Hutchinson Gabriel, 1895; public domain

All things are ready, come to the feast!
Come, for the table now is spread;

Ye famishing, ye weary, come,
And thou shalt be richly fed.

“Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread”

James Montgomery, 1825 altered. Suggested tune: ST. AGNES

Be known to us in breaking bread, but do not then depart;
Savior, abide with us, and spread
Your table in our heart.
There eat with us in love divine;
Your body and Your blood,
that living bread, that heavenly wine, be our immortal food.

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

African American traditional, public domain

Let us break bread together on our knees, let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.
Let us drink wine together on our knees, let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.
Let us praise God together on our knees, let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.

“Christ For the World We Sing”

Music: Felice de Giardini, 1769. Words: Samuel Wolcott, 1869. The United Methodist Hymnal # 568

“Come, Sinners to the Gospel Feast”

Music: Katholisches Gesangbuch, ca. 1774; adapt. From *Metrical Psalter*, 1855. Words: Charles Wesley, 1747 (Lk. 14:16-24). The United Methodist Hymnal # 616

“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love”

Music: Ghana folk song, arranged by Tom Colvin. Words: Tom Colvin © 1969 and 1989 Hope Publishing Company