

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Words of Instruction & Invitation:

God's Banquet is coming. The time we await when all will gather from North, East, West and South.

A banquet where the rich and powerful will sit with the weak and poverty-stricken. A table where young and old will learn from each other. A time when all will sit together in peace, "and the wolf will lie down with the lamb".

Here at this table we get a foretaste of God's banquet. This is indeed God's table, not the church's, and so all who seek to follow The Way are welcome to eat and drink from it.

We come to taste the grace eternal, we come to see that God is good.

The Great Thanksgiving:

God is with us

we are not alone

Christ is present here

the Spirit moves within us

Let us give thanks to God

in memory and in hope

Blessings be to you, Creator God, who in the beginning brought light and life to the world and who continues to bring it love and light everlasting.

Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages, your ancient promise still brings us hope.

Over the ages you have called (...) would surround the world.

They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.

And then you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise in a new way

Promising her a son, who would be called Jesus.

Promising her that in her son the world would be changed

And now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

O come, O come Emmanuel

And also we lift our voices in song, singing together the praises of ages:
(MV #203 tune: Kingsfold)

The Story Remembered:

Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we remember the life that this baby will live.

We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.

And we remember one special meal, foretaste of the banquet that is to come, that he ate with his closest friends.

Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation, he prepared them to be liberated.

And at the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it, then passed it to them saying:

Take and eat. This bread is the body of Life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and in hope.

After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again until the time of the heavenly banquet.

Remembering the birth and life of the child in the stable, we remember also his death and his resurrection.

We remember how he poured his love out on all he met, and how even death could not hold back his love. We look forward to his return and the coming reign of peace, love, and justice.

With hope and joy we sing the mystery of faith:

(MV #204 tune: Kingsfold)

The Spirit Transforms:

God, you poured your Spirit (...) have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality. And the people all sang:

(MV #205 tune: Kingsfold)

And now, as beloved children of a loving Parent, we pray, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...

The Bread we break is the Bread of Life. The Cup we Share is the Cup of Promise. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Come and eat, the banquet awaits.

Gift of Music: Of the Father's Love Begotten

VU 61

Prayer After Communion (Unison):

God of pregnant expectations, God of Christmas promise, God of child-like hope, we have come to your table. In our eating and drinking you have filled us with hope in a world of despair. May we be beacons of this hope as we wait for the day when the world will be changed. Grant that this foretaste of your banquet stirs in us a hunger for peace and justice in our community and around the world. Amen

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