



A Black Rock Prayer Book

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An offering from Religious AF Camp
religiousafcamp.com

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PURPOSE & PRINCIPLES

Religious AF offers, open, non-judgmental, non-commodified Christian spiritual hospitality, prayer and conversation to all burners. We are a place of spiritual healing and safety.

We are explicitly Christian. Our rituals, scripture, and prayer come from the Christian tradition.

We respect the value and validity of other spiritual paths.

We offer hospitality, conversation, prayer and ritual to all who seek it: gay, trans, straight, high, sober, clothed, naked, polyamorous, monogamous, celibate, gracious and grumpy.

Decommodification: we are not at Burning Man to sell Christianity, Jesus, the Church, or our camp. We are here to freely offer blessing, prayer, ritual and hospitality.

We are sensitive to the ways toxic Christianity has harmed people. We are careful in using triggering symbols, such as the Latin cross, or a predominance of male-centric language for God and humans.

We come to Burning Man because we experience God here. The generosity, openness, mutual support, creativity and playfulness is, in many ways, how we envision God's dream for all of humanity.

A BLESSING

The world now is too dangerous
and too beautiful for anything but love.
May your eyes be so blessed you see God in everyone.
Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor.
May your hands be so blessed
that everything you touch is a sacrament.
Your lips, so you speak nothing but the truth with love.
May your feet be so blessed you run
to those who need you.
And may your heart be so opened,
so set on fire, that your love,
your love, changes everything.

A PRAYER FOR TRAVEL

Loving God, Mother and Father of us all,
you are calling us home.

As we make our pilgrimage from this life
to our heavenly home, we pray you keep us safe.

Protect us from all assaults of the enemy.

Keep us ever mindful of and in compliance with the traffic laws.

If we are detained on our journey,
help us to breathe and stay calm.

If we must unload and be searched,
help us to do so with grace, and repack with equanimity,
so that we may resume our journey to Black Rock City,
to the warm embrace of the Playa and companionship
with you and all the saints in light.



DAILY MORNING PRAYER

Opening Sentence

Our prayer leader begins with the opening sentence for that day.

Monday *Radical Inclusion, Radical Self-Expression*

Do not call to mind the former things; or ponder things of the past. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. *Isaiah 43:18-19*

Tuesday *Radical Self-Reliance*

Stand with the belt of truth around your waist, justice as your breastplate, and put shoes on your feet so that you are ready to spread the good news of peace. *Ephesians 6:14-15*

Wednesday *Civic Responsibility, Leave No Trace*

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all who live in it, for he founded it upon the seas and established it on the waters. *Psalms 24: 1-2*

Thursday *Communal Effort, Participation*

"We make many attempts to establish the outer world as a safe haven...instead of finding a safe haven within and bringing that to the outer world." *Henry Nouwen*

Friday *Giftng, Decommodification*

Giver of Life, we praise You! Bestower of all gifts, we give You thanks, for your steadfast Love endures forever! *Psalm 106: 1-2*

Saturday *Immediacy*

Give us today our daily bread. *Matthew 6:11*

Invitation to Prayer

Our prayer leader guides us into being attentive to God's presence among us and within us.

The night has passed and the day lies open before us. Let us pray with one heart and mind as we rejoice in the gift of this new day. May the light of your presence set our hearts on fire with love for you, today and every day.

Amen.

Christ has risen and brought light to his people, the people he has redeemed with his resurrection light.

Alleluia.

The Leader selects one of the following options.

Option 1 – Engaging the Psalms

Some suggested psalms are included. Translations in this section come from Psalms for Praying: An Invitation to Wholeness by Nan Merrill.

Possible ways the prayer leader could invite the assembly to prayerfully engage the psalms are with prayerful body movement, a dramatic reading, a call and response reading, or another prayerful engagement.

Psalm 95: 1-7

O Come, let us sing to Most High
 Creator of the Cosmos
 Let us make a joyful song to you
 The Beloved!

Let us come to the Radiant One with Thanksgiving,
 With gratitude let us offer our psalms of praise!
For the Beloved is infinite, the
 Breathing life of all.
The depths of the Earth belong to Love;
 The height of the mountains as well.
The sea and all that is in it,
 The dry land and the air above
 Were created by Love.

O Come, let us bow down and give thanks,
 Let us be humble before the Blessed One!
For the Beloved is Supreme, and
 We, blessed to be invited to Friendship
 As companions along the Way!

O that today we would harken to the Beloved's Voice!

Psalm 126:1-2

When the Divine Lover enters the human heart,
 All yearnings are fulfilled!
Then will our mouths ring forth
 With laughter, and
 Our tongues with shouts of joy;
Then will we sing our songs of praise,
 To You, O Beloved of all Hearts.
For gladness will radiate out for all to see;
 So great is your presence among us.

Psalm 139: 1-12

O my beloved, You have searched me
And known me!
You know when I sit down and
When I rise up;
You discern my innermost thoughts.
You find me on the journey and
Guide my steps;
You know my strengths and my weaknesses.
Even before words rise up in prayer,
Lo, You have already heard
My heart call.
You encompass me with love where'er
I go,
And your strength is my shield.
Such sensitivity is too wonderful
For me;
It is high; boundless gratitude
Is my soul's response
Where could I go from your Spirit?
Or how could I flee from
Your presence?
If I ascend into heaven, you are there!
If I make my bed in darkness,
You are there!
If I soar on the wings of the morning
Or dwell in the deepest parts of the sea,
Even there your hand will lead me,
And your love will embrace me.
If I say, "Let only darkness cover me,
And the light about me be night,"
Even the darkness is not dark to You,
The night dazzles as with the sun;
The darkness is as light with You.

Option 2 – Engaging Song and Movement

There is a separate appendix of possible songs to sing or listen to and engage in body movement prayer.

Option 3 – Guided Contemplative Practice

There is a separate appendix of possible guided contemplative practices the prayer leader could lead the group in.

A Reading from Scripture

Someone will read the day's scripture passage which will be reflected on during the Bible Study immediately after Morning Prayer.

After the reading there will be a time of silence. We encourage you to sit in contemplative, meditative silence as you listen to what the Spirit may be saying to you in the reading.

The Prayers

This participatory prayer offered with thanks to Walter Brueggemann.

Leader After listening to God speaking to us through scripture, we respond with our own prayers and petitions.

Leader

Eternal Spirit who sees and loves those who often are unseen and unloved by others,

We lift up to you all those who may be carrying heavy loads;
those who have brought their losses and emptiness to the play;
those held down by addiction or threatened by violence;
those who suffer in mind and body;
those who feel unloved and unwelcome.

May they find in us your hospitality, with no agenda of our own except to welcome and listen, offering a cool breeze on a hot day.

You are the God who is simple, direct, clear with us and for us. You have committed yourself to us. You have said Yes to us in creation, Yes to us in our birth, Yes to us in our baptism, Yes to us in our awakening this day. But we are not like you. We say “perhaps, maybe, I can’t.”

People

In your mercy you call us again.

Today you called and we said Yes. Because we are like you: loving and creative. We claim our Yes today in this place:

hot, exposed, uncontrolled, and not of our own making.

We claim our Yes because today we are committed to Jesus’ command to love you, love ourselves, and love our neighbors.

We claim the weird, ordinary, and unmet parts of ourselves saying Yes to you today because we are religious as fuck, we are your church, and we are not giving up.

**In your mercy and helping one another,
hear our prayer: we say Yes. Amen.**

The People are invited to add their own prayers, silently or aloud.

The Lord's Prayer

The Leader selects a version of the Lord's Prayer, either the Western or the New Zealand version, for the assembly to pray together.

Leader Let us join together in the words Jesus taught us, saying

Eternal Spirit,

**Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be
Father and Mother of us all,**

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

**The hallowing of your name
echoes through the universe!**

The way of your justice

be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

**Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today,
feed us.**

**In the hurts we absorb from one another,
forgive us.**

**In times of temptations and testing,
strengthen us.**

**From trials too great to endure,
spare us.**

**From the grip of all that is evil,
free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.**

**Our (Father/Mother/Creator) 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.**

The Blessing

We close with the following final blessing. The prayer leaders could bless all those assembled with this, or they could invite all those gathered to pair up and bless each other with these words.

The world now is too dangerous
and too beautiful for anything but love.
May your eyes be so blessed you see God in everyone.
Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor.
May your hands be so blessed
that everything you touch is a sacrament.
Your lips, so you speak nothing but the truth with love.
May your feet be so blessed you run
to those who need you.
And may your heart be so opened,
so set on fire, that your love,
your love, changes everything.



TUESDAY EUCHARIST

Celebrant Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.
People **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Hymn *Laudate Dominum, #6*

Celebrant God be with you.
People **And also with you.**

O God of peace, you have taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God, **Amen.**

The Readings

First Reading *Coming to God: First Days* by Mary Oliver

Lord, what shall I do that I
Can't quiet myself?
Here is the bread, and
Here is the cup, and
I can't quiet myself.
To enter the language of transformation!
To learn the importance of stillness,
With one's hands folded!
When will my eyes of rejoicing turn peaceful?
When will my joyful feet grow still?

When will my heart stop its prancing
As over the summer grass?
Lord, I would run for you, loving the miles for your sake.
I would climb the highest tree
To be that much closer.
Lord, I will learn also to kneel down
Into the world of the invisible,
The inscrutable and the everlasting.
Then I will move no more than the leaves of a tree
On a day of no wind,
Bathed in light,
Like the wanderer who has come home at last
And kneels in peace, done with all unnecessary things;
Every motion; even words.

The Psalm

Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17

Lord, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
For you yourself created my inmost parts; *
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I will thank you because I am marvelously made; *
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

My body was not hidden from you, *
while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written in your book; *
they were fashioned day by day,
when as yet there was none of them.
How deep I find your thoughts, O God! *
how great is the sum of them!
If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the
sand; *
to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.

The Gospel

Luke 14:1, 7-14

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher!'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet,

invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ**

The Homily

Hymn *Ubi Caritas, #4*

Prayers of the People

Celebrant Let us pray for ourselves and the world.

The Leader and People pray responsively

Loving God, enliven us for your work of love in our world.

That we may be salt of the earth and light to the world.

Breathe fresh life into your people.

Give us power to reveal Christ in our daily lives.

Creator of all, lead us and all people into the ways of justice and peace.

That we may respect one another in freedom and truth.

Awaken in us a sense of wonder for the earth and all that is in it.

Teach us to care creatively for our fragile world.

God of truth, inspire with your wisdom those whose decisions affect the lives of others.

That all may act with integrity and courage.

Give grace to all those whose lives are linked with ours.

May we serve Christ in one another, and love as Christ loves us.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

**We seek the grace of healing, O God.
At the heart of the brokenness around us.
And in the hidden depths of our own souls.
We seek your touch of healing.
O God, for in there you reside.
In the hidden depths of life, O God,
there you reside. Amen.**

Leader

Love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for God is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as God is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. **Amen.**

Prayers may be written and left at the temple

Hymns *O Lord Hear My Pray'r, #3*
Stay With Me, #2

The Peace

Celebrant The Peace of God be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

Those assembled share signs of peace with one another.

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **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 our thanks and praise.

Celebrant

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But paralyzed by fear and judgement, we denied your image in ourselves and others; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing (say):

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from all the forces that deny life and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary,

your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, take, eat:

People ***This is my own body, given for you, do this for the remembrance of me.***

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you:

People ***This is my life-blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.***

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
to you be honor, glory, and praise,
for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

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.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the bread.

Celebrant We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

People **We who are many are one body,**
 for we all share in the one bread

Celebrant Behold what you are.

People **May we become what we receive.**

Invitation to Communion

This is the table, not of the Church, but of Jesus. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is Christ who invites you. It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray

**Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands;
now we put our lives into yours.**

Take us, renew us and remake us.

**What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you,
still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.**

Hymn *Bless the Lord my Soul, #1*

Blessing

The Celebrant blesses the people.

Dismissal

Go out into the world in peace, have courage,
hold on to what is good, return no one evil for evil,
strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the suffering,
honor everyone, love and serve God,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

Thanks be to God!



WHITE WEDNESDAY SERVICE OF ASHES

Introduction to the Service

The Prayer Leader introduces the service.

Welcome,

Welcome to this place,

Welcome to this place here with us.

Soon we are going to start a Christian reflective service to ponder the manifestations of the Man and the Temple.

We will use ashes from last year's Burns.

The service will take about 20 minutes.

So if you want to participate, gather around and we will begin.

Beginning

Leader

In the name of the love that makes us one, we greet you.

All of us are gathered here. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your life's journey, you are not alone; you are welcome.

Each year at Burning Man, we come to the Temple to mourn the death of friends and family. The Temple is a testimony to our common mortality. It is here at the temple that we are reminded to savor and rejoice in each moment of life. The Temple reminds us that life is such a gift to us and to the whole community.

We also write upon the wooden body of the Temple all those things which dim the light within us and keep us from living as liberated beacons of love. We lay down our pains, our fears, our limitations, and our prayers, and we leave them in the temple to

be consumed in flame. Death is part of any new birth and transformation.

We have brought ashes with us from last year's Man and Temple burns as a reminder that our lives are impermanent, and yet they are filled with moments of great pain and joy, ugliness and beauty. We will use these ashes at the end of the service in a beautiful ritual and mark this acknowledgement on each other.

Collect

Leader

We will begin with a prayer:

Thank you Oh Love for revealing, through the story of Christ's death and resurrection, that our mortality is not to be feared. Open our hearts and minds in this time together so that your Spirit may cultivate in us a richer sense of love and compassion. **Amen.**

Contemplation

Leader

We now invite you into a Christian practice of contemplating this psalm. The Book of Psalms is a book from the Old Testament in the Bible. It is a collection of songs and prayers by those seeking and seeing Yahweh.

Contemplation is a style of meditation where one examines deeply the nature of a thing. To contemplate is to gaze upon something in one's heart or mind until God's nature within that thing is revealed to you.

So I invite you to find a comfortable spot to sit or stay standing. Begin to breath and place your attention on your breath. Let your other thoughts pass away. There is no need to control your

breathing during this time of contemplation, just allow yourself to breathe naturally.

As I read the psalm to you, allow your heart to gaze upon these words and listen for God's Spirit speaking in, among, and between them. At the end there will be a period of silence. Then a bell will ring to bring you back and will have a time of sharing from the heart if you wish to.

Psalm 90

Eternal and Immortal One, you have been
Our refuge in all generations
Before the mountains were brought forth,
Before you had formed the Earth and
The world, from
Everlasting to everlasting
You are the Alpha and the Omega.

When our days on Earth are ended,
You welcome us home to your Heart,
To the city of light,
Where time is eternal
And days are not numbered.

You gather those who love you as
Friends returning from a long
Journey,
Giving rest to their souls.
You anoint them with the balm of understanding,
Healing wounds of the past.

For our days on earth are a mystery,
A searching for you
A yearning for the great mystery
To make itself known

The years past and soon the harvest is at hand

A time to reap the fruits of one's life.

Who has lived with integrity?

Who will reflect the Light

Who can bear the radiant beams of Love?

Who have revered the Counselor,

And opened their hearts to the

Spirit of Truth?

Teach us, O Beloved, to honor each day

That we may have a heart

Of wisdom.

There follows a time of silence.

After a few moments, the prayer leader will ask those gathered to share a word or a phrase that has stayed with them, or whatever they may have heard the Spirit speaking to them.

Leader

Now is a time of communal prayer, where we join our hearts together and read the affirmations. If you are not near a booklet, move towards one now so you can join us. I (or name of person) will read the leading statement and we read together the bold text.

Litany of White Wednesday

The litany is said by the leader and people responsively.

O God, blessed mother of the universe,
We are your sacred children.

We are your sacred children.

O God, blessed teacher and guide,
We are your sacred children.

We are your sacred children.

O God, blessed wind and holy breath,
We are your sacred children.

We are your sacred children.

Journeying on our many roads, we gather here.
We bring our life.

We bring our life.

Raising a city from the dust,
We bring our love.

We bring our love.

Gathering in this temple,
We bring our light.

We bring our light.

In this place, where a fire will burn,
We bring our pain.

We bring our pain.

Where a light will leap to the heavens,
We bring our fear.

We bring our fear.

Where ashes will fall,
We acknowledge our mortality.

We acknowledge our mortality.

Where dust and ash will join,
We bring our love.

We bring our love.

Take all that keeps us from burning brightly;
Free our hearts.

Free our hearts.

Take all that keeps us from loving fully;
Free our hearts.

Free our hearts.

Inspire and fill us with hope and boldness;
Renew our Spirit.

Renew our Spirit.

Song *Oh Love* by Ayla Nereo

Blessing of the Ashes

Together we will bless the ashes by reading the next passages as one. Read together with us

**Blessed are you, O Life Eternal,
who meets us in all times and places,
who lights our way, who gives us love,
who hears our prayers.**

**Grant that these ashes, formed from earth, and prayer, and fire,
may be a sign to us of our renewal,
and help us to remember that we are called
to walk in light and love.**

Amen.

Invitation and Imposition of Ashes

Leader

Now is the time for the ritual with the ashes - commonly done on what is known as Ash Wednesday. For those who wish to receive a blessing, we place a mark of ash on your forehead. We will do this in pairs, so take turns with the pots.

The person placing the ashes on the forehead may say

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

The person receiving the ashes may say

I am dust, and to dust I will return

Closing Words

The Leader blesses the people, saying

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

Light, love, and wisdom be within you.

And may the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be upon you and remain with you forever.

Amen.

Beloved friends, we all are being made new by the light and love that made us.

Go, therefore, and share the light and love within you with those you meet along your path.

May it be so.



THURSDAY EUCHARIST

Celebrant In the name of God: Creator, Redeemer
and Giver of Life.

People **Amen.**

Grace to you and peace from God our Creator, the love at our
beginning and without end, in our midst and with us.

**God is with us,
Here we find new life.**

Let us give thanks for the coming
of God's reign of justice and love.

**Jesus Christ is good news for the poor, release for the captives,
recovery of sight for the blind and liberty for those who are
oppressed.**

A Prayer by Thomas Merton

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the
road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am
following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you
and I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. And I
know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road although
I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always,
though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death, I will
not fear, for you are ever with me and you will never leave me to
face my perils alone.

The Gospel

Luke 14:1, 7-14

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Reflection & Dialogue

Prayers of the People

The Leader and People pray responsively

Caring God, we thank you for your gifts in creation:

For our world,

The heavens tell of your glory.

For our land, its beauty and its resources,
For the rich heritage we enjoy.

We pray for those who make decisions about the resources
of the earth,

That we may use your gifts responsibly;

For those who work on the land and sea, in city and in industry,
**That all may enjoy the fruits of their labors and marvel at your
creation;**

For artists, scientists and visionaries,

That through their work we may see creation afresh.

We thank you for giving us life;

For all who enrich our experience.

We pray: For all who through their own or others' actions are
deprived of fullness of life,

**For prisoners, refugees, the persecuted and the oppressed,
and all who are sick;**

For those in politics, medical science, social and relief work,
and for your Church,

For all who seek to bring life to others.

We pray for those we hold in our hearts today
either silently or aloud

We thank you that you have called us to celebrate your creation.

Give us reverence for life in your world.

We thank you for your redeeming love;

**May your word and sacrament strengthen us
to love as you love us.**

God, Creator, bring us new life.

Jesus, Redeemer, renew us.

Holy Spirit, strengthen and guide us.

God of peace, Let us your people know, that at the heart of turbulence there is an inner calm that comes from faith in you. Keep us from being content with things as they are, that from this central peace there may come a creative compassion, a thirst for justice, and a willingness to give of ourselves in the spirit of Christ.

Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **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 thanks and praise.

Celebrant

Eternal God, in the abundance of your love you have caused all things to be; from dust and spirit you have woven our humanity; in all our wanderings you never cease to call us to fullness of life.

You gave us Jesus, son of Mary, the bread of life broken for the world; He fed and feasted with us, He healed us and suffered for us; His dying and rising have set us free from the poverty of sin and the famine of death.

Therefore, with all whom you have made, beloved and called, with all who hunger for your kingdom and all who will not rest

until all you children are fed; with the broken saints and redeemed sinners of all the ages, we take up the song of your praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We ask that your Holy Spirit will fall upon these gifts that these fragile earthly things may be to us the body and blood of our Lord and brother, Jesus Christ; Who, on the night he was betrayed, gathering with his faltering friends for a meal that tasted of freedom.

Calling them to his table, He took bread and broke it and said:

“This is my body, which is given for you.

Do this to remember me.”

In the same way after supper, he took the cup saying:

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this, whenever you drink it, to remember me.”

As on that night, so here and now he offers himself in touch and taste beyond all words can hold.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again.

Inspire us with hope that in our eating and drinking we may be filled with the life-giving presence of Christ and proclaim him as creation's host, transforming poverty into plenty in the reckless generosity of love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom and with whom and in whom in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory be yours forever. **Amen.**

Bread and wine; the gifts of God for the people of God.
May we who share these gifts be found in Christ and Christ in us.

All are invited to receive communion.

Postcommunion Prayer

Let us pray: Most loving God, creator and redeemer, we give you thanks for this foretaste of your glory. **Through Christ, and with all your saints, we offer ourselves and our lives to your service. Send us out in the power of your Spirit, to stand with you in your world. We ask this through Jesus Christ, The servant, our friend and brother. Amen.**

The Blessing

The Celebrant blesses the People

The Dismissal

Go in peace.

Amen. We go in the name of Christ who is love.



FRIDAY MEMORIAL SERVICE

Leader The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

Greeting

Brothers and sisters, we gather today to commemorate the life and death of people we have loved, relationships which have ended, even parts of ourselves that need to be released. Every time we mourn, we grieve every loss we have ever had. Whatever loss you need to name in this time is welcome here.

Friends, we gather here in the protective shelter of God's healing love. This is a time to voice both memories and questions with one another and with God. We are free to grieve, to be angry or sad, and to know that God does care. We gather here as God's people, conscious of others who have died and of the frailty of our own existence on earth. We come to comfort and to support one another in our loss. We gather to hear God's word of hope that can diminish our despair and move us to offer God our praise. We gather to commend to God with thanksgiving all whom we grieve today as we celebrate the good news of Christ's resurrection. For whether we live or whether we die, we belong to God.

Assurance of God's Grace *Matthew 11:28-30*

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Procession to the Temple

Opening Prayer

Leader Let us pray.

Holy God, whose ways are not our ways and whose thoughts are not our thoughts, grant that your Holy Spirit may intercede for us with sighs too deep for words. Heal our wounded hearts made heavy by our sorrow. Through the veil of our tears and the silence of our emptiness, assure us again that ear has not heard, nor eye seen, nor human imagination envisioned, what you have prepared for those who love you; through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead. **Amen.**

Invitation to Speak Names

The Leader invites those gathered to say the name or names of those they are commemorating.

This refrain may be said as a response.

Love never ends.

Pastoral Reflection

The Great Thanksgiving

The Celebrant faces the People and says

The Lord be with you.

People

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 to give you thanks O Loving Creator,
for you set the sun, moon, and stars as lights in the heavens.
On the earth below you brought forth life in all its colorful array.
And so we join the saints and angels in proclaiming your glory
as we say:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for you made all people,
filled them with your Spirit, and created them in diversity
as endless as your compassion. And at a fitting time you joined
together the human and the divine into one family through your
beloved son Jesus, who taught us the way of love.

Through him, the silenced are given voice, the hungry are fed,
the forgotten are remembered, and the wounded are restored.

On the night he was betrayed to the ways of fear, he gathered his friends at the table. He took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said,
"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said,
"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Holy God, we now celebrate the memorial of your Son. By means of this holy bread and cup, we show forth the sacrifice of his death, and proclaim his resurrection, until he comes again.

Sanctify these gifts by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. Gather us by this Holy Communion into one body in your Son Jesus Christ. Make us a living sacrifice of praise.

By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant and People

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

The Fraction

The Celebrant breaks the bread

Communion

All are welcome to receive

Commendation

Into your hands O merciful God,
we commend who we have loved and what we have lost.
We thank you for giving us family and friends,
to know and to love on our earthly pilgrimage.
In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn.
Give us faith to see in death the gate
of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue
our course on earth, until, by your call, we are reunited with
those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Receive all into the arms of your mercy,
Into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
And into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

Benediction

The Leader invites the People to put their hands on each place in their body as the words are spoken.

May your eyes be blessed to contemplate the extravagance of beauty in our world. May your *ears* perceive the magnitude of beautiful sounds. May your *mouth* be blessed to express words of friendship and compassion. May your *mind* be full of precious memories and dreams of tomorrow. May your *hands* be blessed to convey tenderness. May your *heart* be embraced by love, possessed by love and shine out an abundance of love today and for all your tomorrows. Amen.

