

Earth, Love, and Justice Communion Liturgy

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Invitation to the Lord's Table

One: You. All of you, every cell and molecule, hands and feet, skin and blood, repurposed and made manifest in all the particularities, the wounds and scars, the stories and experiences, the failed attempts and the faithful parts of you. all of it is welcome at this table...

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Let us Pray...cosmic God in whom we live, and move and have our being, you moved over the deep and you sang the beauty of creation into being... hydrogen and helium the first primordial elements... stars that danced in the cosmos and you invited them into expansion... to move and grow and explode and creating more life-making elements... lithium, beryllium, oxygen...

And then you saw fit to sing us into being... human beings... oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, and phosphorus.... potassium, sulfur, sodium, chlorine, and magnesium... creative energy and matter teeming in human flesh, made in God's own creative and generative image...

But how often do we hear this story, of being created in your own image O God, and then use these words to make you small? We amplify our limitations and we project them onto you. We get jealous, and so we imagine a God who must be a raging beast. We feel lost, and so we imagine a God who is an absent parent. We fail or feel insecure, and imagine a God who would rather punish us than love us. And when the future feels uncertain and unfamiliar, we imagine... a God who must not have much imagination.

All: Why do we blame our failure of imagination on you, O God?

One: God is not made in our image.

We are made in God's image.

There is no limit to the imagination of a cosmic God who sang this wild and chaotic world into being and gave us this beautiful and terrible gift,

the power to live and move and create.

It's hard to imagine the power we have, the raw energy we wield,
and yet we do wield it,
sometimes we grow and build and create marvelous and beautiful things,
like rich and colorful cultures,
bright and green gardens, breath-taking works of art, tiny,
vulnerable human beings and clever tools.

And sometimes we wield the power of creation like a child with a book of matches.

We build beyond our capacity to sustain, we compete, rather than collaborate.
We subvert the power of creation – using it serve ourselves and against one another,
to hoard power and oppress others, to make weapons of war,
to build tall walls to create deadly borderlands and barbed wire fences
to contain God's creation rather than setting it free.

So much of God gets lost when we act as if God is made in the
image of our limitations, but here is something true and beautiful:
the primordial substance of God's creation?

It cannot be reduced to nothing...

it cannot be erased or destroyed...

it can be broken, desecrated, changed forever...

it can also be converted, transmitted and even liberated ... yes... but never destroyed.

All: Remind us of your infinite abundance, O God.

One: And so here we are, each containing the elements of creation and the capacity to
restore, and regenerate and to re-member...

Though we are scattered,
at this table we are together,
and we are all invited to this feast.

Hear us now as we combine our energy to pray using the words Jesus taught us...

Lord's Prayer

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. . . .

Words of Institution

One: On the last night of his life, Jesus gathered with his people and shared a meal.
Amidst the chaos of the world, the room where Jesus and the disciples sat was calm, filled with the smells of good
food and laughter shared among chosen family.
It was in this setting, among the scrappy group of folks who'd said yes to the invitation to follow him, that Jesus
leaned into the vulnerable space and asked to be remembered.

Taking the bread, Jesus blessed and broke it and gave it to them saying: Take, eat.

Whenever you do this, remember me. Remember my body - my flesh and my bones, and remember my actions – what I stood for and what I refused to accept.

He also took the cup and, pouring it, he said: Take, drink. Remember my blood, shed unjustly because I refused to give in to a death-dealing status quo. Whenever you do this, remember me.

Communion of the faithful

Prayer after communion

One: We come to this table to unearth the lives and stories that have been buried...
to tell the truth about what is broken and desecrated but never destroyed...

We come to seek forgiveness, restoration, and reparations, we come to begin again.

Sharing in these elements... bread and cup... we claim our place in the family of things,
we claim our call to be repairers of the breach, makers, and artists, and gardeners and givers... we come to
remember and to re-member...

to put ourselves and the body of Christ together again. Amen.