



Brief non-digital Communion Service

(prepared by Rev Kath Behan, in response to updated Assembly guidelines 03/04/2020)

In the Uniting Church, the sacrament of holy communion or the eucharist are celebrated as part of the life of the people of God. This ritual is called a sacrament because it is considered holy in that we set it apart as a regular opportunity to proclaim the hope we have in Christ. We believe this is a gift that God has given to us, that is not dependent upon our goodness, but only on God's grace. When we share in this sacrament, we are sharing in the story of God that has always been and will continue long after us.

In the Uniting Church, it has always been important for us to maintain an 'order' about how we participate in this sacrament together – not out of a sense of legalism and exclusion, but rather out of a sense of deep respect and profound gratitude. This continues to be an important expression of our life together.

At this challenging time, we find ourselves in the place where the church is dispersed. And while some have access to online opportunities for sharing communion, others do not. For this reason, the following non-digital liturgy is offered for the celebration of the sacrament of communion, and to affirm the conviction that God is present with us, in whatever capacity we are able to present ourselves to God - in a situation of home isolation, extended time in the workplace on the frontline of service to the community, or even lying in a hospital bed.

This communion liturgy can be led over the phone by a local minister, chaplain or designated congregation pastoral carer.

Suggestions for set-up:

- You are invited to create a small worship space that may include a candle, a cross, a bible. Alternatively, if this is not possible for hygiene purposes or other limitations, consider placing yourself where you can look at something that brings you hope, like looking out the window.
- To participate in the meal of communion, all you will need is something like bread that can be broken, and a cup of something to drink. Or alternatively, if food and drink are not advisable, then just participating in the liturgy is enough.
- Those who are leading the liturgy over the phone are encouraged to also have a worship space and elements to share in as well.

May God bless the sharing in this liturgy, in the name of Christ.



The Invitation

Leader: Jesus said: "I am the bread of life.
All who come to me shall not hunger,
and all who believe in me shall not thirst."

With Christians around the world
and throughout the centuries,
we gather in this uncertain and unfamiliar time,
in homes, hospital beds, workplaces,
around these familiar symbols;
simple, ordinary elements,
that speak of nourishment and hope,
and are freely given for all of God's people.

The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Leader: Loving God, we thank you
that you are as close to us as breath,
that your love is constant and unending.

Participant: You put the stars in the sky, and know the number of grains of sand on the beach.

Leader: We thank you for all You have created that sustains life.

Participant: We thank you for Jesus Christ,
who taught us how to live lives of forgiveness and peace, hope and grace,
through his life, death and resurrection.

Leader: And we thank You for the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, who knows our every need even before we ask it.

So we ask that You would bless this meal before us,
As a reminder of how You have nourished and strengthened your people throughout all generations, and
in all places.

Participant: Through this meal, we celebrate that You have called us to be the body of Christ,
Hands, feet, eyes, ears and mouth,
Wherever we are, and in whatever capacity we have,
that we may join with you in the reconciliation of all creation.

Leader: And now in the silence we remember all who are broken....
All who are struggling with ill-health, job loss, exhaustion, anxiety and fear, from the impact of Covid-19...
All who are oppressed....
All who are alone and cast aside....
All who are hopeless and despairing....
All who are afraid to stand up and speak out and face ridicule and condemnation....



(time of silent prayer, or naming those who are on our hearts)

....For it is these very ones whom Christ invites to this meal of hope.

And so in the tradition of our story of faith, we pray together the prayer that Christ taught us:

***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 in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours now and for ever. Amen.***

Breaking the Bread:

Leader: We remember on the night
when Jesus and the disciples
had their last meal together,
Jesus took the bread, gave thanks,
and gave it to the disciples,
saying "This is my body,
which is broken for you.
Take and eat it, and as often as you do, remember me."

(Break the bread)

Together: ***In the symbol of the broken bread,
we participate in the life of Christ
and dedicate ourselves to being his disciples,
finding ourselves in the midst of the brokenness
and woundedness of life.***

Leader: In the same way he took the cup,
and after giving thanks
he gave it to the disciples, saying:
"Drink this, all of you.
This cup is the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

(Raise the cup)

Together: ***In the symbol of the wine poured out,
we participate in the life of Christ,
and dedicate ourselves to being his disciples,
giving ourselves to others***



The Uniting Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

so they may come to know there is always hope to be found.

Leader: These are the gifts of God, for the people of God.
Let us eat and drink together.

(time of silence while eating and drinking)

Prayer after Communion:

Together: We give thanks, loving God,
that you have refreshed us at your table.
Strengthen our faith in these challenging times.
Increase our love for one another.
Open our eyes to see where You are at work around us.
And may we continue to live out the hope we have within us,
with those who are in need of hope today.
In the name of Christ, Amen.