



‘Worship at home’

Sunday October 6th 2024

We come to worship God knowing we are part of the wider community of God’s people, the body of Christ. One aspect of belonging in community is sharing in hospitality. You might like to make yourself comfortable with a **glass of water** or a **‘cuppa’**, and **biscuit** or **snack**.



Opening

We come with joy to worship God;
knowing that in Christ we each find welcome.
We come to be forgiven, loved, set free;
in Christ we all find our place at the table.
We are one in Christ, even when we are apart;
let us worship God. Amen!

Today is celebrated by some churches around the world as World Communion Sunday. This encourages us to think about the universal and inclusive nature of the church. We remember that we are a small part of a whole body of believers. Today and every day, all around the world, Christians from all cultures and nations affirm their faith in Christ and the importance of breaking bread together.



Have you ever worshipped in another country or with another culture?

**What was different from your tradition?
What did you share in common?**



Mark 10:13-16

Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people. When Jesus noticed this, he was angry and said to his disciples, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom

of God belongs to such as these. I assure you that whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them.

Good News Bible



"Let the little children come to me...."

This Scripture passage comes immediately after Jesus talking to his disciples about marriage and good relationships. This was an important discussion, and the disciples scolded those who wanted to distract Jesus by bringing their children for a blessing.

**Have you ever felt like you were in the way,
or excluded from a conversation?
How did it make you feel?**

**When might you have excluded others,
even unintentionally, or with seemingly good intentions?**

Take a sip of your drink and bite of your snack. Reflect on times when you have shared hospitality with others, perhaps as family meals, or gatherings with friends. There are times and places where we feel we are welcomed and belong as part of the group. Yet sometimes we feel disconnected and lonely, even in a crowd. As humans we have a need for companionship, and even those of us who are introverts need to seek out good relationships. We are created as social beings, to find connections with others.



Jesus reminds us that we are each invited to find welcome and acceptance in the body of Christ, and to show welcome and acceptance to others. Children, and those of all ages, cultures, genders and abilities find welcome, healing and love as part of God's family. This requires us to both give of ourselves and to be open to receiving from others.

And the Table Will Be Wide

And the table
will be wide.

And the welcome
will be wide.

And the arms
will open wide
to gather us in.

And our hearts
will open wide
to receive.

And we will come
as children who trust
there is enough.

And we will come
unhindered and free.

And our aching
will be met
with bread.

And our sorrow
will be met
with wine.

And we will open our hands
to the feast
without shame.

And we will turn
toward each other
without fear.

And we will give up
our appetite
for despair.

And we will taste
and know
of delight.

And we will become bread
for a hungry world.

And we will become drink
for those who thirst.

And the blessed
will become the blessing.

And everywhere
will be the feast. *Jan Richardson*



The Best Supper © Jan L. Richardson

Consider again the drink and snack in front of you. Reflect on times when you have felt unable or inadequate to offer hospitality to others. Perhaps there are people or places in which you feel uncomfortable and awkward. Think about how you might be more able to reach out to those who might be excluded from social gatherings, or feel isolated and lonely.

What is one thing you can do to make someone feel welcome or included this week?

Pray for those who:

- Might feel excluded from the table of companionship and seek a place to belong
- Are in need of food and shelter
- Feel isolated and alone
- Worship in countries where there is unrest and persecution
- Live in fear due to conflict or violence



Closing

On this day and always,
give us eyes to recognise God's image
in the lives of Christians everywhere.
Give us a mind to accept and celebrate our differences.
Give us a heart big enough to love each other.

By your Spirit help the body of Christ be one.
Help us work as one in ministry to all the world.
Bring the blessing of the diversity of the body
to bear fruit until Christ comes again
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honour and glory is yours,
Almighty God, now and forever.
Amen.

*adapted from The Africana WORSHIP BOOK Year B
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