

The Lord's Supper: Covenant-Making

Adapted from: Baptist Union of Great Britain, *Gathering for Worship: Patterns and Prayers for the Community of Disciples* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2005), pp.36-29.

There are PowerPoint slides to use with this pattern should the Minister or other leading communion wish to use it to enable the congregation to follow and respond accordingly.

This pattern for covenant-making celebrates the eternal covenant of grace between God and humanity and also the covenant between believers within the community of disciples.

We Gather

God has made us a people:
we have been shaped by God's will.

Jesus calls us together:
we meet in Jesus' name.

The Spirit binds us together:
and leads us into truth.

Words of Invitation

Look, here is the Lord's Table spread as for a feast.
Bread for breaking, wine poured for drinking:
signs of his love and hospitality,
symbols of his life broken, his blood poured out.
He is not dead!
He is risen and present among us,
evidence of God's covenant grace and promise.
So we come in faith to the table, you and I,
companions on the journey.
Some of us fresh and eager,
others weary, in need of nourishment.
All of us conscious of our failings.

Words of confession and forgiveness may be offered here extempore or using one of the following prayers.

We confess that we have lived superficially.
We have pushed to the back of our minds
the questions that trouble us.
We have not found time to face the emotions that disturb us.
We have hidden from life
behind habit, activity, and entertainments.

We have avoided you, God, even as you came after us.
In our relationships we have given less than our whole selves
and we have not received from others
what they wished to give us of their selves.
We have countered the sharp demands of justice
with hardened hearts.
We have allowed imagination and sympathy to wither.
Routine has been our ally and honesty our dread.
Lord God, we have shut ourselves up.
Come after us again, knock once more,
that we may open up to meet others,
rediscover ourselves, know your love, and live again.

Or

Merciful God, we confess to you now that we have sinned.
We confess the sins that no one knows
and the sins that everyone knows:
the sins that are a burden to us
and the sins that do not bother us
because we have got used to them.
We confess our sins as a church:
we have not loved one another as Christ loved us
and we have not given ourselves in love and service for the world
as Christ gave himself for us.
Father forgive us.
Send your Holy Spirit to us,
to give us power
to live as, by your mercy, you have called us to live;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Or

Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.

At the conclusion of the prayer the words of invitation may be concluded

Come now, don't hesitate,
the feast is ready
and the Lord himself invites you.

We Covenant

**Creating and redeeming God,
we give you thanks and praise.
Your covenant of grace
was made for our salvation
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
We come this day
to covenant with you
and with companion disciples:
to watch over each other
and to walk together before you
in ways known
and still to be made known.
Pour your Spirit upon us.
Help us so to walk in your ways
that the promises we make this day,
and the life that we live together,
may become an offering of love,
our duty and delight
truly glorifying to you –
Father Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.
This day,
we give ourselves again
to the Lord
and to each other
to be bound together in fellowship,
and to work together
in the unity of the Spirit
for the sake of God's mission.**

The following may be named, as appropriate.

**In our congregation,
in local partnerships,
in our association
and in the wider Union,
we commit all that we have and are
to fulfil God's purposes of love.**

As a sign of covenant, we share the peace.

It was the night of the Passover, and Jesus and his friends were sharing supper together.

While they eating he told them that one of them would betray him. They were appalled and protested saying, 'Not I Lord, I would never betray you.'

Jesus took some bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them saying, 'Take this and eat. This is my body.'

He took the cup of wine and after giving thanks passed it among them, saying as they drank, 'This is my blood of the covenant. It is poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. I will not drink again until the day comes when I drink with you in my father's Kingdom.'

As the story is told (or immediately after) the person presiding breaks the bread and pours the wine.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Creating and redeeming God,
we give you thanks and praise
for your covenant of grace:
a covenant expressed
in sinful people who know forgiveness,
the weary who are refreshed,
the hungry who are nourished,
the captives who are set free
and the oppressed who experience liberation.
Thank you that you chose to make us a part of your story.
Thank you for Jesus Christ
who revealed your love in his death and resurrection
and who continues to share his life with us
through bread and wine.
Thank you for sending the Holy Spirit
who sustains us in our walk together,
helping us to watch over each other,
to pray for one another,
and to work together for justice and truth.

As we eat this bread
and drink from the cup,
(signs of hospitality and grace),
may we be empowered to serve boldly
wherever you may call.
Accept these prayers
and our heartfelt thanksgiving
in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

We Share

The bread

One people, one loaf, a sign of our common faith

and testimony to the generosity of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Take this loaf, food for faith,
and feed on it with thanksgiving.

The Bread is Shared

The wine

One people, one cup, a sign of the new covenant
poured out for you and for many.
It is a covenant sealed by his blood.
When we drink
we must be thankful
and agree together never to forget.

The Bread is Shared

We Journey

Holy God,
we have been nourished and had our thirst quenched,
through bread broken and wine poured
in thanksgiving for your Son Jesus Christ.
Send us out to be as generous to those we meet this week,
that we might show through word and deed
that he is not dead,
but risen and present among us.
Hallelujah! Amen.