

The Lord's Supper: Hungering for Justice

Adapted from: Baptist Union of Great Britain, *Gathering for Worship: Patterns and Prayers for the Community of Disciples* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2005), pp.40-42.

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 highlights the Kingdom dimension to the Lord's Supper – hungering and thirsting for justice.

Gathering sentences

Gather us in,
the lost and the lonely, the broken and breaking,
the tired and the aching
who long for the nourishment found at your feast.

Gather us in,
the done and the doubting, the wishing and wondering,
the puzzled and pondering
who long for the company found at your feast.

Gather us in,
the proud and pretentious, the sure and superior,
the never inferior,
who long for the levelling found at your feast.

Gather us in,
the bright and the bustling,
the stirrers, the shakers,
the kind laughter makers
who long for the deeper joys found at your feast.

Gather us in,
from corner or limelight, from mansion or campsite,
from fears and obsession, from tears and depression,
from untold excesses, from treasured successes,
to meet, to eat, be given a seat,
be joined to the vine, be offered new wine,
become like the least, be found at the feast.

Gather us in!

Invitation

This is the table,
not of the Church,
but of the Lord.
It is to be made ready
for those who love him and who want to love him more.
So, come,
If you have much faith
and if you have little,
if you have been here often
and if you have not been for a long time,
if you have tried to follow
and if you have failed.
Come,
not because it is I who invite you:
it is our Lord.
It is his will
that those who want him should meet him here.

The Story

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he sat at supper with his disciples. While they were eating, he took a piece of bread, said a blessing, broke it, and gave it to them with the words, 'This is my body. It is for you. Do this to remember me.' Later, he took a cup of wine, saying, 'This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Drink from it, all of you, to remember me'.

So now, following Jesus' example and command, we take this bread and this wine, the ordinary things of the world which Christ will make special. And as he said a prayer before sharing, let us do so too.

This may be said extempore or using a written prayer such as the following:

Gratitude, praise, hearts lifted high,
voices full and joyful:
these you deserve.
For when we were nothing, you made us something.
When we had no name and no faith and no future,
you called us your children.
When we lost our way or turned away, you did not abandon us.
When we came back to you, your arms opened wide in welcome.
And look, you prepare a table for us
offering not just bread, not just wine, but your very self
so that we may be filled, forgiven, healed, blessed and made new again.
You are worth all our pain and all our praise.
So now, in gratitude, we join our voices

to those of the Church on earth and in heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord God,
as we come to share the richness of your table,
we cannot forget the rawness of the earth.
We cannot take bread and forget those who are hungry.
Your world is one world and we are stewards of its nourishment.
Lord, put our prosperity
at the service of the poor.
We cannot take wine and forget those who are thirsty.
The ground and the rootless,
the earth and its weary people cry out for justice.
Lord, put our fullness
at the service of the empty.
We cannot hear your words of peace and forget the world at war
or, if not at war, then preparing for it.
Show us quickly, Lord,
how to turn weapons
into welcome signs
and the lust for power
into a desire for peace.
We cannot celebrate the feast of your family and forget our divisions.
We are one in spirit, but not in fact. History and hurt still dismember us.
Lord, heal our church
in every brokenness. **Amen.**

The Sharing

Taking and breaking the bread

Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread, broke it and said,
'This is my body, it is for you'.

Taking the cup of wine

And later he took the cup of wine and said,
'This is the new relationship with God, made possible because of my death.
Take this – all of you – to remember me'.

Look,
here is your Lord coming to you

in bread and wine.
These are the gifts of God
for the people of God.

The bread and wine are shared

A quiet prayer song may be sung as the elements are distributed.

Christ who has nourished us, is our peace.
Strangers and friends, male and female, old and young,
he has broken down the barriers to bind us to him and to each other.
Having tasted his goodness,
let us share his peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

The peace may be shared, giving time for participants to greet each other.

Concluding Prayer

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

Closing Responses

The cross,
we shall take it;
the bread,
we shall break it;
the pain,
we shall bear it;
the joy,
we shall share it;
the gospel,
we shall live it;
the love,
we shall give it;
the light,
we shall cherish it;
the darkness,
God shall perish it.