

CAR BOOT COMMUNION: COME TO THE FEAST! (ISAIAH 55)

Sanctuary, August 2020

GATHERING

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says:
Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy, and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.
Why spend money on junk?
Why work for things which leave you wanting more?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.
Pay attention and come to me,
hear me, that your soul may live. (Isaiah 55:1-3)

***This is the word of God:
Heaven's bread, the perfect meal
for our deepest hunger and hope.***

Blessed are you, God of all creation,
blessed is your provision,
and blessed is the communion
into which you gather us.
You promise through your beloved Son
that when two or three gather in his name,
you will be there in the midst of them.
***We give thanks for this promise,
and for God's presence here with us.***

The peace of God in Jesus Christ,
the bread and word of life, be with you.
And also with you.

We acknowledge
the traditional custodians of this land,
who have sung God's creation,
been nourished without money,
and trusted God's abundance
since time immemorial.
***May we too sing, eat and trust,
taking only what we need
so that all have enough to eat.
May these prayers be one step on the journey.***

We're here because we're hungry
for all that God offers:
for acceptance, for challenge,
for a place and a people
who want to be with us,
who want to feast with us
whoever we are, and whatever we bring.
Give us today our daily bread:
Give us today the bread of tomorrow.

We're here because we're hungry
for all that God offers:
for a taste of the truth –
that all is not hopeless,
that all is not helpless,
that the powers of this world
the rules of the market
will yield to God's rule.
Give us today our daily bread:
Give us today the bread of tomorrow.

CONFESSION

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says:
Seek God while God's here to be found,
pray while God's close at hand.
Let the wicked abandon their way of life
and the evil their way of thinking.
Let them come back to God, who is merciful,
come back to our God,
who is lavish with forgiveness. (Isaiah 55:6-7)
***God, we turn to you.
Forgive us our sins.***

We confess how we have turned from love and trust:
Brief pause for reflection.
Forgive us our sins.

We confess how we have hoarded abundance:
Brief pause for reflection.
Lead us not into temptation.

We confess how our consumption wounds the earth:
Brief pause for reflection.
Deliver us from evil.

We confess how we have capitulated
to the powers of the world, the rules of the market:
Brief pause for reflection.
The kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.

Forgive in us what has gone wrong,
Restore in us what is wasted.
Reveal in us what is good.
Turn us back to you,
and nourish us with better food
than we could ever buy:
***Your word, your love, your inspiration,
your daily bread for our life's journey,
in the company of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.***

THE WORD

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says:

My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth. It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:8-11)

*God, as we listen to your word,
make your thoughts our thoughts,
your ways our ways,
your purpose our purpose,
that we may bear the Holy Spirit's fruit.*

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

Let us pray.

Holy God, whose word creates life,
we name people and places
who need love, light and healing:

*We pray (aloud or silently) for people or situations
in need of God's care ... **Lord, hear our prayer.***

God of all places and this place:
You promised a new earth where the hungry will feast
and the oppressed go free:

Come, Lord, build that place among us.

God of all times and this time:
You promised a new day when the fearful will laugh
and the sick find healing:

Come, Lord, speed that time among us.

God of all people, our God:
Take what we have and what we hope for,
to make this a world where all people find good news.

***Help us share in the work of your kingdom,
until the new earth is created among us.***

THE TABLE

Blessed is our God, both guest and host,
who sets the table before us
and invites us to share in communion.

Let us hear the story of how it began: On the night that he was betrayed, Jesus sat at the table with his friends. Just as he did when feeding crowds in the wilderness, he took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'Take, eat, this is my body.'

So now we follow Jesus' example:
blessing bread and sharing it with friends.

***Thank you, God, that ordinary things
become special when placed in your hands.
Thank you for making broken things whole,
and that nothing is wasted in your economy.***

The body of Christ
is given for the life of the world.
Self-giving bread for self-giving people.
Let us receive what we are.
Let us become what we receive:

The body of Christ.

LEAVING

As we carry this bread away
to be consumed in separate locations,
let us remember the communion of saints
which will continue to unite us across time and space.

When we consume the bread,
may it consume us and change us and remind us again
of God's joyful, peaceful, healing purpose.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says:
My word will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it:
You shall go out with joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills
will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field
will clap their hands.
Instead of thistles, manna gums will grow,
instead of blackberries, sheoaks.
This will be a witness to God,
living and lasting evidence of God. (Isaiah 55:11b-13)

May the God who calls us to the table,
who feeds multitudes without money,
who feeds us with his own flesh,
who guides us into creative purpose,
nourish and sustain us, and continue to transform us
into the very image of Christ: The Bread of Life.
Let us sing in harmony with manna gum and sheoak
as we go out with joy to love and serve the world:

In the name of Christ: Amen.

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*This liturgy was first aired in a formerly cleared paddock which is now fringed with manna gums: a prayer in itself. Written, sourced, edited and arranged by Alison Sampson for Sanctuary © 2020 + We're here because ... tomorrow: Janet Morley All Desires Known (3rd ed.) Harrisburg, PA/New York, NY: Morehouse, 2006: 121 + Forgive in us ... our Lord: Wild Goose Worship Group Stages on the Way WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow G51 3UU, Scotland, 1998: 25-26 (extract, edited); God of all Places and Thank you, God: adapted from TableLife, Oxford.