

CAR BOOT COMMUNION (WITH THE MANNA-MOBILE)

Sanctuary, 2020

GATHERING

'Can God set a table in the wilderness?'

The people asked; they put God to the test.
Then God commanded the clouds above
and opened the doors of heaven.
God rained down manna for them to eat
and gave them the bread of heaven.
Mere mortals ate the bread of angels,
which God gave them in abundance.

*Heaven's bread, the perfect meal
for our deepest hunger and hope.*

While graciously providing, God tested them back. God told them to take no more than enough; to store nothing of what they had gathered; to share freely; to trust and take time to rest from their work; and to place some of the manna at the centre of their common life so that they would always remember. A bit like car boot communion, this 'bread of the presence' in their Ark of the Covenant was their constant, portable, spiritual reminder of their story and the source of their freedom.

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 of life, be with you all.

And also with you.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians
of this land, who have trusted in God's abundance
since time immemorial.

*May we learn to trust in God's abundance,
and, like manna, take 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

Forgive us our sins. We confess to God
how we have turned from love and trust:

Brief pause for reflection.

Forgive us our sins.

We confess to God
how we have hoarded abundance:

Brief pause for reflection.

Lead us not into temptation.

We confess to God
how our consumption wounds the earth:

Brief pause for reflection.

Deliver us from evil.

We confess to God 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, the Lord says:
On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare for all
peoples a feast of rich food, a banquet of well-aged
wines – the best of meats and the finest of wines. God
will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over
all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; God will
swallow up death forever. Then the Lord will wipe away
the tears from all faces, and take away the disgrace of

the people from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.
In that day they will say,

***This is our God,
the one in whom we trusted,
the one who saved us.
This is the Lord for whom we waited.
Let us rejoice, and be glad.***

For the Word which nourishes:

Thanks be to God.

THE TABLE

Blessed is our God, both guest and host,
who sets the table with bread and wine,
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.' Later he took a cup of wine and gave it to them, saying, 'This cup is the new relationship with God, made possible through my death. Drink, all of you, to remember me.'

So now we follow Jesus' example and command, taking bread and wine together.

In these, Jesus has promised to be present;
through these, we become one with Christ;
in Christ, we may be made whole.

***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.***

My friends, be grateful when you touch bread.

Let it not lie uncared for, unwanted.

There is so much beauty in bread;

Beauty of sun and soil, beauty of patient toil.

Winds and rain have caressed it.

Christ often blessed it.

Be grateful when you touch bread.

Be loving when you drink wine.

Let its colour, life and joy be appreciated.

There is so much beauty in wine.

Beauty of self-giving, beauty of forgiving.

Winds and rain have caressed it.

Christ often blessed it.

Be loving when you drink wine.

***Thank you, God, for bread, for wine,
for love and for your promises,
and for people to share them with. Amen.***

*We come forward, one by one,
to take bread and wine.*

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

We have dined on Christ's own flesh and blood:
and as this bread and wine become one with us,
we become one with Christ:

bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh,

loving, forgiving, and praying for the world:

***Listening God, we bring to you those
who need love, light and peace:***

*We pray for people or situations
in need of God's care.*

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.***

LEAVING

In gratitude for this moment, this meal,
these people, this transformation,
we offer ourselves to you.

***Ask much of us, expect much of us,
enable much by us, encourage many through us,
that we may live to your glory,
both as inhabitants of the earth
and as citizens of the commonwealth of heaven.
Amen.***

May the God who sets a table in the desert;

who feeds multitudes from a child's generosity;

who feeds us with his own flesh and blood,

nourish and sustain us, and continue to transform us
into the very image of Christ: The Bread of Life.

We go in peace to love and feed the world:

In the name of Christ: Amen.



Written, sourced, edited and arranged by Alison Sampson for Sanctuary © 2020 + Ps. 78 (selections); While graciously providing ... Suggested by Marcus Curnow + We're here because ... tomorrow: Janet Morley *All Desires Known* (3rd ed.) Harrisburg, PA/New York, NY: Morehouse, 2006: 121 + Prayers of Confession: Alison Sampson + 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); Thank you, God ... drink wine and God of all Places: adapted from *TableLife*, Oxford; In deep gratitude ... of heaven: *A Wee Worship Book* (4th ed.) Glasgow: Wild Goose Worship Group, 1999: 89-90 (adapted); Blessing: Alison Sampson. Image courtesy servicioskoinonia.org.