

MEALTIME PRAYER IN HOUSEHOLDS

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## *The Day of Pentecost 2020*

*One of the understandings of which many of us have lost sight in recent years is the notion of the household as 'Domestic Church.' From the earliest days of Christianity, families and other households were a primary setting for worship and discipleship formation. The church placed great emphasis on encouraging and supporting the domestic church. Likewise, in recent decades, though we may refer to Sunday as "The Lord's Day," so many demands and distractions we encounter often mean we end up treating Sunday observance as "The Lord's Hour."*

*This rite has been provided so households may dedicate one meal on each of the Sundays during the 50-Day Season of Easter as a time for worship, prayer, devotion, and the sharing of faith. While helpful in a time of pandemic when we cannot gather with our congregations, it is also hoped that this kind of practice will become an ongoing tradition in our households, even when we no longer must practice 'social distancing,' so we might better nurture the domestic church and devote more of Sunday as the high feast day of the week.*

*Two options are provided for The Gathering in this service. You will want to review them ahead of time and decide which one you will use.*

*As you use this resource, you are encouraged to provide for the breakfast/brunch or the dinner it accompanies the same kind of sumptuous fare you would put out on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Easter.*

*Much of this rite is based on the Home Prayers found in The Book of Alternative Services 1985 (BAS) of The Anglican Church of Canada, and on the Gathering Rites for the Paschal Cycle approved by The General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada in 2019. (Available at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Gathering-Rites-for-the-Paschal-Cycle.pdf>)*

## *+ Preparation +*

*You will need a candle or a number of candles for your table, a large bowl or basin, and a pitcher of water if you are using Gathering Option #1).*

*You may also want to have on hand a Bible if you wish to use a different translation than the one provided below.*

*You may also wish to use a copy of The Book of Alternative Services (BAS), if you have one in your home.*

*If desired, copies of this rite may be printed for everyone. However, the service is designed so the parts voiced by participants are those already known or easily memorized. So printed copies for all are not necessary.*

*The meal is prepared. Before the table is set and the food is served, the following rite for washing hands may take place. The Leader or another person says,*

*As we prepare to serve our meal, let us begin by washing, cleansing our hands as we were cleansed in the waters of baptism. We do this not because we are afraid, but because we are commanded to love. So we cleanse our hands as an expression of love for the vulnerable people Jesus loved. May we be instruments of God's care. May the sacrifices we make be for the good of our human family near and far.*

*All present then wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water. Once washed, each person should help with setting the table as they are able.*

*This handwashing rite is provided by The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA. Used and adapted with permission*

## + *The Gathering* +

*The candle or candles on the table or in the worship area are lit. The Leader or the one who lights the candle(s) says the following:*

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful;  
and kindle in us the fire of your love.

*Then the leader continues,*

*Leader:* In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body,  
and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.  
Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*Others:* **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

### **Thanksgiving for Baptism**

*Someone pours the water into the basin or bowl.*

*Leader:* Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are raised to new life in the Spirit.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Then the Leader gives thanks, saying,*

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water.  
Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.  
Through water you led the children of Israel  
out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise.  
In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John  
and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ,  
to lead us, through his death and resurrection,  
from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.  
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.  
By it we share in his resurrection.  
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son,  
we celebrate our fellowship in him in faith.  
We pray that all who have passed through the water of baptism  
may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be all honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Participants are encouraged to dip their hand in the water and trace the sign of the cross on their forehead or over their body as a remembrance of their baptism. Members of households may choose to trace the cross on the forehead of each other, saying, "Remember your baptism."*

### **Song**

*A favourite song, refrain, or hymn for Pentecost, or about the power of the Spirit, or our unity in the Spirit may be sung. As another option, an "Alleluia" that you know from the worship life of your church may be sung.*

### **Table Prayer**

*(Based on Psalm 104.24-34)*

*Leader:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*Others:* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Leader:* O Lord, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.  
These all look to you to give them their food in due season.  
When you open your hand,  
they are filled with good things.  
Send forth your Spirit, O God,  
on this meal and this household,  
that your people may know renewal  
and sing your praise while we have our being.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
the risen and ascended Lord.

*Others:* **Amen.**

*Other prayers for Grace at Meals can be found in The Book of Alternative Services (1985), pp.694-695, and The Book of Common Prayer, p. 735.*

## *+ The Meal +*

*The meal is now eaten. If several are gathered, they first serve one another, then dine.*

## *+ Praise +*

*Here may follow a psalm, hymn, song, or instrumental music.*

## *+ The Word and the Prayers +*

*At the end of the meal, someone reads the following Bible passage, Acts chapter 2, verses 1-21 (Common English Bible):*

When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

<sup>5</sup> There were pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered. They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in their native languages. <sup>7</sup> They were surprised and amazed, saying, “Look, aren’t all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? <sup>8</sup> How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; as well as residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the regions of Libya bordering Cyrene; and visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), <sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the mighty works of God in our own languages!” <sup>12</sup> They were all surprised and bewildered. Some asked each other, “What does this mean?” <sup>13</sup> Others jeered at them, saying, “They’re full of new wine!”

<sup>14</sup> Peter stood with the other eleven apostles. He raised his voice and declared, “Judeans and everyone living in Jerusalem! Know this!

Listen carefully to my words! <sup>15</sup> These people aren't drunk, as you suspect; after all, it's only nine o'clock in the morning! <sup>16</sup> Rather, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

*<sup>17</sup> In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.  
Your young will see visions.  
Your elders will dream dreams.*

*<sup>18</sup> Even upon my servants, men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.*

*<sup>19</sup> I will cause wonders to occur in the heavens above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and a cloud of smoke.*

*<sup>20</sup> The sun will be changed into darkness,  
and the moon will be changed into blood,  
before the great and spectacular day of the Lord comes.*

*<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

## **Reflection**

*After a period of silent reflection, the Leader begins the time of shared reflection. The following questions may be used.*

1. What word, image, or phrase stands out to you from the story?
2. In the story, we hear mention of a lot of nations and peoples, some of whom have names that are difficult to pronounce. Two of those mentioned, Medes and Elamites, no longer existed at the time in which this story is set. What do you think Luke may be trying to tell us about the reach of God's Spirit when he includes these people in the story? What does it say about the breadth God's love?
3. How does the gift of the Spirit change the apostles? How does the gift of the Spirit change us?

## Prayers of the People

*Presider:* I invite each and all of you to name those people and places for whom we should pray and remember this day.

*Time is allowed for people to do so.*

*Or, if preferred, you may wish to use the litany to the Holy Spirit on p. 123 of The Book of Alternative Services, or the Thanksgiving Prayer on p. 736 of The Book of Common Prayer.*

*The Prayers of the People conclude with the following prayer.*

*Leader:* God unheld by word or wall:  
transform us by your Spirit of strong, yet gentle power;  
and turn our hearts to the mending of the world,  
through Jesus Christ, the name above all names,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

### Conclusion

*Leader:* Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia!

*All:* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**