

MEALTIME PRAYER IN HOUSEHOLDS for the 1st SUNDAY OF EASTER, 2021

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. Over the past year, due in no small part to the pandemic, many congregations are doing so again. This is one resource provided to support this effort.

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The reading from the Gospel according to Luke, from the New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

+ Preparation +

You will need a candle or a number of candles for your table. You may also choose to decorate the eating area with other symbols related to the Christian celebration of Easter. Of course, it is recommended that you use your best dishware, cutlery, and tablecloth. You may even wish to dress up for dinner.

You will also need a Bible. If a Bible is not available, a copy of the reading is 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 Gathering* +

The candle or candles on the table or in the worship area are lit. Then the leader says,

May the light of Christ in glory rising scatter the darkness of heart and mind. Alleluia! Christ is risen.

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

Leader: O God, the source of light and life,
by the resurrection of your only Son
you have led us out of darkness into your marvelous light,
from death into life,
from slavery into freedom.
Bring the light of your new creation to us and to our world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

Others: **Amen.**

Song

A favourite song, refrain, or hymn for Easter, or extolling Christ as our light, or encouraging us to let our light shine before others 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 Luke 24.13-35)

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

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

Leader: Blessed are you, O God. The Lord Jesus made himself known to the disciples of Emmaus in the breaking of the bread. May our meal together this evening reveal his presence among us so, like them, we can tell others that Jesus is risen. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

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

+ 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, or during dessert, someone reads
Luke 24.13-35*

*This scripture passage may be read from your Bible or using the copy of the passage
provided in the first appendix to this service.*

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. What does this story tell you about how the risen Jesus comes to us, speaks to us, or reveals himself to us in our lives?
3. What does this story tell you about how we can live the risen life of Jesus or be the presence of Jesus for others?

Prayers of the People

You may use the form for the Prayers of the People provided in Appendix #2, or you may simply choose to do the following:

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.

The Prayers of the People conclude with the following prayer.

Leader: God of glory, you raised Jesus from death to life.
As we are joined with him in death through baptism,
so unite us with him in resurrection,
that, as part of your new creation,
we may walk in newness of life
and shine your light in all the world.
We ask this through Jesus Christ the Lord,
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!**

Appendix #1 -

Luke 24.13-35
New Revised Standard Version

Context: On the evening of the 1st Sunday of Easter, we hear a story of the Risen Christ sharing a meal with his disciples. In her book *Gospel Medicine*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes, "I do not know why so many of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances have something to do with food, but they do...Maybe it is because eating is so necessary for life, and so is he. Or maybe it is because sharing food is what makes us human. Most other species forage alone, so feeding is a solitary business, but human beings seem to love eating together. Even when we are stuck alone with a frozen dinner, most of us will open a magazine or turn on the television just for company. It is, at any rate, one of the clues to his presence. There is always a chance, when we are eating together, that we will discover the risen Lord in our midst."

Reading:

¹³ Now on that same day, the first day of the week, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷ He said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹ He asked them, "What things?"

They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his

body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

²⁵ Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

³² They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Appendix #2 – Prayers of the People

If more than one person is praying this service in a household, one or two other participants may lead the following prayers, all participants responding with the text in bold print.

Through Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, we have come to trust in God, who raised Christ from the dead and gave him glory.
With our faith and hope set on God, let us lift our hearts to God as we say, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

For this household;
that we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst,
let us lift our hearts to God: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our congregation of *N. Church*,
for the whole Diocese of Algoma,
and for our Archbishop, Anne;
that all who know the Lord Jesus in the Breaking of the Bread
may love one another deeply from the heart,
let us lift our hearts to God: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For this world: for all nations and peoples, *especially N.*,
that violence and injustice will come to a swift end,
and a spirit of genuine service and concord will be given to all,
particularly to those who lead,
let us lift our hearts to God: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who suffer sickness or need, *especially N.*,
that they may know God's healing embrace
through the compassion of many companions,
let us lift our hearts to God: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We remember those who have died, *especially N.*,
and that we may walk with our God for eternity in the land of the living,
let us lift our hearts to God: **Lord, hear our prayer.**