

HOW BLESSED, IS THIS MEETING PLACE

Connecting as community before a meal: A rite of reflection
by Deride Brown ibvm

We gather

You might begin by reading the words or listening on YouTube to one of the hymns

[How Blessed is this Place – David Haas](#)

O how blessed is this place where we touch God's own face,
in the presence of each other may we who pray and draw near
Know that our God is here who is Father and Mother.

Word who sang to forgive, rose from the tomb to live
Singing the hymn of endless glory. Piercing the poison of night, Jesus, our holy
light come be the author of our story.

Here at this table we will dine, taking both bread and wine,
Blest broken, shared with each other. Here where all children are blest
Stranger will be our guest, one with Jesus, our brother.

We are sent forth from this space filled with God's love and grace, calling
creation to be faithful. To you O God we belong: source of all beauty and song:
we will be your people.

[Remembrance – Matt Maher](#)

Oh, how could it be that my God would welcome me into this mystery
Say take this bread, take this wine, now the simple made divine for any to receive.

By Your mercy, we come to Your table. By Your grace, You are making us faithful.

Lord, we remember You and remembrance leads us to worship, and as we worship You
Our worship leads to communion. We respond to Your invitation, we remember You.

See His body, His blood. Know that He has overcome every trial we will face.
None too lost to be saved, none too broken or ashamed, all are welcome in this place.

By Your mercy, we come to Your table. By Your grace, You are making us faithful.

Lord, we remember You, and remembrance leads us to worship and as we worship You
Our worship leads to communion. We respond to Your invitation, we remember You.

Dying You destroyed our death. Rising You restored our life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Lord Jesus, come in glory. Lord Jesus, come in glory. Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Lord, we remember You, and remembrance leads us to worship and as we worship You
Our worship leads to communion. We respond to Your invitation, we remember You.

We respond to Your invitation. We respond to Your invitation, we remember You.

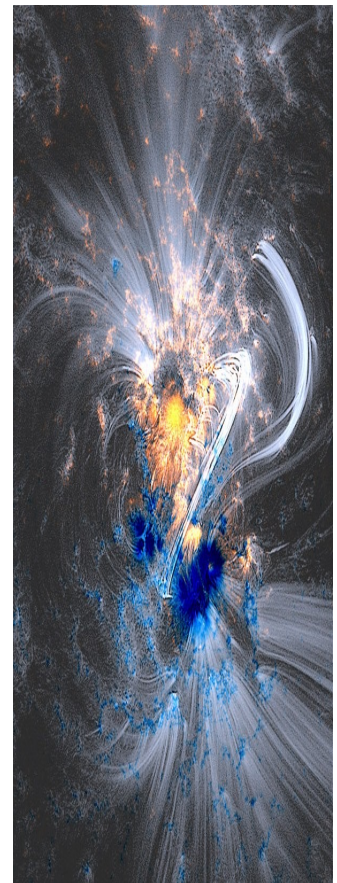


Figure 1 [Where can I Find life?](#)

We ponder

You might invite your family to bring a scarf, a favourite piece of clothing, a colourful item from their bedroom. Share the words below as a family and then lay the items in the centre of your gathering space.

And the dance goes on...

....As we take up our colours...

....we give thanks...

....we have been blessed

....The Proclamation of our Shared Word.

We wondered whether we would have the energy: **or the heart for the on-going.**

We felt the world, with all its desperation: **and relentless deathly cycles.**

But, sometimes, for a moment, it all becomes framed in light beyond our seeing.

In ourselves, we feel the movement of possible music:

**And in the imagination of God,
the birthings of Christ,
the dance goes on.**

You might invite your family to say a sentence about how they are feeling as they gather today.

We share together

You might say these words together

We Gather the Cup of Blessing

And the Bread of Nourishment

Strength for our Journey

**Where Two or Three are gathered in my name,
Know I am with you, I am with you.**

**Where Two or Three are gathered in my name,
Know I am there to be with you.**



Figure 2 *Freely give what you have been*

We Reflect

We thank you for Jesus of Nazareth who loved so greatly and taught so clearly and courageously that he was able to set people free, from images and ideas and religious practices that bound them into fear and a false separation from you. Through him we have learned that our loving is a sharing in your life. In him we see your presence challenging us to make your reign on earth more visible.

We believe that like all people who lived in love and died in love, Jesus died into your eternal loving embrace. We are thankful that his story grounds our belief in our own eternal, loving connectedness to you and our belief that we are in communion with all our relatives and friends who have died...*(pause to remember them... you might like to name them here).*

We pray for all who allow the mind and heart and spirit of Jesus to motivate their actions. We pray that Christian leadership may be open and affirming, creative and challenging. We pray that all Christians may better recognise, acknowledge, and acclaim your presence in all people, at all times, in all places. For ourselves gathered here, we ask for the grace to be who and what we ritualise here: "the body of Christ", people committed to our "Amen" to allowing your Spirit to move freely in our lives.

We thank you that we have gathered here as the body of Christ;
We rejoice in the giftedness of each one here;
We are grateful for who are for each other.
We consider ourselves blessed *in* and *by* you.

May we be truly Eucharistic in all we do
To this prayer we give our Amen.

Thanks be to God for good and faithful friends.
Lights for each other, on our journeys.
Cups of living water, held to our lips.
Healing oil poured on our heads
Wise Ones, for our guiding.



Figure 3 The Spirit Ripples out full of grace - person to person, receiving and giving.

We offer our gift of Peace to each other.
You may like to pause here and offer each of those gathered a sign of peace

We remember the night before he died, when he took bread, gave you thanks for everything he had,
broke the bread and shared it with his friends asking them to remember his total surrender to you
and his enduring love for each of them
.... STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY

Likewise, knowing His life was to be poured out, He shared a cup of wine with them.
... STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY ...

We give thanks for the power inherent in the symbols to which we claim:
the power of this community which is the face of inclusivity and connection.

Here you might like to take turns and read a paragraph each
We are the Church,
We ask, O God, for the grace to be our best selves.
We ask for the vision to be builders of the human community
rather than destroyers.
We ask for the humility as a people to understand
the fears and hopes of other peoples.

We ask for the love it takes to bequeath to the children of the world to come
more than the failures of our own making.
We ask for the heart it takes to care for the all the peoples of Afghanistan
and Iraq, of Palestine and Israel,
and for those displaced through the injustices present in the Sudan,
as well as for ourselves.

Give us the depth of soul, O God, to constrain our might, to resist the
temptations of power, to refuse to attack the attackable,
to understand that vengeance begets violence and to bring peace,
not war, wherever we go.



Figure 4 No one grows or is able to give life with strength alone

For You, O God, have been merciful to us.
For You, O God, have been patient with us.
For You, O God, have been gracious to us.

And so may we be merciful
And patient
And gracious
And trusting
With these others who you also love.

We ask

You might say these words together

May the blessing of God
Rest upon us
May God's Peace abide in us
May God's Presence illuminate our hearts
Now and forever.

The dance of the transforming Spirit goes on,
We claim it and join in the dance of the Spirit of God,
As life is born in us, Jesus seen among us, the Spirit moving with us.

We proclaim

You might say the Glory Be together

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen



Figure 5 *Give without payment*



Figure 6 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*

We share a meal together