

A REMOTE LOVE FEAST FOR PALM SUNDAY 2020

INTRODUCTION

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We give thanks that we can share in this sacred fellowship while we are isolated in our individual homes, care homes, and hospital rooms. Even as we do, we cry out to Christ Jesus as the people of Jerusalem did so long ago: "Hosanna! Save us! Deliver us, we pray!" And God brings us together through the power of the Spirit, and this feast.

The Love Feast, or Agape Meal, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry, and expressing the community and fellowship enjoyed by the family of Christ. Although its origins in the early church are closely interconnected with the origins of the Lord's Supper, the two services became quite distinct and should not be confused with each other....

The modern history of the Love Feast began when the Moravians in Germany introduced a service of sharing food, prayer, religious conversation, and hymns in 1727. John Wesley first experienced it among the Moravians in Savannah, Georgia, ten years later. It quickly became a feature of the Evangelical Revival and a regular part of Methodist society meetings in Great Britain and throughout the English-speaking world. As Methodists immigrated to North America they made Love Feasts an important part of early American Methodism.

The Love Feast has often been held on occasions when the celebration of the Lord's Supper would be inappropriate, or as it is today, not possible, since we cannot be together to partake. Your home or room is an appropriate location for this Agape Meal. The worship setting for today can be a dining table, a meal tray, a coffee table, or something similar. You will need a glass or cup of water for each person, and a plate or bowl filled with as much as you want of bread, crackers, or rolls.

One of the advantages of the Love Feast is that any Christian may conduct it. Congregational participation and leadership, testimonies and praise, prayer, and scripture are all important parts of this sacred time. Most Love Feasts include the quiet, reverent sharing of food.

And so, let us join with each from wherever we are in the spirit of fellowship.

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar
Lay Leader Rene Wilbur

LOVE FEAST

OPENING PRAYER

As the people spread their coats and palm branches on the ground to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem, so we welcome him into our lives this morning. Let us pray.

King of Glory, King of Peace, Servant King, reign in our hearts and lives this day and all days, that we might praise your holy name. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Philippians 2:5-11 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be exploited,

⁷ but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸ he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name

that is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

We enter the sacred story anew today as it was celebrated in [Zechariah Chapter 9](#) (The Message) and [Psalm 118](#) (NSRV)

Shout and cheer, Daughter Zion!

Raise the roof, Daughter Jerusalem!

Your king is coming!

a good king who makes all things right,

a humble king riding a donkey,

a mere colt of a donkey.

This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!

CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

And the story continues. We respond after each line of confession with the ancient words: Hosanna. Save us.

The streets were crowded. A parade mood filled the air. Shouts came from deep in the heart.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us from lukewarm faith.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us from callous indifference.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us from paltry hopes and petty dreams.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us from unquenchable greed.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us from lazy habits and faithless commitments.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us from soft-mindedness and hard-heartedness.

Hosanna. Save us.

We cry from the depth of our hearts and the very pit of our souls.

Hosanna. Save us.

Save us now.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

WITNESS

As we observe Palm/Passion Sunday, we are challenged to have the mind of Christ.

The mind of Christ, a person who emptied himself, a person who became the servant of all for the sake of the redemption of humanity, a person who humbled himself, even to embrace the death on a cross.

Friends, as we take part in this love feast as disciples of Jesus Christ and as we reenact what our Lord and Savior went through so that we may have life, may we not reenact it just as a tradition, but with true repentant hearts and minds, asking for God's forgiveness for all our sins. May we rededicate ourselves so that the world may see in us a true departure from our egos, prides, and all human sins, and an adoption of new humble spirits full of Christ's love, and the direction of the Holy Spirit. May we always have a longing to carry the cross, a desire to embrace that cross, and a willingness to die on it for our Christian witness.

LORD'S PRAYER

Save us as we pray together in the words that Jesus taught, spoken in all of our languages:

Our Father ...

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The light of Christ reaches out to friend and stranger, touching each life with blessing. If you have not done so already in your worship, share the peace and forgiveness of Christ with those in your space or those on your phone or screen. Do so safely wherever you are.

INVITATION

Let us pray as we come to the table.

Be present at our table, Lord.

Be here and everywhere adored.

**Bless thou this food and grant that we
may feast in paradise with thee.**

Now let us share together in this feast. If you are not alone, you will pass the bread and offer some water to each person you are sheltering with. If alone, you will serve yourself some bread and water. Eat and drink as much as you have available and need. You may offer reflections, prayers, and sharing during the meal.

As you break and share bread, I say to you: You are loved by Christ.

As you partake of the cup of water, I say to you: You are a child of God.

PRAYER AFTER THE MEAL

We give thanks for this time of fellowship and sharing your love, O God. May we offer the love and grace and peace that you have given us to others, both strangers and friends. Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING

Go now in peace and may the love of God, the light of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit abide in you now and forever. Amen and Amen.

Works Cited

Introduction and Liturgy	United Methodist Book of Worship. P. 581ff. ©1992.
Opening Prayer	John Birch, adapted.
Prayer of Confession	The Open Church, adapted.
Invitation	John Cennick, adapted.

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