

Agapé Meal *

for Several Persons

Sundays and Holy Days from Christmas Eve – The Epiphany (Jan 6) When the Church Cannot Gather in Person

Appropriate foods for festal Agapé meals are celebratory, according to the tradition or culture of participants, but simplicity is to be favored over complexity. Offerings might include bread, fresh fruit, wine and juices, olives, simple fish or meats (esp. lamb), eggs, and fresh vegetables.

This meal might be held by families in a single home, or it might be held simultaneously with other community members over an online platform with the priest joining. Co-residents in a home, or in a housing complex, might also hold such a meal inside or outside, subject to guidelines of their locality regarding distancing, hygiene, and number of participants.

+ The Opening Rite +

At the time appointed, all gather around the table, standing as able.

The Presiding Priest (communal/online) or Presiding Layperson (household member) briefly welcomes all, and then:

Presider We gather today in the name of Jesus, born as one of us to redeem us.
People We gather today, thankful that no trial or trouble can separate us from God's love.

All say the Canticle

Canticle 20 **Glory to God** *Gloria in excelsis*

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Presider now offers the following blessings.

Over Wine

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of Jesus Christ, crucified yet risen. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Over Bread

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; you have fed us with the bread of life in the Body of your Son. Feed us now with your presence among us and your presence in your Word. As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Over the Other Foods

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us, even as we long to gather around one table and one Lord, as we await our risen Lord's return. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

+ The Meal +

Dine together, enjoy, be open to gratitude.

+ Reflection +

Near the end of the meal, the Presider could invite all present to reflect and share, using these or similar words:

“In the week past, what has been difficult, what have you mourned?”

“And what grace or gift have you known or received?”

A family with younger children might ask instead:

“When have you felt sad this week?”

“When have you felt loved?”

+ Scripture +

Someone now reads the Scripture for the day.

The Scriptures appointed can be found by clicking on the calendar at

<https://episcopalchurch.org/lectionary-calendar>

or in the Book of Common Prayer on pages 901-911.

The Gospel is always read.

Silence or a reflection on the gospel may follow.

Free-form prayers of intercession and thanksgiving may be offered.

A simple hymn or song of praise can be sung.

+ The Closing Rite +

All stand as able, and the presider now says:

The Lord be with you. or God be with you

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

The Lord's Prayer may be prayed by all in unison.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Presider then prays the Collect of the Day. These can be found by clicking on the calendar at <https://episcopalchurch.org/lectionary-calendar> or in the Book of Common Prayer on pages 212-214.

People **Amen.**

Still standing, the Presider now says:

Presider We have gathered this day, both mourning and rejoicing.

People **We have gathered this day in faith that God will hear our prayer.**

Presider Surrounded by illness, we mourn our dead;

People **yet still we say, Alleluia!**

Presider We know loneliness and discomfort;

People **yet still we say, Alleluia!**

Presider We cannot see the way that lies ahead;

People **yet still we say, Alleluia!**

Presider All we go down to the dust;

People **yet even at the grave we make our song, Alleluia!**

Presider Alleluia Christ is risen!

People **The Lord is risen indeed!**

Presider Abide in the peace of God.

People **Thanks be to God.**

This concludes the Agape Meal service.

*Edited from a ritual created by the Rev. Dr. James Farwell adapted and created from contents of the *Book of Occasional Service* 2018, *The Book of Common Prayer* 1979, and from original material. Permission to adapt and amend is given to all.