



'A Shalom Liturgy'

Invitation

Jesus came proclaiming "Peace": Peace to those of us who are far off, and peace to those of us who are near. (Eph 2:17)

Lord, we celebrate your *shalom*.

Jesus said, "Listen, I am standing at the door and knocking: if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me." (1Cor 11:23-26)

Lord, we welcome your presence.

Jesus said, "When you enter a house, say 'Peace to this house', and if a person of peace is there your peace shall remain." (Lk 10:6)

Lord, we receive your *shalom*.

Remember that *shalom* is only ever present to the extent that there is physical wellbeing, justice in all relationships and integrity in character;

Lord, we remember.

We confess to God the ways in which we have failed to live in true *shalom*.

Pause

For allowing those things that prevent the nurturing of *shalom* in our relationship with God,
Lord, have mercy.

For making those choices which have inhibited the growth of *shalom* deep within ourselves,
Lord, have mercy.

For ignoring the care and compassion of *shalom* in actions towards our fellow human beings,
Lord, have mercy.

For rejecting the meekness of *shalom* in our relationship with wild nature and the earth herself,
Lord, have mercy.

The Peacemeal is a place where our enemies are fed and reconciled:

'If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat and water to drink.' (Prov 25:21)

The Peacemeal is a place where forgiveness is found:

Jesus said to the woman at the table, "Your sins are forgiven ... go in peace." (Lk 7:48-49)

The Peacemeal is a place where the risen Jesus is encountered:

'He was known to them in the breaking of bread ... Jesus himself stood among them and said, "Peace be with you" ... then he said, "Have you anything to eat?"' (Lk 24:35-36,41)

Sharing the bread (At the commencement of eating the meal)

Now let us share the bread together. Bread, 'the staff of life', is food in its most basic form. Across the nations of the world it is a symbol of what meets our most vital physical needs, but also those needs that are spiritual. Bread is a gift from God.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; those who come to me shall not hunger, and those who believe in me shall never thirst ... I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread they will live for ever; I am the bread given for the life of the world." (Jn 6:35,51)

Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (1Cor 11:23-26)

The bread is broken, shared equally between each of the participants at the meal - initially a portion is eaten reflectively, the remainder is then eaten as part of the meal.

WE EAT THE MEAL TOGETHER

Sharing the cup (At the conclusion of eating the meal)

Now let us share the wine together. Wine, 'the blood of the grape', has from ancient times been a symbol of strength, joy and the reality of life itself. Like bread, sharing wine has always been a mark of friendship, with deep spiritual significance. Wine is a gift from God.

Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If anyone thirst, let them come to me and drink. The person who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of their heart shall flow rivers of living water'" ... But now in Christ Jesus you have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace.' (Jn 7:37-38; Eph 2:13-14)

After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (1Cor 11:23-26)

The wine is poured, shared in a glass passed between each of the participants at the meal.

Declaration

Having shared the Peacemeal together, in friendship with one another and in the company of the risen Jesus, we now turn our faces towards the journey ahead.

We recognise that the kingdom of God is not food and drink but justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rm 14:17)

As we move from the table we recognise that *shalom* requires both inner formation and practical action. We seriously yet joyfully heed the biblical calls to respond to *shalom*. So ...

We shall seek *shalom*,

We will depart from evil and do good, seeking *shalom* and pursuing it. (Ps 34:14)

We shall proclaim *shalom*,

We will wear as shoes on our feet the eagerness to spread the gospel of peace. (Eph 6:15)

We shall make *shalom*,

We will respond to your call to be peacemakers and so identify as children of God. (Mt 5:9)

We shall live *shalom*:

We will, if possible, so far as it depends on us, live in peace with everyone. (Rm 12:18)

We shall pray *shalom*:

We will seek the *shalom* of the city... and pray to the Lord on its behalf. (Jer 29:7)

We shall expect *shalom*:

We will live declaring that of your kingdom and your *shalom* there will be no end. (Isa 9:6-7)

God says, "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind ... for like the days of the Tree of Life shall the days of my people be ... The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain" (Isa 65:17, 22, 25)

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Mat 6:10)

On this mountain the Lord of Hosts will prepare for all peoples a feast of rich food, a banquet of well-aged wines: the best of food and the finest of wines. And God will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; the Lord will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces (Isa 25:6-8)

Oh the joy of eating bread in the kingdom of God. (Lk14:15)

We conclude our Peacemeal by speaking words of blessing together and to each other:

May this simple meal nourish you; physically, spiritually, completely.

May the love within this moment inspire you.

May you live courageously and joyfully - as someone who is truly free.

May peace embrace you.

May deep *shalom* transfigure you to live as a beacon of wild hope.