

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Exodus 12:1–14

Psalm 149

Romans 13:8–14

Matthew 18:15–20

SELECTED READING AND THEME

Exodus 12:1–14

We eat and drink together as our way of taking our place in God’s freedom and justice movement.

CALL TO WORSHIP

It’s time to gather!

Our God is within and among us.

So ready your appetite for encounter.

Open up, get ready to taste freedom,

It’s time to delight in God

and to feel God’s own delight in us.

Come, let’s worship our God!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Come, Christ Jesus, meet us here today.

Draw near to us as we draw near to you.

Fuel our appetite for peace, for reconciliation.

Give us a hunger for justice and wholeness,

And deepen our experience of joy in the Holy Spirit

Draw near to us as we draw near to you.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God our Maker,

You are love, and your love lives within us.

But even so, we hurt each other all the time.

We struggle with one another,

we get defensive,

we refuse to listen to one another,

we create division and pain.

We are sorry, God, for the people we’ve hurt.

We are sorry for the ways we’ve refused to recognise the pain we cause others.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Our God delights in teaching us lessons for living and learning always involves growing and making mistakes along the way.

Our God guides us into reconciliation and forgives us.

Know that you are forgiven, soaked in grace, and caught up in a bigger freedom movement.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING

Let all of us who love God sing a brand-new song of praise.

God our maker, you give us the inside word on right living.

You place us on the highway of wholeness

and make us ready and willing to pound the pavements of wonder and freedom!

You fix us on your promises of blessing and peace,

and the words of our critics bounce right off!

You, Loving God, transform our appetites –

No more cravings for self-centredness.

We're hungering for more God-wisdom

and you, O God, never fail to disappoint!

Our bellies and spirits are full; you offer us the richest of fare!

We thank you and adore you for the ways you captivate us with the flavours of abundant life.

DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT

The enslaved Hebrews are instructed to participate in a special meal and ritual for what was to come: God will provide the means, the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, by which death and judgment would 'pass over' the Hebrews. This meal carries the audacious plot twist that flips the script on the normal domination storyline: God isn't on the side of the enslavers; God is on the side of the poor and the powerless! God is on the side of the enslaved people, the outcast, the alien – all those considered dispensable or less-than. Sharing in this meal is how the Israelites made the exodus redemption real and effective for present and future generations.

Jesus and his disciples, descendants of these same enslaved people, were celebrating the Passover meal the night before his crucifixion. Jesus connected this liberation story with his own life, death, and teaching. Jesus urged his followers to share in this freedom meal regularly. The simple act of recalling memory and sharing bread and wine has explosive significance. To eat and to drink of this meal is to enter the redemptive power of God's liberating activity as participants. To eat and drink is to participate in God's freedom and justice movement, where the burdened and battered are set free, and all may experience their ultimate dignity, worth, and value.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Our lives are touched by grace. Let's respond now with generosity and gratitude in giving our offerings.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Lord Jesus, take all that we bring and work it into your dream for the world.
Amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Peacemaking God, Reconciling God,
Be with those on the frontline of danger and conflict,
all those working for a just and loving world –
peacekeepers and community organisers,
activists and social workers –
all those giving their all to bind people together
in places where tensions are strong.

Bless the peacemakers, God,
may they know their honoured place in the family business.

In these places where hurts are deep, and complexity is high, we ask that you help to meet needs, encourage understanding, offer wisdom and enable a way for people to meet each other with grace.

Raise the odds of forgiveness and help people, where possible and where safe, to return to each other as brothers and sisters once more.

Bless the peacemakers, God,
may they know their honoured place in the family business.

In our own community, may we do our best to bring our hurts to one another in the name of reconciliation and friendship.

Help us to be non-defensive with each other, willing to hear each other's concerns, with as much grace as we can muster on both sides.

If talks break down, help us to be peace-making communities for each other, communities of grace, transparency, honesty, and collective wisdom, trusting that you, Christ Jesus, are present in our midst, willing the good in all circumstances.

Bless the peacemakers, God,
may they know their honoured place in the family business.

COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING

We have eaten and tasted the kind of freedom
that draws us into the struggle for justice and freedom for all.
So, eat well and wage peace in a divided world.

Go where the hurt is and work for healing and reconciliation.

And may you know your honoured place in the Divine household

May Jesus' leadership inspire you

And may the Holy Spirit enliven you with the joy of participation.

Go in peace!

HYMNS

Exodus 12:1–14

Behold the Lamb of God	TiS.705
Bread of the world in mercy broken	TiS.512 AHB.437
God's Paschal Lamb is sacrificed for us	TiS.543
He walked on earth, showing glimpses of heaven	TiS.260
Love divine, all loves excelling	TiS.217 AHB.148
The day of resurrection!	TiS.361 AHB.277

Psalm 149

Sing a new song to the Lord	TiS.95
Sing praise to the Lord	TiS.96 AHB.(83)

Romans 13:8–14

Brother, sister, let me serve you	TiS.650 SA.14
Jesus Christ is risen today	TiS.362 AHB.280
Kneels at the feet of his friends	TiS.640 AHB.561
O day of God, draw near	TiS.616 AHB.547
Soldiers of Christ arise	TiS.570 AHB.481
Wake, awake! for night is flying	TiS.266 AHB.195

Matthew 18:15–20

All praise to our redeeming Lord	TiS.442 AHB.367
Christ is made the sure foundation	TiS.432 AHB.343
Fold to your heart your sister and your brother	TiS.587 AHB.(503)
Peace with the Father, peace with Christ the Son	TiS.466 AHB.402
Praise, my soul, the King of heaven	TiS.134 AHB.68
This is my will, my one command	TiS.641 AHB.401
When love is found and hope comes home	TiS.654