

Weekly Eucharist in Easter 2012

The Office of Theology and Worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is encouraging congregations to celebrate the Lord's Supper each week during the season of Easter in 2012. This initiative grows out of the 2006 Sacrament study *Invitation to Christ* (commended by the 217th General Assembly), which called congregations to increase the number of Sundays on which the Lord's Supper is celebrated. These resources are provided to support and equip congregations in the celebration of weekly Eucharist in Easter.

Why celebrate the Lord's Supper each week?

Word and Sacrament belong together in the life of the church. As our *Book of Confessions* and *Book of Order* affirm, the church is defined by the proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments, and a disciplined life in covenant community (see Scots Confession 3.18 and Foundations of Presbyterian Polity 1.0303, as well as numerous references in the Form of Government). When we gather for worship each Sunday, we should practice these elements of our common life and show forth these signs to the world.

Contrary to popular thought, weekly Eucharist is hardly a new idea for churches of the Reformed tradition. John Calvin called for the Lord's Supper to be "set before the church very often, and at least once a week" (*Institutes* 4.17.43). Commenting on Acts 2:42, Calvin observed that among the earliest Christians "it became the unvarying rule that no meeting of the church should take place without the Word, prayers, partaking of the Supper, and almsgiving" (*Institutes* 4.14.44). The *Book of Order* says, "It is appropriate to celebrate the Lord's Supper as often as each Lord's Day. It is to be celebrated regularly and frequently enough to be recognized as integral to the Service for the Lord's Day" (W-2.4009). In other words, the Service for the Lord's Day is incomplete without the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Why celebrate weekly Eucharist in Easter?

The season of Easter — the "great fifty days" between the Resurrection of the Lord and the Day of Pentecost — is a time of joy and gladness, an extended celebration of the good news of Christ's rising from the dead. As such, it offers an ideal time to rediscover the experience of the Lord's Supper as a resurrection meal — a joyful feast in the presence of our risen Lord. In fact, this is what *each* celebration of the Eucharist is intended to be, for each Sunday we rejoice in Christ's rising from the dead on the first day of the week. For worshipers who are not well acquainted with this understanding of the Lord's Supper, or not accustomed to weekly Eucharist, what better time to practice than the season of Easter?

Unfortunately, many worshipers have only a partial understanding of the Lord's Supper — equating it with the "Last Supper" and experiencing it only as a somber memorial of Jesus' death. (The "Last Supper" itself is a misnomer; the gospels record several meals that Jesus shared with his disciples after he rose from the dead, not to mention the feast he still prepares for us when we gather in his name.) To be sure, the remembrance of Jesus' death is one facet of the Lord's Supper, but this aspect of its meaning should not eclipse the whole. The great mystery of faith that we proclaim is: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Thus an emphasis on celebrating the Eucharist in Easter can help to expand our experience and understanding of the Sacrament.

What is included in these resources?

For each Sunday and festival during the fifty days of Easter — including Easter Sunday, the Ascension of the Lord, and the Day of Pentecost — you will find a brief Great Thanksgiving coordinated with the themes and images of the Revised Common Lectionary texts for the day. (The lectionary citations are also provided for each day, to facilitate worship planning and

preparation for preaching.) There are several items that are repeated throughout the season: the Invitation to the Lord's Table, the words at the Breaking of the Bread, and the Prayer after Communion. Presiders should memorize the Invitation to the Table and words at the Breaking of the Bread so they can deliver them with confidence and joy throughout the season. By the end of the Easter season, some worshipers may know the unison Prayer after Communion by heart, enabling them to carry it with them in daily life. (This might also serve as a grace before meals, or a prayer at the conclusion of a meal.) At the end of this document you will find a musical resource for celebrating the Lord's Supper in Easter: a setting of the Sanctus and Benedictus, the Memorial Acclamation, and the Great Amen to the tune of the favorite Easter hymn, "Jesus Christ is Risen Today." (These may also be downloaded separately at our website: [http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/theologyandworship/season-easter/.](http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/theologyandworship/season-easter/))

Why do these resources not use the words of institution at the Breaking of the Bread?

The Directory for Worship provides for three placements of the words of institution: at the Invitation to the Lord's Table, during the Great Thanksgiving, and at the Breaking of the Bread (W-3.3612, 3.3613, and 3.3614). In these resources for weekly Eucharist during the season of Easter, the location of the words of institution (as well as the placement of other elements) is intended to accentuate Easter themes and promote the experience of a joyful feast. At the Invitation to the Lord's Table, the Emmaus narrative (Luke 24:13-35) sets the stage for a resurrection meal. The familiar words of institution are found midway through the Great Thanksgiving — remembering with thanksgiving the meal that Christ shared with his disciples "on the night before he died," but not giving death the last word. At the Breaking of the Bread, we hear the words of Jesus from John's gospel: "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35); "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5); "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35). These "I am" sayings of Jesus remind us of the promises of our risen Lord who said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).

In what other ways can we foster an experience of joyful celebration?

In order for this seasonal "experiment" with weekly Eucharist to be a successful one, it is critical that pastors and other worship leaders attend to the non-verbal aspects of liturgical celebration.

Music is a key element in establishing the idea of a joyful feast. Simple, lively congregational songs of praise and thanksgiving during the Communion of the People will help to set the right tone; global songs (such as "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" / "Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises," "Una Espiga" / "Sheaves of Summer," or "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ") can be particularly effective. See also the musical setting at the end of this document.

The gestures and posture of the presider make a big difference in conveying celebration and joy. Look up as much as possible, making eye contact with the congregation where appropriate. When praying the Great Thanksgiving, raise your hands with palms up and open (an ancient Christian gesture of prayer). Tone of voice is also important. Be expressive, praying and speaking with conviction and gladness.

If you don't already serve communion by intinction (dipping a piece of bread in the cup), consider using this method of distribution during the season of Easter. Allowing people to stand, move, and come forward is a more active and lively means of participation. (Certain servers may be designated to assist those who are unable to come forward, serving them where they are seated.) Remind communion servers to share the bread and cup with joy, smiling, making eye contact, and saying: "The bread of life" and "The cup of salvation."

Art and other visual elements can also contribute to a sense of celebration. The colors for the season of Easter are white and gold. You might invite an artist in the congregation to design special white and gold banners or other fabric hangings that will adorn the sanctuary throughout the season; keep in mind that you will want to add the color red at Pentecost.

What other steps should we take to prepare for weekly Eucharist in Easter?

First, talk to the session. According to the Directory for Worship, “The session is responsible for authorizing all observances of the Lord’s Supper in the life of a particular church and shall ensure regular and frequent celebration of the Sacrament” (W-2.4012). Be sure to give the session (and the worship committee, in particular) ample time to consider this proposal and discuss its implementation.

Second, talk to the congregation. The Directory for Worship says, “The congregation should prepare themselves to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper” (W-3.3609). Find ways to prepare the congregation to be active and informed participants in this eucharistic celebration. Once the session has approved, pastors might start mentioning this initiative as early as the beginning of the Christian Year in Advent; make brief reminders throughout the season of Lent. An email from the session to the congregation and/or a notice in the bulletin or church newsletter will also help. Without the opportunity to anticipate this joyful celebration, worshipers will not understand what is taking place. Without adequate preparation, they are more likely to be resistant to this change, and won’t fully appreciate its benefits.

Third, take advantage of this initiative as an opportunity for Christian education and theological reflection around the Sacraments. If your congregation has not already had the chance to study *Invitation to Christ*, this would be an excellent occasion to do so. *Invitation to Christ* can be downloaded free of charge: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/sacraments/guide/>; printed copies are available for \$5 each: <http://store.pcusa.org/7043006001>.

Won’t weekly Eucharist make our worship services longer?

Not necessarily. With a little planning and coordination (as should be the norm in any service!), the eucharistic liturgy can be relatively simple and succinct. At the same time, don’t short-change it; celebrate the Lord’s Supper in a way that is unapologetically rich and full, a feast of God’s grace. It helps to have a clear sense of the big picture and overall flow of the Service for the Lord’s Day: think of the Word as the first half of the service (beginning with Gathering) and the Table as the second half (concluding with Sending). You might find other ways to trim time from the service — eliminate unnecessary announcements, long explanations of the liturgy, and any ornamental elements that don’t serve to promote the people’s participation in prayer and praise. Having said all of this, if the service runs a little longer than usual, what’s so wrong with that? Remember that time in the presence of God and the communion of saints — preparing for an eternity of worship around God’s throne — is time well spent.

Won’t weekly celebrations of the Lord’s Supper make the Sacrament seem less special?

Yes and no. On one hand, seeing the Lord’s Supper as something less “special” — as in occasional, unusual, or out of the ordinary — would be a good thing for the church. As noted above, the celebration of the Sacraments (along with the proclamation of the Word and the exercise of discipline) is supposed to be one of the defining features of Christian life. We ought to experience the Lord’s Supper as an ordinary and integral part of what we do when we gather for worship in Jesus’ name.

On the other hand, the practice of celebrating the Eucharist on a regular basis will help us to appreciate more fully how truly special it is. Or to put it another way, if we really understood and appreciated what a gift Christ has given us in the Lord’s Supper, we would want to celebrate this meal as often as possible! Think of the manna God showered upon the people of Israel each day as they journeyed through the wilderness: on one hand, a thing so simple, so ordinary — daily bread, a fine flaky substance as common as the morning dew; on the other hand, a thing so amazing, so extraordinary — bread from heaven, the life-saving, life-sustaining grace and providence of God.

Resurrection of the Lord / Easter Day

April 8, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 10:34-43 *or* Isaiah 25:6-9

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 *or* Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18 *or* Mark 16:1-8

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You make for us a feast of rich food and well-aged wines;
you will wipe away all tears, and swallow up death forever.
You are our God! We rejoice that you have come to save us. (Isaiah 25:6-9)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

On the first day of the week you raised Jesus from the dead.
Death could not destroy him! The tomb could not hold him!
Now he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit forever. (Mark 16:1-8)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Send us out in the power of your Holy Spirit
to show and tell this good news to all the world:
that Christ our Lord is risen from the dead. Alleluia! (Acts 10:34-43)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Second Sunday of Easter

April 15, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 4:32-35

Psalm 133

1 John 1:1—2:2

John 20:19-31

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You established your church to testify to the power of Christ's resurrection,
a people of one heart and soul, holding everything in common,
sharing their abundance with the poor. (Acts 4:32-35)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

With Thomas we confess that Christ Jesus is our Lord and our God!
Christ breathes into us the gift of the Spirit and the power of forgiveness.
By the gift of faith we have eternal life in his name. (John 20:19-31)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Make our joy complete! Lead us to walk in the light of Christ.
Continue to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness,
for you alone, O Lord, are faithful and just. (1 John 1:1–2:2)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Third Sunday of Easter

April 22, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 3:12-19

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36b-48

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You are the God of our ancestors, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
You spoke through your prophets of the Messiah who would come to suffer
so that all might repent and be delivered from sin. (Acts 3:12-19)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Christ is our peace. He still comes among us to eat with us, to speak with us,
and to open our minds so that we may understand the scriptures.
We are witnesses: Through Christ your word is fulfilled. (Luke 24:36b-48)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Help us to show the world the great love that you have given us,
that, in Jesus Christ, we should be called children of God—
and that is what we are! (1 John 3:1-7)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 29, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You are our shepherd, O Lord, and in you there is nothing we lack.
You lead us to green pastures and still waters; you restore our souls.
You prepare a table before us; our cup overflows! (Psalm 23)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Christ Jesus is the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep.
He gathers them from far and wide, so that there may be one flock, one fold.
He knows his own, and they know him. (John 10:11-18)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Teach us to love, not only in word or in speech, but in truth and action also.
Show us how to love one another, and to serve our sisters and brothers,
so that Christ will abide in us, and we may abide in him. (1 John 3:16-24)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 6, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-8

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

All the ends of the earth turn to you and worship you, O Lord.
The poor eat, and they are satisfied; those who seek you praise your name.
Even those who sleep in the dust bow down before you. (Psalm 22:25-31)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Christ is the true vine, and you, O God, are the vine grower.
He is the vine, and we are the branches. In Christ, we bear fruit;
apart from him, we can do nothing. (John 15:1-8)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Let us love one another, for love is from you, O God; you are love.
Fill us with your perfect love that casts out all fear,
so that we may love all people, just as you have first loved us. (1 John 4:7-21)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 13, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 10:44-48

Psalm 98

1 John 5:1-6

John 15:9-17

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

The sea roars, the floods clap their hands; the hills sing together for joy,
for you judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity.
All the ends of the earth have seen your victory! (Psalm 98)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

There is no greater love than the love revealed to us in Christ Jesus,
who taught us to love one another even as he has loved us,
and who laid down his own life in love for the world. (John 15:9-17)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Help us to keep your commandments with freedom and joy.
Let your Spirit of truth testify through our lives
that Christ Jesus, your Son, has triumphed over all the world. (1 John 5:1-6)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Ascension of the Lord

May 17, 2012

SCRIPTURE

These readings may also be used on the Seventh Sunday of Easter.

Acts 1:1-11

Psalm 47 *or* Psalm 93

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:44-53

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You are robed in majesty and glory; you are girded in mercy and strength.

You established the world — the heavens, the earth, and the seas.

From age to age you reign; from everlasting, you are God. (Psalm 93)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Jesus came to fulfill the law, the prophets, and the psalms.
After he rose from the dead, he ascended to heaven to reign.

With joy we worship him and bless your name. (Luke 24:44-53)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Give us your Spirit of wisdom and enlighten the eyes of our hearts
so that we may know the hope to which you have called us
and proclaim the good news of Christ's coming realm. (Ephesians 1:15-23)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 20, 2012

SCRIPTURE

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm 1

1 John 5:9-13

John 17:6-19

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You watch over the faithful, O Lord: those who keep your word.
They are like trees, planted by streams of water;
they yield fruit in due season, and prosper in all things. (Psalm 1)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

You sent Jesus Christ into the world to save us, to sanctify us in the truth.
Still, Christ prays for us, to guard and protect us from all evil.
We belong to Christ, and in Christ we belong to you. (John 17:6-19)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Keep us faithful in all that we say and do.

Fill our hearts with your truth, so that we may testify to the good news:
that you have given us the gift of eternal life. (1 John 5:9-13)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

Day of Pentecost

May 27, 2012

SCRIPTURE

If the Ezekiel passage is chosen for the first reading, the Acts passage is used as the second reading.

Acts 2:1-21 *or* Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:22-27 *or* Acts 2:1-21

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast which he has prepared.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.

From the four winds you send your Spirit upon the earth;
by the power of your Word, you cause the dead to rise.

We are your people, O Lord, and you are our God. (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and place
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Jesus dwelt among us as your Word made flesh,
testifying to the truth and revealing your glory.

Still, your Spirit guides us in his way of truth and life. (John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15)

Touching or lifting bread (but not breaking it):

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus,
on the night before he died, took bread,
and after giving thanks to you, he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Touching or lifting cup (but not pouring it):

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

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**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:
**Dying, you destroyed our death;
rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Help us in our weakness, and teach us to pray as we ought,
as we look with hope and longing
for the fulfillment of your new creation. (Romans 8:22-27)

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lifting and breaking bread:

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Lifting and pouring cup:

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Lifting bread and cup:

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.
Whoever believes in me will never thirst.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of glory, we give you thanks
for this feast of your goodness and grace.
Send us out to share the bread of life
with all who hunger for your love;
through Jesus Christ our living Lord. Amen.**

A Setting of Eucharistic Responses to EASTER HYMN

Tune from the *Lyra Davidica*, 1708; see *Presbyterian Hymnal* #123, where a descant is provided.

... who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of might,

The first system of musical notation features a treble and bass clef with a common time signature. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of might,"

hea-ven and the earth are full of your glo - ry, love, and light.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: "hea-ven and the earth are full of your glo - ry, love, and light."

Bles-sed is the one who comes in your ho - ly name, O Lord.

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Bles-sed is the one who comes in your ho - ly name, O Lord."

Ho - sa - na in the high-est! Ho - sa - na in the high - est!

The fourth system concludes the hymn with a double bar line. The lyrics are: "Ho - sa - na in the high-est! Ho - sa - na in the high - est!"

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

Dying, you de - stroyed our death; ri - sing, you re - stored our life.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The lower staff is in bass clef with a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the upper staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

O Lord Je - sus, come in glo-ry! Ho - sa-na in the high - est!

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The lower staff is in bass clef with a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the upper staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

... now and forever.

A - men, a - men, a-men. Al - le - lu - ia!

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The lower staff is in bass clef with a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the upper staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.