



Mennonite  
Church  
Canada

Resource Centre

# From our Churches

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## Gathering Around the Table

Small Group Communion Service

*Words in bold are said together. All other sentences can be led by anyone present.*

### **The Welcome**

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."

**We give thanks for this promise and for God's presence here with us.**

God welcomes us and so we greet one another:

**(individual name), we welcome you to this table in the name of Christ**

*(Each individual's reply) Amen, it's good to be here.*

Jesus said, "When you have supper, do not invite just your friends or relatives or those who are wealthy ... but rather invite the poor and the marginalized."

We confess to God the ways in which we have not been inclusive and welcoming in this past week.

*(Pause.)*

For our blindness to the needs of others and our preoccupation with our own agenda

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our failure to pay attention to the still small voice in our lives

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our life choices this week which have not contributed to greater love and justice in the world

**Lord, have mercy.**

## **The Promise of New Beginnings**

The prophet Isaiah writes: “On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare for all peoples a feast of rich food, a banquet of well-aged wines – the best of meats and the finest of wines. God will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; God will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces, and take away the disgrace of the people from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. In that day they will say

**This is our God; the one in whom we trusted, the one who saved us. This is the Lord for whom we waited, let us rejoice and be glad.**

*(Bread and wine are placed on the table.)*

While they were at the table, Jesus took a loaf of bread and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them saying, “Take; this is my body.” Then he took a cup of wine and gave it to them. “This is my blood – which is poured out for many.”

**Thank you God that ordinary things can become special when placed in your hands. Thank you that that which is broken may be made whole, and that which is given is not wasted.**

*(In the silence we think about things in ourselves and in the world that we would like to change.)*

*(Bread is passed around.)*

Be grateful when you touch bread –

**Let it not lie uncared for, unwanted.  
There is so much beauty in bread;  
Beauty of sun and soil, beauty of patient toil.  
Winds and rain have caressed it.  
Christ often blessed it.  
Be grateful when you touch bread.**

*(Eat bread together.)*

*(Wine is poured.)*

Be loving when you drink wine –

**Let its colour, life and joy be appreciated.  
There is so much beauty in this wine  
Beauty of self-giving, beauty of forgiving  
Winds and rain have caressed it.  
Christ often blessed it.  
Be loving when you drink wine.**

*(Drink wine together.)*

Let's say together –

**Thank you God for love, for food, and for friends to share it with.**

*(The first course is served.)*

Thank you Lord, for this meal

**But we cannot live by bread alone.  
We have shared it together  
Because we need each other gathered round this table.  
We need (individual name)**

*(Each individual's reply) And I need you.*

**Lord God, as we bring our prayers  
We thank you that we can share in your Kingdom of justice and peace.  
We come in our poverty, not in our wealth  
In our blindness, not with great faith,  
In our weakness, not in our strength.  
You welcome all people  
So now we bring to you those who need love, light and peace.**

*(Night lights may be lit as we name individuals or situations)*

### **Prayer for a New Earth**

God of all places and this place:  
You promised a new earth where the hungry will feast and the oppressed go free.

**Come Lord, build that place among us.**

God of all times and this time:  
You promised a new day when the fearful will laugh and the sick find healing.

**Come Lord, speed that time among us.**

God of all people, our God:  
Take what we have and what we hope for, to make this a world where all people find good news.

**We come Lord, to share in the work of your Kingdom, until the new earth is created among us. Amen.**

*(Dessert is served.)*

It is night. The night is for stillness.

**Let us be still in the presence of God.**

It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done. What has not been done has not been done.

**Let it be.**

The night is dark.

**Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our lives rest in you.**

The night is quiet.

**Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace.**

The night heralds the dawn.

**Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities.**

**Amen.**