***EXPANDED EDITION***

***for Sunday or midweek online worship gatherings***

**A Sacred Meal for a Dispersed Community available to the**

 **Church of New Hampshire**

**Epiphany 2021**

*Acknowledging that we are not in the same physical space in the same way that Jesus gathered in the Upper Room with his disciples on the night before he suffered, we come together nonetheless via online technology. We do so out of the spiritual yearning for closeness expressed by our Savior who said, “I have eagerly desired to share this Passover with you before I suffer.” (Luke 22:15)*

*Participants are invited to have a candle and ceremonial food prepared and laid out on a table. Bread could be flatbread, crackers or challah; drink could be wine, grape juice, cider, water.*

*This service may be led by a priest, deacon or lay worship leader.*

**Opening Sentences[[1]](#footnote-1)** *(Participants are invited to light a candle here if they choose)*

Leader: The Lord has shown forth his glory;

People: Come let us adore him.

**The Confession of Sin (From A New Zealand Prayer Book)**

***Leader*** Happy are those whose sins are forgiven, whose wrongs are pardoned. The Psalmist writes, “I will confess my sins to the Lord, I will not conceal my wrongdoings.”

***Leader*** God forgives and heals us.

***People We need your healing, merciful God:***

***Give us true repentance.***

***Some sins are plain to us;***

 ***Some escape us; some we cannot face.***

***Forgive us; set us free to hear your word to us;***

***Set us free to serve you.***

***Celebrant*** God forgives you. God forgives others;

Forgive yourself. Through Christ, God has put away your sin:

Approach your God in peace.

**Collect of the Day**

**Hymn or Song of Praise**

*Taize music and songs about light might be particularly appropriate. Worship music created by music directors from NH churches can be found by going to* [*https://www.nhepiscopal.org/worship-liturgy*](https://www.nhepiscopal.org/worship-liturgy) *or NH Episcopal YouTube Channel* [*https://www.youtube.com/c/NHEpiscopal*](https://www.youtube.com/c/NHEpiscopal)*, check back often as content is updated frequently.*

**The Word of the Lord**

(*from the lectionary for the day)*

**Scripture Readings**

**Homily**

**Apostles Creed**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

creator of heaven and earth;

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. AMEN.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Prayers** *(Suggested Weekly Prayers - See Appendix below)*

**Collect**

**Agape Meal**

**Reading: Luke 22:14-20**
When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

*The Leader now offers the following prayers.*

**Prayer for Bread**

Leader: 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**.

**Prayer for Drink**

Leader: 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**.

**A Prayer of St. Chrysostom**

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one

accord to make our common supplication to you; and you

have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two

or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the

midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions

as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of

your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

**Leader:** Jesus said, “When two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

*(Participants now eat their food and drink their drink)*

**Hymn** *(Optional music here while people eating and drinking)*

**Closing Prayer:**

**The General Thanksgiving**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,

we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks

for all your goodness and loving-kindness

to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation,

and all the blessings of this life;

but above all for your immeasurable love

in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;

for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,

that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,

not only with our lips, but in our lives,

by giving up our selves to your service,

and by walking before you

in holiness and righteousness all our days;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,

be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

**Blessing**

**Dismissal**

Leader: Go in peace, be the light of Christ

People: Thanks be to God.

**Appendix I - Prayers of the People (for the Season after the Epiphany):**

 **- Suggestion 1 -**

**Prayers of the People for the Season after Epiphany**

*(adapted from the “Prayers of Intercession” from the ELCA).*

Called to be a light to the nations, let us pray for God’s justice, peace, and healing.

We pray for the church and its leaders, and for all who work for the unity of the gospel; that the compassion of Christ may break down all divisions. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for clean air, clean water, and clean soil. Renew the sky, land, and waterways. Teach us how to care for the earth as you desire. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for an end to war and for peace throughout the world *(areas experiencing conflict may be named.)* Prosper the work of peacemakers, erase hatred, and stop violence. Give us courage to engage in difficult conversations with those whose experiences are different from our own. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all your children who suffer in body, mind, or spirit *(especially…)*. Quell the anxieties of all who wait for test results. Bring hope to all whose life is a struggle and filled with despair. Heal us with your presence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this congregation. Bless the work and play of young and old. Deepen our faith. Expand our discipleship. Equip us to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful departed *(especially)* and we pray for those who will die today. Hold them in your loving embrace. Breathe your Spirit of peace into them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers in the name of Christ, the light of the world, who is one with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

 **- Suggestion 2 -**

**Litany**

Leader: We gather today, with a desire to know your Presence among us.

*People: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead us.*

Leader: Surrounded by illness, we mourn our dead;

*People: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead us.*

Leader: We know loneliness and discomfort;

*People: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead us.*

Leader: We cannot see the way that lies ahead;

*People: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead us.*

Leader: Yet, we know you make a way in the Wilderness;

*People: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead us.*

Leader: Assure us that you are doing a new thing among us.

*People: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead us.*

*(Perhaps a final collect including the opportunity to pray for particular persons,*

*and express thanksgivings)*

 **- Suggestion 3 -**

**Suffrages A, Morning Prayer, Rite II, BCP 97-98:**

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;

**R. And grant us your salvation.**

V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

**R. Let your people sing with joy.**

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

**R. For only in you can we live in safety.**

V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;

**R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

V. Let your way be known upon earth;

**R. Your saving health among all nations.**

V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

**R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;

**R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

1. BCP 81 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)