



TIME OF CENTERING

GREETING

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we have all come to this place frail and broken. In a world of violence, hate, greed, and isolation, in a church searching to find the way forward, we look for healing through this restorative service of old. It is in this Agape Feast where adversaries become friends, friends become neighbors, and the Christian family embraces all. Let us join in song before we share the blessings of food and water, just as the first Christians did in ancient times.

The history of the feast, as a celebration born simply out of love, generosity, and fellowship is beautiful. Christians today must be grateful for the resurrection of the celebration by the Moravians, and also for the vitality given to it by Charles Wesley! The feast is appropriate in any Christian setting and can nourish the hearts and souls of Christians in so many ways. At its most basic, the love feast is an experience of warmth and sharing, a commemoration of the early church. At its most symbolic, the love feast is a means of God's grace that is experienced in the fellowship with each other and with God. But the simplest explanation of the love feast, to which one can respond when asked, is that it is a way to remember Christ's presence on earth, and to celebrate with gratitude the spirit of God's love.

OPENING HYMN *WHAT FEAST OF LOVE* Upper Room Worship Book #119
Text: Delores Dufner, OSB Tune: Greensleeves)

Verse 1

What feast of love is offered here; what banquet come from heaven?
What food of everlasting life, what gracious gift is given?
This, this is Christ the King, the bread come down from heaven,
O taste and see and sing! How sweet the manna given!

Verse 2

What light of truth is offered here, what covenant from heaven?
What hope of everlasting life, what wondrous word is given?
This, This is Christ the King, the sun come down from heaven.
O see and hear and sing! The Word of God is given!

Verse 3

What wine of love is offered here, what crimson drink from heaven?
What hope of everlasting life, what wondrous word is given?
This, this is Christ the king, the sweetest wine of heaven.
O taste and see and sing! The Son of God is given!

OPENING PRAYER (ALL)

We thank you, O God, for the life and knowledge which you have revealed through Jesus, your child and our brother. To you be glory forever.

As the piece of bread was scattered over the hills and then brought together and made one, so, let your church be brought together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

For yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READINGS (NRSV)

Galatians 3: 26-29

²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.

²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Ephesians 4: 1-6 (*Unity in the Body of Christ*)

¹ I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

³ making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling,

⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

MEDITATION

RESPONSE

We Are One In The Spirit

The Faith We Sing #2223

THE AGAPE FEAST

Here before us, you will find some water and bread.

It is important to know that this feast is not a Eucharistic feast, but one of love and fellowship.

Let us commemorate our unity through Christ, and feast on the spirit of love who is Christ.

THE BLESSING

SONG OF SENDING

I NEED YOU TO SURVIVE

Zion Still Sings #219

<https://youtu.be/JBwUkCYW2n0>

Verse 1

I need you, you need me, we're all a part of God's body.

Stand with me, agree with me, we're all a part of God's body.

It is God's will that every need be supplied;

You are important to me, I need you to survive,

You are important to me, I need you to survive.

Verse 2

**I pray for you, you pray for me, I love you,
I need you to survive.
I won't harm you with words from my mouth,
I love you,
I need you to survive. (repeat)**

**It is God's will that every need be supplied;
You are important to me, I need you to survive,
You are important to me, I need you to survive.**

Opening Prayer taken from the *Didache*. (found in *The Love Feast*, by Richard Stowe)

This service is designed by Dr. Cynthia A. Wilson (2018)