



## 'Worship at home' Holy Week Wednesday

As we move through this Easter week, you are invited to spend some time each day in worship, reflecting more deeply on the last week of Jesus' life and on your own discipleship.

Today, you are invited to sit at your kitchen/dining room table for worship.

Get yourself a cup of coffee or a glass of water, and make yourself comfortable.

**Light a candle** to remind you of the light of Christ with you, and place it in a safe place.



Shared meals with family and friends are something many of us are missing greatly at the moment. **If you were hosting a dinner party tonight, who would you invite?**

Imagine Jesus sitting at the table across from you, having a cup of tea with you. **We are reminded that Christ IS present with us, at this time and always.**

### **Matthew 26:17-30**

*On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"*

*He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'*

*"So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.*

*When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?"*

*Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.” Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?”*

*Jesus answered, “You have said so.”*

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and*

*gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”*

*When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. New International Version*

**Reflection:** For many thousands of years, people have been gathering together to share food. Hospitality is an important part of who we are, individually and as the church.

This scripture tells of the institution of our church’s foundational practice, Holy Communion.

The disciples gathered together for the Passover meals, but this year something was different. Confusion and uncertainty intermingled with promise and hope. In this meal, Jesus renewed the ancient covenant between God and God’s people, then went on to fulfil it, bringing the Easter promise of new life.



This Easter, for us, things will be different. Most of us will not gather with our families for Hot Cross buns or Easter egg hunts. When we do, there will possibly be someone missing. Confusion and uncertainty intermingle with promise and hope.

But we hold before us the anticipation of Easter, and the promise of new life that the resurrection continues to bring us and our world. This week, more than ever, that is something to hold on to.

**Reflect on a variety of meals you have shared with others over the years.**

*You might think about weddings and family celebrations, romantic dinners, and meals in other cultures or unusual situations.*

**What has made them significant for you?**

**Reflect on the times you have shared in Holy Communion.  
What makes it significant for you?**

Shared meals are significant because of who is present with us. They bring a sense of connection and belonging with a particular group of people.



The celebration of Holy Communion is God's gift, through which we remember and participate in this last supper of Jesus and his disciples. In this holy meal we are nourished and sustained in our Christian walk, and we find forgiveness and wholeness. Our participation also affirms our sense of connection and belonging to God's people, the body of Christ.

In times like this, when we are not able to gather with our usual communities, we remember that we are still connected with each other. Although physically apart, we stand together, as friends and families, as people of faith, as bearers of goodness and kindness and love, in solidarity with people all over the world of all families and communities and cultures and faiths. We hold firm to the Easter promise of hope and new life.

**Prayer:**

Gracious and loving God,

You call us to love you with our whole being,  
and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

At this time of upheaval and distress  
for nations and people across our world,  
may your love hold us together.

May your love be the lens through which  
we see each other and your world.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are present with us,  
as one who knows our suffering,  
bring comfort and peace to all those  
who are grieving the loss of loved ones,  
work, connection and hope for the future.

May we embody your compassion –  
responding to the suffering of our neighbours,  
our families, our friends,  
and strangers with generosity.

Life-giving Spirit, you weave us together as the Body of Christ,  
strengthen our life together,  
even though we are physically separated.  
Nurture us in faith and discipleship,  
that we may bear witness through our living,  
to your abundant grace and liberating hope for all people,  
and the whole creation.

Through Christ our Life and Hope, we pray. Amen.

*Dr Deidre Palmer – President of the Uniting Church in Australia*

**Closing:**

After you have drunk your cup of coffee or glass of water, phone a friend or family member and let them know that you are thinking of them, and that you would love to share afternoon tea or dinner with them once this is possible again!