

Transforming the Body

A Liturgy

by Lucas Land

Call to Worship

LEADER: God of all creation, earth, grain, water, yeast, sun, grapes and air,

PEOPLE: Gather us together like the ingredients of bread and wine.

LEADER: We are crushed under foot like grapes in a winepress.

PEOPLE: Let the Spirit of grace ferment in our church and relationships.

LEADER: Knead our lives together in this moment through pain and joy.

PEOPLE: Let your creative fire transform us into the Body of Christ.

Hymn

“We come to the Hungry Feast”

TEXT: Ray Makeever, 2000

TUNE: Ray Makeever, 2000

With One Voice #766 Augsburg Fortress Publishers (August 2001)

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

I Samuel 21:1-6

Litany

LEADER: Bread of the world, in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed,

PEOPLE: By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead.

LEADER: Look on the heart by sorrow broken,

Look on the tears by sinners shed;

PEOPLE: And be Thy feast to us the token,
That by Thy grace our souls are shed.

—Reginald Heber, “Bread of the World, In Mercy Broken,” from *Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Service of the Church Year* (1827).

Gospel Reading

Matthew 12:1-8

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Meditation

Jesus’ example of David taking the bread of the Presence when he was hungry reminds me of the way we treat the elements of communion. The bread and wine are considered “holy” and off limits except during the particular ritual of the Eucharist. In some churches the bread and wine have to be finished off, poured down a particular drain or disposed of properly because of their sanctity.

In light of Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 11 about divisions at the agape meal and his warning about taking communion unworthily which follows, he seems to imply that taking Eucharist unworthily means not sharing your food with the hungry. If that is the case then every time the elements (especially if it’s a loaf of real bread) are disposed of or gorged on by someone in order to fulfill the letter of traditional ritual, we may be partaking unworthily of the Lord’s Supper.

Communion/Eucharist

We place on our table symbols of abundance — bread and wine. We see these staples and we are reminded to live with grateful hearts. We see these things and we think, “Tonight, everyone can join in, everyone can have enough.”

—Lucas Land, at this writing, was an intern at the World Hunger Relief Training Farm in Elm Mott, TX. Now he runs a business in Waco, TX, called Edible Lawns, dedicated to helping people grow more of what they eat. (For more information, go to www.ediblelawns.net.)

For some of us all the bits of grain in this loaf and all the grapes crushed into this cup remind us that we are all part of one great family—birthed of one mother, co-existing in a common community. We look at these simple earthy foods and we remember that we belong together.

For some of us these simple foods remind us of Jesus—they help us remember that he spent much of his time around the table, sharing bread and wine and conversation. He seemed to think this was important, and we think it is important too.

As we eat this bread and take this cup, we are transforming the body of the world into our bodies. In the same way, as we consume the body and blood of Christ we are consumed by him, transformed into something more than ourselves, the Body of Christ.

—Adapted from Monkfish Abbey (www.monkfish-abbey.org)

Communion Hymn

“One Bread One Body”

TEXT and TUNE: John Foley, SJ 2000

With One Voice #710 Augsburg Fortress Publishers (August 2001)

Benediction

Blessed are you
Oh Lord our God,
Ruler of the Universe,
Who has given us:
The grain of the earth,
The fruit of the vine,
The blood of your vein,
The pulse of your heart.

Help us to break bread with the hungry
As we are broken by their hunger
Teach us to live as your Body
Amen

—Adapted from Monkfish Abbey (www.monkfish-abbey.org)

—The art on this place mat is by Audrey Cary.

Test Your Hunger I.Q.

by Katie Minchew

How much have you learned about hunger and poverty? The answers to each of these questions can be found on pages 19-21 of this Hunger Emphasis packet, so be sure you have read closely! If you are stuck, the answers are upside down at the bottom of the page. Good luck, and may these statistics inspire you to help make a difference in the fight against extreme hunger and poverty.

1. Nearly _____ percent of the US population lacked adequate employment as of January.
a. 15 _____
b. 70 _____
c. 20 _____
2. How many Afghan children under 18 applied for asylum in Europe last year?
a. 3,800
b. 6,000
c. 4,300
3. An estimated 1.02 billion people across the _____ are hungry.
a. World
b. US
c. State of Mississippi
4. Every _____, almost 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes.
a. Day
b. Week
c. Month
5. In 2005, almost 1.4 billion people lived below the international poverty line, earning less than _____ per day.
a. \$3.25
b. \$2.25
c. \$1.25
6. Each year, _____ children under five die because they are undernourished.
a. 3 million
b. 1 million
c. 5 million
7. _____ in _____ households in the U.S. are living with hunger or are at risk of hunger.
a. 1 in 5
b. 1 in 6
c. 1 in 7
8. _____ million people, including 15.6 million children, live in homes that are at risk of hunger.
a. 27.5 million
b. 31.8 million
c. 38.1 million
9. In 2006, about _____ million children died before they reached their fifth birthday.
a. 9.7 million
b. 4.5 million
c. 10 million

