

Harvest/Remembrance

agape meal prayer



AIM

To provide a prayer that invites God to our communal/celebratory meals.

INTRODUCTION

This prayer was written for use at a TLS weekend away. Instead of taking communion together at the end of the weekend, we combined our final meal and act of worship together. This involved many of us taking part and flowed surprisingly well. We kept it simple and informal but intentionally included God into the occasion all the way through; enjoying our food, conversation and worship all rolled into one. Many people commented that it gave them a different way of thinking about Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples. We felt we had really entered into the feast rather than simply symbolically commemorating it as we normally do at a communion service.

Combining a meal with an act of worship is often referred to as an 'Agape Meal'. Agape is a Greek word pronounced 'agapay'. It means to love and live out that love by decision rather than relying only on feelings. In the Bible, 'agape' is used to describe Christ's love for us. An Agape Meal is often an informal 'bring and share' type of meal.

Below is a prayer that can be used during such a meal. The wording has different options to choose between so that it can be used before, during or after the meal.

AGAPE MEAL PRAYER

(This can be adapted depending at what point in the meal the prayer is said.)

(eat)

Jesus, as we (are eating) in your presence –

(have eaten)

Transform)

You are transforming) our conversation,

You have transformed)

Enter)

Entering) into our relationships

Entered)

(infuse)

And (infusing) our lives with your love.

(infused)

Because we don't want to be polite and smiling only on the surface,
we want to allow you into the very core of our being –
so you can fill us from the inside
and we overflow to our neighbours.

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Talking, eating, listening and laughing –
(May) we do it all in your presence ...

Always.

Amen.

MORE IDEAS

This prayer can be used at a celebratory meal such as a Harvest Supper or church anniversary. Alternatively, it can be used at a gathering where there are likely to be mixed emotions – perhaps to mark the end of a phase in the life of your church or group. This gives people a good environment and opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings.

Depending on the size of the group and the occasion, you may need to decide who is to read the prayer and either leave them to choose when to read it or decide in advance to fit with other input. Generally speaking, the larger the group, the more advance preparation is advisable.

To make sure the prayers etc are heard by the whole group, it may be necessary to stand/use a microphone/bang a spoon on the table/play some music before speaking. If you are having a celebratory meal, those who are leading prayer or worship could have a balloon passed to them or pull a party popper to attract everyone's attention just before their input.

Whatever method you use, remember that there is no need for suddenly serious, quiet voices just because Scripture or a prayer is being read! Try to keep the transition from chat to prayer/worship as natural as possible. It might be a good idea to have the prayer printed on a card for people to take home with them (don't forget to acknowledge copyright).

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

Acknowledgements

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HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group about general or website V4L issues via the website or at admin@vision4life.org.uk

If you have comments and particularly contributions to the prayer year, you can email the V4L prayer year coordinator via prayer@vision4life.org.uk

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email:

Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: evangelism@vision4life.org.uk