

A METHODIST LOVE FEAST

Introduction

The Love Feast, or Agape, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry. The service expresses the *koinonia* or sharing, belonging and fellowship enjoyed within the body of Christ.

The Love Feast, in common with other acts of worship includes prayer, praise, scripture, preaching and mutual fellowship and an offering, but in addition the Love Feast contains a time of Prepared Testimony and the sharing of the Love Feast cake and the Loving Cup. If preferred, individual glasses or cups may be used.

A SAMPLE Order for a Love Feast

Preparation

Welcome to our love feast, which is a way of expressing the sharing, belonging and fellowship we have together as followers of Jesus.

A key part of it is to share testimony - how your story is part of God's story. 'My life is different because I believe God has changed my . . . challenged my . . . loved me . . .' It is where you are. It is who you are. No need to pretend. It is your testimony.

A second key part is to share food and drink – often cake or bread and tea or water. You will need to get your own! It's helpful to get them ready before you start.

HYMN: All praise to our redeeming Lord' (StF 608)

Prayers of adoration

Prayer: Holy God, we thank you that wherever we are you are with us. We praise you that in Christ we have new life. Unite us in this worship by your Holy Spirit that we may each know your blessing. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer Our Father

HYMN:

Bible readings:

Isaiah 55:1-3; Invitation to the Thirsty

Ephesians 3:14-19 A Prayer for the Ephesians

Matthew 22:34-40: The Greatest Commandment

Short Sermon

HYMN/ Song

Testimony

The leader might like to sum up the reading, before inviting people to share How your story is part of God's story. 'My life is different because I believe God has changed my . . . challenged my . . . loved me . . .' It is where you are. It is who you are. No need to pretend. It is your testimony.

Love Feast: eat and drink

After the testimonies are finished, the leader invites people to consume their cake, light a candle and drink a cup of water:

GRACE : Be present at our table, Lord; be here and everywhere adored; thy creatures bless, and grant that we may feast in paradise with thee.

Responses to God's grace and goodness are then invited.

Let's eat and drink together, in thankfulness to God.
The portions of Love Feast cake are eaten in silence
The Loving Cup of water is drunk by each person.

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession

A time of prayer

We bring to God the world he shares with us;

to remember before God people and situations that trouble us.

We pray with people denied human rights.

May your Spirit of justice enable and empower people to stand with those who cry for justice.

We pray for refugees, for those who seek asylum, for those who we depend on who are migrant-workers in our country.

We remember before God those who are hungry. We think today of people forced by the current situation to use food banks.

And we pray to God for those who have lost hope, May we, as disciples of the good shepherd, find ways to channel your grace and hope.

Take a few moments to bring to God the people and places that are on your mind this morning.....Then close our time of prayer by saying

The Lord hears our prayer. Thanks be to God.

HYMN: To God be the Glory

Blessing