

Northgate United Methodist Church
May 3, 2020
Order of Worship
Fourth Sunday of Easter

Prelude
Greeting

Call to Worship (An adaptation of **Psalm 116**)

I love the LORD, for he heard my voice;
he heard my cry for mercy.

Because he turned his ear to me,
I will call on him as long as I live.

The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came over me;
I was overcome by distress and sorrow.

Then I called on the name of the LORD: "LORD, save me!"

The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

The LORD protects the unwary; when I was brought low, he saved me.

For you, LORD, have delivered me from death, my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling,

that I may walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

What shall I return to the LORD for all his goodness to me?

I will lift up the cup and call on the name of the LORD.

I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.

AMEN.

Opening Prayer

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his resurrection,
teaching them to love all people as neighbors.

As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe
in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbors with whom we share it.

Open our hearts to your power moving
around us and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and enemy,
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all that is broken. **AMEN.**

Opening Hymn

In Remembrance of Me

TFWS 2254

In remembrance of me, eat this bread.
In remembrance of me, drink this wine.
In remembrance of me, pray for the time
when God's own will is done.

In remembrance of me, heal the sick.
In remembrance of me, feed the poor.
In remembrance of me, open the door
and let your neighbors in, let them in.

**Take, eat, and be comforted;
drink and remember, too,
that this is my body and precious blood
shed for you, shed for you.**

**In remembrance of me, search for truth.
In remembrance of me, always love.
In remembrance of me, don't look above,
but in your heart, look for God.
Do this in remembrance of me.**

Community Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. AMEN.

Greeting to the Love Feast

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 come to a time of centering before we share the blessings of sweets (be it cake, or cookie or muffin) and water or juice, 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.

Anthem

Remember

Scripture Reading

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"You're Invited to the Table"

Pastor Freddie Orr

The Agape (Love) Feast

Here before us, you will find some water or juice and some sweets (such as cake, cookie or muffin). 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.

Blessing

Oh, God, bless this which we partake with the Love that only you alone can provide and offer to all. May we go forward in that Love to share it, just as Christ taught us.

(You may eat and drink)

Closing Hymn

Come, Share the Lord, vs. 1 & 5

TFWS 2269

**We gather here in Jesus' name,
his love is burning in our hearts
like living flame;
for through the loving Son
the Father makes us one;
Come, take the bread;
come, drink the wine;
come, share the Lord.**

**We'll gather soon where angels sing;
we'll see the glory
of our Lord and coming King;
now we anticipate
the feast for which we wait:
Come, take the bread;
come, drink the wine;
come, share the Lord.**

Benediction

Today's Worship Leaders

Preacher Pastor Freddie Orr
Liturgist Valerie Orr
Music Director..... David Forbus
Accompanist Laura Benton



Traditional Worship Service 10:45 am

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THE LOVE FEAST

The Love Feast, or Agape Meal, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry and expressing the koinonia (community, sharing, fellowship) enjoyed by the family of Christ.

Although its origins in the early church are closely interconnected with the origins of the Lord's Supper, the two services became quite distinct and should not be confused with each other. While the Lord's Supper has been practically universal among Christians throughout church history, the Love Feast has appeared only at certain times and among certain denominations.

The modern history of the Love Feast began when Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians in Germany introduced a service of sharing food, prayer, religious conversation, and hymns in 1727. John Wesley first experienced it among the Moravians in Savannah, Georgia, ten years later. His diary notes: "After evening prayers, we joined with the Germans in one of their love-feasts. It was begun and ended with thanksgiving and prayer, and celebrated in so decent and solemn a manner as a Christian of the apostolic age would have allowed to be worthy of Christ."

It quickly became a feature of the Evangelical Revival and a regular part of Methodist society meetings in Great Britain and throughout the English-speaking world. As Methodists immigrated to North America they made Love Feasts an important part of early American Methodism.

For more information on The Love Feast, see <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/the-love-feast>