

# **INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE**

## **World Communion Sunday 2021**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them up to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**HYMN:** Let Us Break Bread Together # 513

Pastor: Asian Christians shared the bread and the wine. Churches in China met in secret so that they would not be arrested. Christians in the Middle East, some of whom were saved only by having dreams of Jesus, met under the watchful eye of the government as they celebrated the Eucharist. In Europe, Christians gathered in churches that used to be much fuller and celebrated the Lord's Supper. In African the sacrament was celebrated in great numbers by a growing number of Christians, many of whom bare scars of persecution as they Commune together.

**ALL: Christ followers met both in public and in secret. Some met in freedom while others gathered under threat of persecution and death. Some take the sacrament today with organ music, others with simple singing, and still others in quiet so as not to be arrested.**

Pastor: In wealthy churches and in desperate poverty the sacrament is observed. In churches, homes, huts, and in God's creation this seal of the covenant was experienced. The bread is given to people that could overeat all day and to people who had no idea what they would eat or where they would get it today.

**ALL: The one thing in common - We all come to the same table of our Lord.**

Pastor: In many different languages, by ordained clergy and volunteer pastors, something like these words of institution were given. On the night He was betrayed Jesus took bread. And when he had given thanks and blessed it, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, “This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Drink you all of it.”

**ALL**: The bread is many different types and colors and from many places. Some created primarily from wheat, others from rice or other kinds of grain. Some will have bread left over. Some with very small pieces that could barely give every Christian there a morsel. Still- it represented the body of Christ broken and sustained the body of Christ around the world today.

*(Break Bread)*

Pastor: The juice around the world will be different.

**ALL**: For many it will be wine, some will have juice, some will celebrate with water that had to be carried from a dirty well some miles away. Some will use individual cups, others fancy goblets, still others have been passing around whatever cup was in the home where they were meeting Still- it represented the blood of the covenant in their place and in their communities, just as it does in ours.

*(Pour Cup)*

Pastor: Let us pray.

**ALL**: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we thank you for this sacrament of communion shared with Christians around the world. Pour out your Holy Spirit on these elements and on those who partake—that we may be your body and the representation of your covenant in our lives and throughout the world. Amen.