

Brief Communion Prayers

Both the liturgies from First Church Malone and Buenas Nuevas are not elaborate liturgies; they are brief. They make known, in a succinct way, the presence of Christ and the distinctive heart of the congregation. No matter how brief a liturgy may be, its intent and effect should be to celebrate Christ's presence recognized through bread and wine, blessing and fellowship. Historically, from this kernel of table, meal, and blessing grew elaborate rituals and intricate prayers used throughout our history in our many traditions. Elaboration may add richness or may obscure central things. Brevity can allow a community to focus on bread and wine and gesture—a sensory experience of the goodness of God sometimes overwhelmed by words.

Two additional brief forms of the communion prayer are provided below. They are complete in themselves, reciting the mighty works of God in salvation history, recalling Christ's ministry, death, and resurrection, consecrating the elements as holy things to nourish God's people.

They may, however, be elaborated on with elements found in *Book of Worship*. There may be an invitation before the prayer or a hymn. One may add traditional words of institution. The breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine, as well as the distribution, may be accompanied by words or song. The ritual may conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving. Like the responsive prayer from Malone UCC, prayers might also be prayed responsively between the pastor and the congregation.

“Come, You Weary and Restless”

The Invitation

One: Come, you weary and restless,
 come, all who hunger and thirst.
 Jesus calls us to dine as friends,
 come, God's feast of welcome awaits us.

The Communion Prayer

Pastor: God be with you!

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: As we partake of this bread and fruit,
 we honor Creator and creation.
 As we bless and share these gifts,
 we celebrate the table-fellowship of Jesus.
 All are worthy, all are welcome!
 As we receive the fruits of Spirit,
 we celebrate the communion of all things.
 Creator, Christ, and Spirit dance as one. So may it always be.

(The pastor may hold hands, palm down, over bread and cup.)

Come, Holy One, come.
Bless and prosper this meal;
bless and prosper this fellowship;
bless and prosper our lives,
that justice and love may be the measure of our common witness. Amen.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

(The pastor may break the bread with such words as "Through the broken bread we participate in the body of Christ." The pastor may pour the wine or lift the cup with such words as "Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives." The elements are shared among the congregation.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving (after all have been served)

Pastor: Thanks be to you, O God,
for your presence and your purpose,
for your loving kindness and your steadfast Spirit.
May the blessings of this table
strengthen our faith, increase our generosity
and unify our hearts,
for we pray in the name of Jesus, the Risen One. Amen.

"Bread Baker and Wine Maker"

O God, our Mother and Father,
bread baker and wine maker,
we give you thanks and praise.
You worked the world into being,
instilled all creation with life,
and shaped us as your people.
In Jesus Christ,
the bread of life and the true vine,
you feed us with the Word,
and nourish us from the stalk.
(The pastor may hold hands, palm down, over bread and cup.)
O present Spirit,
help us recognize the risen Christ
in the breaking of the bread.
Feed the world with this bread.
Bring it joy with this wine.
Give it leaven and salt in us,
a community of faith
strengthened by your meal.
We pray in the name of Jesus.
Amen.