

A Kitchen Agape

“Agape” is the New Testament Greek work for “self-giving love”. In the Christian tradition an “Agape” is also the name for informal meals and times of togetherness and mutual sharing which remind us of all those early Christians’ “Love Feasts” and the unity that the Spirit continues to give us. It was the Agape that eventually became formalised in the early Church meal of the Eucharist. An Agape can provide a weekly opportunity (perhaps on Sunday evening) to worship as a household and receive God’s gifts.

Before the Agape begins, please place on the table the meal you are about to share. The table should also be set with a single loaf of bread (eg a bread roll), a single glass of wine (or water), a small dish or container of salt, and an unlighted candle in the centre.

The Agape may be led by any member of the household.

THE BLESSING OF THE MEAL

LEADER: How wonderful it is for God’s people to live together in harmony! Welcome to this meal, in the name of Christ. We come to share in God’s love.

ALL: We come to share our food and our lives.

LEADER: We come to break bread together, and open our lives to one another.

ALL: We come because we have faith and want to give thanks.

LEADER: May God bless this food and this fellowship.

ALL: As we share our food, we give thanks for this abundance, and we remember those who do not have enough.

LEADER: May God give food to those who are hungry.

ALL: May God give us a hunger for justice, and a determination to serve those who do not have a safe home, or food to eat, or basic health care.

RECEIVING THE GIFTS OF GOD

LEADER: On the table in the midst of this household with whom Christ is present we have set symbols to remind us of his promises to us:

READER 1: A candle, to remind us of the way, “I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (*the candle is lighted now*).

READER 2: Bread, symbol to remind us of God’s love, as Jesus told us: “I am the bread of life. The bread that I shall give is myself for the life of the world” (*the loaf or bun is broken now, one piece for each person*).



READER 3: Wine, to remind us of Jesus' life poured out for us, as he told us: "This is my blood, which is shed for you"

OR

READER 3: Water, to remind us of the living water that Jesus gives, as he told us: "Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life"

READER 4: Salt, to remind us of how we are to live, as Jesus told us: "You are the salt of the earth"

ALL: May the food and companionship we share nourish our bodies, hearts and minds. And may our spirits be refreshed. As we live in the light of God's presence. With us now, and at all times and places. Amen.

Each person takes a piece of the bread and sprinkles a small amount of salt on it before eating it. Then each person takes a sip of the wine (or water) from the common glass.

SHARING THE MEAL

The main meal is eaten, and the household shares their stories of the week.

READING AND PRAYERS

A reading from the Bible (eg. one of the readings set for Sunday evening), followed by prayers for the concerns of the week.

THE PEACE

LEADER: Look, the fragments of our feast. Our meal is ended, but God's banquet continues as we go from this place.

ALL: Let us take the banquet into the world and never give up until all people are fed.

LEADER: May the peace of Christ be upon you, and may you be channels of peace and justice.

ALL: And also with you. Amen.

(A kiss, or embrace of peace may be shared)

This Agape has been adapted for the Anglican Parish of Swan from OLOF'S BROTHERS' LOVE FEAST available at www.katrinadream.org