

# “Comfort Food: A Feast of Love”

Adapted from the Liturgy created by Dr. Marcia Mcfee

## **Read silently or have someone read aloud:**

When we “break bread” together as a church in our worship, we remember that Jesus invited folks to his table as part of his ministry, not just at the Last Supper, although that *is* the meal that we remember tonight. This is a way for all of us to break bread together with whatever we have at our homes. In fact, what we’ve asked you to do tonight is to prepare your favorite “comfort food!”

You are encouraged to post on Facebook or Instagram, if you like, a picture of what you are enjoying tonight as part of our virtual feast with the hashtag #comfortfoodyersburg. You are also welcome to post your pictures to the Dyersburg FUMC Facebook page.

Jesus told a parable about a great banquet where everyone was invited. He told the parable to help us understand what God’s Kingdom looks like, what the family of God looks like. The story that he told was about a man who threw a feast, and he told his servants, “Go everywhere your feet will take you and drag people to my feast so that my house will be full.” We also know that Jesus ate meals with people who weren’t often invited to dinner. In his stories and in his life, he was encouraging his disciples to connect deeply with other people, and to invite them to the table. Jesus not only invites us to the table, but he wants to make sure that we are inviting others to the table—to our homes, to our hearts, and to our churches—even if we can’t physically be with each other right now.

Some of us are finding it hard not to be with the people we love and might be concerned about. I invite you in this moment to name aloud the people you wish were at your table with you tonight.

(pause)

Even though Jesus is no longer physically with us, we remember him every time we gather around a table, and we are assured that he is present with us in Spirit. In the same way, we are assured that our loved ones and friends are with us. Let this be a comfort to us.

We also want to call to mind the people whose names we do not know, though we know they need our prayers and God's comfort.

For those who have lost loved ones  
For those who are sick and recovering  
For those who are caring for loved ones who are sick at home  
For those who are caring for persons in medical care  
For those who are separated from loved ones  
For those who are feeling alone and isolated  
For those who are helping and are so very tired  
For those who are struggling to find friends, food, and comfort  
For those who are afraid

Breathe deeply now, and as you do, remember that *God* knows who needs our prayer, and remember that that Spirit, the very Breath of God blows from within us and around us and among us as a Spirit of Compassion and Presence.

Table blessings are a part of our life together as disciples of Jesus. In fact, Jesus asked us to remember him whenever we break bread and raise a cup in thanksgiving. This is why we call the prayer we pray at communion the "*Great Thanksgiving*." In this feast of love and comfort, we call to mind things for which we are deeply grateful.

Speak aloud now a couple of things that you are grateful for in this moment.

And now raise a plate of "something" on your table, or a glass of whatever you are drinking, and let us bless it in this way:

Holy Comforter  
We gather in your name...  
invited by Jesus...  
bound together with your Spirit...  
in union with each other...

Feed our bodies and our spirits...  
with your comforting presence...  
so that we might be your comfort to others...

Bless this food...  
and break open our hearts...

Bless this drink...  
and pour out your love...  
Amen...

As you pass and fill your plates, and eat your comfort food together, let God fill your imagination with ways to reach across the distance to people you love, to your friends, to people you have recently met, and even strangers.

And now may you shelter not only in place, but in peace. May the peace and comfort of Christ be present with you now and forevermore. Amen.