

Deborah Sokolove: Prayers and Sermon for World Communion Sunday

Prayers and Sermon for Sunday, October 2, 2005

World Communion Sunday

by Deborah Sokolove

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[There was not a sermon as such. Instead, the congregation was asked to share reflections on experiencing God through meals. This is the liturgist's invocation and the introduction/explanation for the sermon time.]

Invocation

*Holy One, you are the Bread of Life,
you are the Cup of Healing for all the nations.*

*You delight our senses with smell and touch,
with sight and sound,
with taste and pleasure.*

*As we have gathered, like wheat from the hills
to become your Body,
fill us with your Holy Spirit,
and make us drunk with your presence.*

*Bring us to your banquet table,
that we may feed the world
in praise and prayer.*

Amen.

Sharing the Word

When Celebration Circle began to plan this intergenerational Communion service, we did not remember that the first Sunday in October is celebrated as World Communion Sunday in many churches all over the world. The National Council of Churches web site tells us,

World Communion Sunday . . . is one of the most venerable of "special Sundays." The day has taken on new relevancy and depth of meaning in a world where globalization often has undermined peace and justice – and in a time when fear divides the peoples of God's earth. On this day, we celebrate our oneness in Christ, the Prince of Peace, in the midst of the world we are called to serve – a world ever more in need of peacemaking.

Therefore, it is a happy coincidence, or even the hand of God, that today we are paying special attention to the meaning of Communion as the heavenly banquet, at which all who come are welcome. In your bulletins, you will find an insert titled "Reflections on Communion," in which you may find the quotations from ancient and modern authorities, and from many parts of the world, that informed Celebration Circle's writing of this liturgy and, more importantly, our thinking about Communion.

Usually, when I stand here as liturgist, I introduce the preacher by saying something like, "We believe that God speaks to all of us at various times, and we are delighted to hear what God has been saying to various members of the community." This morning, this introduction has a special significance. As we continue to share the Word-which is for Christians everywhere the Bread of Life – I invite you to let us know how God has spoken to you through experiences of eating and

drinking at holidays, feasts or even simple meals. When have you met Christ, like the two who traveled to Emmaeus, in the breaking of the bread?

As we bring this time of sharing the Word to a close, let us bring our other gifts and offerings to God.