

God, you poured your Spirit on Mary and she sang words of defiance and hope.

Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here. As we eat and drink may we know your presence. As we eat and drink may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power. And may we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice so that we will have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality.

#951 with additional verse

**Holy, holy, holy, my heart, my heart adores you,
My heart is glad to say the words: you are holy, Lord.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God,
blessed in the one who comes in the way of peace.**

The Pouring and Breaking and Sharing

The Bread we break is the Bread of Life.

The Cup we Share is the Cup of Promise.

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Come and eat, the banquet awaits.

Prayer Following Communion

**We look to the bread and the cup,
and we wait for the fullness of its promise.**

**May the eating and the drinking fill us with hope,
as we live to bring Christ's new beginning
to our lives, our community and our world. Amen**



The Banquet of Hopeful Expectation -- Advent Communion

Invitation

‘Tis the season of watching and waiting,
we watch through the windows of our weary souls for signs of promise;
we wait through the anxious days of uncertainty
for the unexpected moment of grace to come.

This table is our place of communal watching and waiting.
We watch with and for each other
as we receive the sign of broken bread and outpoured cup.
We wait in love with one another
to receive the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

This table is for all who gather this day, come together and come each one, for God is doing a new thing and the banquet is about to begin.

Communion Hymn: #5 vs 1

**All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows await the seed of God.
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.**

The Great Thanksgiving

We are not alone.

God is with us as we watch and wait.

In hope we lift our hearts in prayer

the Spirit assures us in grace.

And so we turn our eyes toward heaven,
turning from despair to hopeful anticipation,

that a new day is about to dawn,
and the long awaited Promised One will come,
O Come, O Come Emmanuel, God with us.

We offer our prayer of thanksgiving at God's table,
and we say the grace of gratitude and bow in adoration,
as we remember the gifts of this table.

We recall the signs of grace –
the pointers to a creation renewed and re-born,
a sprout of hope springing forth from a decaying stump of despair;
a budding compassion growing in the winter of indifference;
a descending goodness that hovers on the clouds of Advent's season;
a belief in love that pushes back hatred, prejudice, and judgement.

Prophets of old declared the signs of grace,
the Baptist cried its truth in the wilderness,
Mary nurtured the Child who would embody its redeeming power;
and so we your people, learn to pray in the shadows of our worries,
and come to trust in the Promise of a new time, a new beginning.

Hymn #5 vs 1

**All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows await the seed of God.
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.**

God in Community, Holy in One, we will be led in this holy season
to the place of our hope and redemption,
as we set out on this Advent journey, as we seek to walk the way to
Bethlehem, we remember that mystery we call faith:

**Christ died, the Branch of Jesse broken on the unjust tree;
Christ was raised, declaring 'the Lord is my resurrection!'
Christ will return, the advent of God's glory and grace for all.**

Come now to Your children gathered at the Table,
pouring out Your Spirit on the gifts of the Bread and of the Cup.
This is the bread which, though broken,
strengthens us to stand up for justice.
This is the cup which overflows with grace,
so we might transform our communities into safe places for all people;
so we might see our sisters and brothers in those the world would
have us fear.

VU #5 verse 1

**All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows await the seed of God.
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.**

Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
we remember the life that this baby will live.
We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition
to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be
as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.
And we remember one special meal, foretaste of the banquet that is to
come, that he ate with his closest friends.
And at the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it, then
passed it to them saying: Take and eat. This bread is the body of Life,
broken by the world.
Eat it in remembrance and in hope.
After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:
This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it
remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again until the time of the
heavenly banquet.
Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his
life, his death and his resurrection.