



FOOD

Small Group Facilitator Guide

Set up:

- Ensure that all technology is in place and ready to view the video. If your church does not have adequate WiFi, this may mean that the facilitator will need to download the video before arriving for the session. Facilitators will also need to ensure that everyone will be able to hear and see the video as it is being played. Facilitators may wish to turn on closed captioning.
- Create a welcoming space to have a conversation.
- Place a table in the center or near the conversation space to create an “altarscape” of items that will help set the tone and keep the conversation focused on each Sign of Life.

What you need:

- *Video viewing capabilities*
- *Small Group Facilitator Guide for the facilitator*
- *Signs of Life Practice Sheet and worship handouts for each participant*
- *A table for the altarscape*
- *Specific items to create altarscape. For food, you will need a crusty loaf of bread, some fruit, a bowl, and a cloth.*

Learning Outcomes

- *For participants to be able to link food to liturgy, their own life, and experience of God.*
- *For participants to gain a better awareness of the presence of the holy in everyday life.*
- *For participants to deepen relationships through spiritual conversation.*

Small Group Session for Food

Gathering Prayer/Setting the Altarscape: (5 minutes)

Gather participants into the conversation circle. Invite a few moments of stillness, and then pray this collect:

O God, who by the abundance of your Son all Creation is nourished and satisfied: Grant us, we pray, a holy hunger to be filled with your good things, and food for the leanness of our souls; through the bread of eternal life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After the prayer, create a still life scene. Place the cloth on the table, and then the bowl on the cloth, and arrange the bread and fruit attractively. Sit together in silence for a few moments with this scene as your focal point.

Check-In (15 minutes):

Orient participants to the rhythm of this session. Let them know that you will do check-in, watch the video, have a conversation, and then close with worship.

Invite participants to answer the following question:

Last week we discussed water. How did you notice the presence of water this week?

Facilitators may wish to practice mutual invitation (see Small Group Facilitator Guide, above) or they may wish to simply go around in the circle. Participants who pass should be invited to share after the other participants have shared.

Watch Video (15 minutes):

Before you start the video, read this script:

“As you watch this video, pay attention to the various ways food is explored, and think about how food is present in the life and liturgies of your worshipping community.”

Play video to the end. Invite the group to come back together for conversation.

Small Group Conversation (40 minutes):

Open the small group conversation with the following question:

“Where is food present in the life and liturgies of your own worshipping community? How are these symbols and practices similar or dissimilar to what you heard and saw in the video?”

After the opening question has been discussed, choose any of the following questions to discuss with your small group. The facilitator should use their best judgment to select the questions that they believe will elicit meaningful conversation for your context. The small group may spend the entire time on one question, or do several. How many questions the group moves through is less important than fruitful conversation for the group.

- How has food inspired you? How has food been a part of your spiritual journey?
- Tell a story about a time that you connected with another person while sharing a meal.
- Brother James notes that Jesus feeds us both with the Eucharistic meal, but also with Scripture. How does Scripture feed you?
- Brother Luke says, “There is always more to receive of God...receiving a piece of bread each day is a helpful reminder that I’m given what I need as opposed to all that I crave.” How does the Eucharist sustain you? How do you know when you have enough?
- When we receive communion, we become more like Jesus. But during the Eucharist, the body of Christ is broken so that it may be given to us. Have you experienced a brokenness that was a gift to others?

When there are about five minutes left for conversation, ask the following question:

“What do you understand differently about food because of this conversation?”

Wrap Up/Weekly Practice (5 minutes):

Remind the participants of the weekly practice. Distribute the Signs of Life Practice Sheet for Food. Reiterate the instructions from the video:

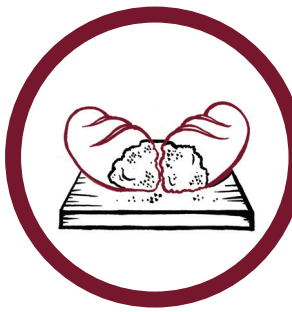
“Here is a reminder of the practice for this Sign of Life. As you eat this week, give thanks to God for your food and also your feelings, whether hungry or full. Remember that Jesus is the Bread of Life; Jesus is food that nourishes us, body and soul.”

This is also the time when the facilitator should remind participants of housekeeping details for the next session.

Worship (10 minutes):

Pass out the worship handouts to each participant. The facilitator may wish to lead worship, or may invite another participant to lead worship. Groups may wish to use the altarscape as a focal point during their worship time.

After worship, the small group session has ended.



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Small Group Worship

Leader prays the collect: O God, who by the abundance of your Son all Creation is nourished and satisfied: Grant us, we pray, a holy hunger to be filled with your good things, and food for the leanness of our souls; through the bread of eternal life, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Magnificat

Read antiphonally by half verse.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *

for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *

**the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.**

He has mercy on those who fear him *

in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *

he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *

and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *

and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *

for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *

to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glorify the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Leader: Without silence, words have no meaning. Listen to this poem about food.

[Here we suggest reading from "Love (III)" by George Herbert.]

In the silence that follows, let God feed you. *[Silence for two minutes.]*

Prayers of the Gathered Community:

Leader: Even as we gather together, well fed and cared for, there are those who are hungry in body and soul. Pray for all those who hunger, either silently, or aloud.

We give God thanks for providing us with the sustenance we need. Give thanks for the ways in which you are fed by God.

Blessed are you, O Lord God, Ruler of the Universe, for you give us food to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Now let us pray the words that Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your Name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and for ever. Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**



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Practice Sheet

This week we invite you to reflect on the sign of Food

Question:

For what do you hunger?

Scripture:

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

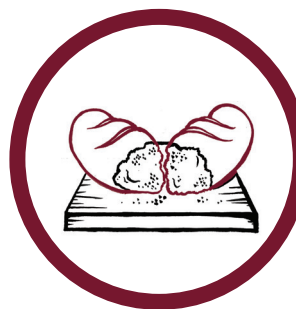
Luke 26:26-29

Collect:

O God, who by the abundance of your Son all Creation is nourished and satisfied: Grant us, we pray, a holy hunger to be filled with your good things, and food for the leanness of our souls; through the bread of eternal life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Practice:

Give thanks to God for your food and also your feelings, whether hungry or full. Remember that Jesus is the Bread of Life; Jesus is food that nourishes us, body or soul.



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