PREACHING & TEACHING

Communion Meditation

A five-minute communion meditation written to be read aloud at the table, with the pauses marked. Unlike the sermon frameworks on this site this one is finished text: it is short enough to be read as written, and the bracketed lines are for your own tradition's words of institution rather than for you to fill in.

5 min · 5 segments

Five movements, five minutes, written to be read. Swap the words of institution for your own tradition's and leave the pauses alone.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- This is the one piece on the worship shelf that is meant to be read as written rather than adapted. It is short deliberately. A communion meditation that runs past six minutes stops being a meditation and becomes a second sermon.
- The pauses are the content. Twenty seconds of silence at a table feels enormous from the front and about right from the pew. Time them rather than trusting your instinct.
- If you are recording this for a feed, do not add music under it. The silences need to be actually silent or they stop working.

01. Coming to the table

1 min

[slow from the first word - do not carry the energy of the service into this]

We come to this table not because we must, and not because we have earned a place at it. We come because we were invited, by someone who knew exactly who he was inviting.

That is worth sitting with for a moment. The people at the first table were not ready either. One of them was about to deny knowing him. One of them had already made an arrangement. He knew, and he passed them the bread anyway.

[pause for 10 seconds]

02. The bread

1 min 30

[let the physical thing be physical - hold it up if you are in a room]

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread. Ordinary bread, from an ordinary meal, in a borrowed room.

He could have chosen something rare. A sign nobody could mistake. Instead he took the most common thing on the table, the thing that was already there, the thing every one of them had eaten a thousand times without thinking.

And he said this is my body, broken for you. *[substitute your own tradition's words of institution here]*

[pause for 15 seconds, or while the bread is distributed]

03. The cup

1 min

[quieter than the bread - this is the harder half]

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup, and said this is the new covenant in my blood.

A covenant is not a feeling. It is a binding thing, made in public, that holds when the feeling has gone. That is what is being offered here. Not a mood that will lift by Tuesday, but an agreement that does not depend on how you arrive.

[pause for 15 seconds, or while the cup is distributed]

04. The silence

45 sec

[say almost nothing here - the temptation to fill this is the thing to resist]

Take a moment before you eat and drink. You do not have to resolve anything. You do not have to arrive at the right feeling.

[pause for 20 seconds - longer than is comfortable from the front]

05. Sending

45 sec

[lift the voice slightly - the table ends by pointing outward]

We do this until he comes. Which means this table is not only a memory. It is a rehearsal for a meal that has not happened yet, and everyone at this one is expected at that one.

Go from here fed. Not fixed, and not finished. Fed. *[pause, then move into your closing prayer or hymn]*

USAGE

Free to use. Read it at your table, record it, publish it under your own name, and keep whatever you earn from it. No credit required.

Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.