The Agape is a fellowship and unity meal with ancient roots. In the early Church it was often celebrated with Eucharist. This meal is not Holy Communion. It is a tangible symbol that of the unity shared by the people of God, rooted in Christ, until we can gather for Communion again. In this time of crisis, it can serve as a powerful reminder for the people scattered in their homes and gathered virtually that we remain connected and focused on God’s vision for the world.

The Agape could be used as a conclusion to a Service of the Word or Sunday liturgy. It could also be provided to families for home use in a fuller version. This rite is adapted from the Iona Abbey Worship Book, 2001 edition, pp. 123-131. The full Iona Agape can be purchased as a PDF download for less than $2 at <https://www.ionabooks.com/agap-service-iona-abbey-pl10010.html>

Ask people at the beginning of the service to have some form of food and drink. In this time of limited mobility, people will need to use what they have on hand: water, juice, wine; bread, fruit, crackers, etc. Instruct people to have enough food for everyone gathered with them and available. Water and bread/fruit may be the most universal options.

Begin with simple instructions, such as: *We will now eat and drink as a symbol of our connection with each other, the entire Body of Christ, and the whole world in this difficult time, until we can gather again at the Table together.* Divide the opening responses as appropriate. There could be multiple lay leaders, for example. We have found at Kairos that dividing responses between all, women, and men can be quite meaningful. – Rev. Bob Fisher

**Opening responses**

Leader: Out of the darkness came light,

**All: and the power of God was revealed**

*Men: in the running wave and the flowing air,*

Women: in the quiet earth and the shining stars.

Leader: Out of the dust came life,

**All: and the image of God was revealed**

*Men: in the human face and the gentle heart,*

Women: in the warmth of flesh and the depth of soul.

Leader: Out of justice came freedom,

**All: and the wisdom of God was revealed**

*Men: in the need to grow and the will to love,*

Women: in the chance to know and the power to choose.

Leader: And God looked at the creation,

**All: And behold, it was very good.**

**The sharing**

Leader: We share this food and drink as a symbol of the heavenly banquet at which all are fed and nourished, and a sign of God’s dream for a world in which all are cared for and included. As we share, we commit ourselves to doing all we can to bring this world about.\*

Share with each other with the words: **Taste and see that the Lord is good.**

**Prayer: As we share this food, and pour out this drink,**

 **We thank you, God, for our daily bread,**

 **For the food that nourishes us, and the community that sustains us.**

 **We thank you for the privilege of quenching our thirst,**

 **And for the Living Water with which you surprise and enrich,**

 **And transform our lives. AMEN**

**Blessing: God bless each of us as we travel on.**

 **In our times of need, may we find a table spread in the wilderness,**

 **And companions on the road. AMEN**

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To form a simple home agape worship, use the following order or something similar.

General order for Agape worship

Opening responses

Prayer of adoration/prayer of the day

Prayer of confession

Giving thanks for the week/highs & lows/examen

Scripture reading

(Brief reflection)

Prayers

The sharing

Blessing