

Carry Out Eucharist

This liturgy was written for an occasion when we had a very busy Saturday and yet still wanted to meet together as two families to share Eucharist. As no one had the time and energy to cook, feeling just a little bit guilty at all the extra packaging, we decided to pick up a carry out from Wagamama's. So this liturgy does have a strong confessional element as well as being a celebration of the diversity of food our increasingly diverse city now offers but also looks at this in the context of our consumerist and globalised society where it is more than carry outs that are consumed.

Cardboard boxes
Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

Smells of coriander and lemon grass
Chilli peppers and garlic
Pickled ginger and tangy tamarind
Zingy lime and salty soy sauce.

Sticky rice and stringy noodles
Ramen soups and plump dumplings
Springy tofu and stir fried bean sprouts
Crunchy peanuts and refreshing green tea.

Cardboard boxes
Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

Cartons opened with anticipation
As multiple smells and colours are revealed
Muscles beginning to un-knot across the back
The weekend has arrived!

Time to get off the hamster wheel of the week
To chill and uncork a bottle of wine
Time to meet with friends and family
To savour food and share laughter.

Cardboard boxes
Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

Carry out food, symbol of a too-busy week
Of deadlines and over-flowing in-trays
Or class trips and after school clubs
Of piles of homework and never-ending emails.

Carry out food, symbol of modern life
Where consumption is of more than just food
And globalisation brings undreamed of diversity

Yet every take away shares the same menu.

Cardboard boxes
Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

So we pause before our carry out meal
Take time to enjoy gathering together
And confess our part in the consumption of our planet
Where we ourselves are also consumed.

So we pause before our carry out meal
To give thanks for food and friendship
For time off to blob out and just be
For the choice not to cook.

Cardboard boxes
Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

And we tell the story of Jesus
who invited friends to a Passover meal
to remember a night when bread had no time to rise
snatched and packed hastily in the rush to escape.

To remember a night when slaves were denied freedom
From being a cog in the wheel of wealth creation
Disposable and replicable
Building the walls of their own imprisonment.

Cardboard boxes
Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

And we tell the story of Jesus
About to be consumed for walking a different path
Who takes the un-risen bread and tears it apart
This is my body, broken for the life of the world.

[tear and share bread]

And we tell the story of Jesus
About to be consumed for walking a different path
Who takes the uncorked wine and pours it out
This is my blood, spilt so you may savour life.

[pour and share wine]

Cardboard boxes

Tin foil trays
Polystyrene tubs
Joined together chopsticks.

Let us celebrate this present moment
Of being together and eating together
Of relaxing and laughing with one another
Our carry out Eucharist.

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