

# Embrace the Spirit

## The Caribbean Initiative

### Embracing the Spirit of.....yeast

*He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." Matthew 13:33 (NRSV)*

This parable allows us to see the mysterious power of the Gospel in everyday life. When the yeast is introduced to the dough, it violently changes the physical state of the dough to create something new and unprecedented. It rises with a new form and a new purpose. The same can be said about the love God shows us. Its work in our lives is almost imperceptible at times, but changes us in profound ways.

In the Caribbean, we cannot understate the violence of the conquistadores and the way they sowed the "Newfoundland" with their crops and way of life. They filled the fields with wheat, in places where the indigenous communities already had their sown their crops of yucca, corn, and sweet potatoes. The conquistadores planted thinking only of their own needs and not taking into consideration a whole myriad of pre-existing cultures and foods that were part of the native landscape. That was just one of the many ways in which the European powers imposed their culture on the Caribbean, as well as in the rest of Latin America. Today, most recipes in the Caribbean combine the products of Europe with the native Caribbean crops in the way that demonstrates resistance and melting of culture and diversity.



On this World Communion Sunday, the materials we are sharing with brothers and sisters in Christ, will guide us to return to the original, radical message of the Eucharist. The Parable of the Great Dinner (Luke 14:15-22) and the Parable of the Wedding Banquet (Matthew 22:1-14), give us examples of breaking norms and rules of a concrete economic and cultural system and allow us to shift into openness, compassion, generosity, and welcome to all humans and creatures in Creation. The proposal is to surrender our *haciendas*, our private places, closed by privilege and domination, and to fill our stomachs with the reality of the other, letting the yeast of the Gospel transform us from the logic of retaining to one of offering. This alternative

implies a society governed by a different symbolic order, not only by another law. It is about a permanent re-evolution of love, understanding, and care.

**¡Bienvenidos y bienvenidas a la Mesa del Señor!  
Welcome to the table of God!**

## Caribbean Style Banana Bread

The fruits found in the warm Caribbean countries are used in this bread. This sweet, flavorful loaf need not be served just for breakfast or snacks, but as an accompaniment to soups and stews.

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
1 egg, well beaten, room temperature  
1/4 cup Jamaican rum  
1 t. vanilla extract  
1/2 t. soda  
1/2 t. salt  
3/4 t. ground nutmeg  
2 cups all-purpose flour, unsifted  
1 1/4 cup very ripe bananas, mashed  
1/2 cup walnuts, coarsely chopped  
1/2 cup white seedless raisins (optional)  
1/2 cup fresh coconut, grated (optional)

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Cream butter and sugar together, beat in egg until light and fluffy, then stir in rum and vanilla.
3. Sift all dry ingredients, add to the butter mixture, alternating with the mashed banana, mix well after each addition.
4. Fold in the nuts and EITHER coconuts or raisins.
5. Pour into a well buttered and floured loaf pan.
6. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes until the bread shrinks from the sides of the pan, and a toothpick comes out clean.
7. Cool for about 30 minutes in the pan, then unmold and completely cool on a rack.

## Pineapple Nut Bread

### Ingredients:

2 eggs  
1/3 cup of sugar  
1/3 cup of butter (melted)  
2 cups flour  
1 T. baking powder  
1 t. salt  
1 cup nuts (crushed)  
1 cup crushed pineapple (canned, including juice)

### Directions:

1. Preheat over to 350 degrees
2. Beat eggs and slowly add sugar until well blended and add melted butter
3. Add 1 cup of crushed nuts and 1 cup of crushed pineapple with juice. Add only enough so that all is incorporated
4. Grease 4x8 inch bread pan. Pour batter into pan and bake for 1 hour and 10 minutes.



## **Call to Worship<sup>1</sup>**

One: We gather to worship together,

**All: Different people, different lives, different histories,**

One: Yet all children of the same Parent,

**All: Created lovingly by the Source of all life!**

One: We gather to reconnect with one another,

**All: Different people, different lives, different histories,**

One: Yet all disciples of one Teacher.

**All: Jesus, the Word made flesh, dwelling among us.**

One: We gather with different joys and sorrows,  
different hopes and fears....

**All: Different people, different lives, different histories,**

One: Yet one people with one God, one faith, one baptism.

**All: Let us open ourselves to the presence of God at work in us, among us, and through us.**

## **Prayer<sup>2</sup>**

Our Creator, how could we possibly not thank you for the Earth you have given to us!

With joy we praise you

for the high mountains and their trees,  
for the rushing waters of Caribbean rivers,  
for the forests so luxuriant in foliage,  
and the abundance of temperate climes.

Still more, we praise you for our Caribbean brothers and sisters.

We thank you for their gifts and witness,  
as they share and receive the Good News of your Son.  
Challenge us, God, to find the ways of presence, mutuality, and collaboration  
in our commitment to unity, justice, and peace everywhere in the world. Amen.

## **Scripture**

Philippians 2: 1-13

## **Communion Hymn**

We come now to your table Lord,  
You are the Living Bread.

We come now to your table Lord,  
Let every soul be fed.

You are the Living Bread,

Let every soul be fed;

And now may every soul be fed,

With Living Bread.



## **Share the Elements**

This is presented to give you options for your own service of communion. You may choose prayers for other settings or use the service as a whole. Use the kinds of breads from the recipes above or variants to represent the many manifestations of the "Bread of Life". Also, use fabrics and chalices from different countries for the communion table.

## **An Affirmation<sup>3</sup>**

One: The communion of saints, called from the entire human family, is united by God.

**Many: As the people of God, we love one another.**

One: We experience, practice, and pursue community with one another.

**Many: We give ourselves willingly and joyfully to one another.**

One: We are a benefit and blessing to one another.

**Many: We share one faith and have one calling.**

One: We are one body, and are of one soul and mind.

**Many: We have one God and Creator.**

One: We are filled with one Spirit.

**Many: We eat of one bread and drink of one cup.**

One: We work for unity with the people from our communities, the Caribbean and the rest of the world .

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

## **Benediction<sup>4</sup>**

Let us go with Jesus, the light who guides us on our way.

May our hope be that the Sun of Justice will rise one morning on all humankind.

May the God of Peace, our constant companion, lead us along paths of solidarity and hope,

and give us the joy of being united in God's love. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from [http://www.ucc.org/justice\\_immigration\\_worship\\_call-to-worship](http://www.ucc.org/justice_immigration_worship_call-to-worship)

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/prayer-cycle/week-31-the-caribbean>

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from [http://oga.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/worship\\_liturgy\\_web.pdf](http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/worship_liturgy_web.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Taken from <http://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/peace-convocation/world-sunday-for-peace/celebration.html>

# Embrace the Spirit

The Caribbean Initiative

## It's time to Embrace the Spirit!

You and your church are invited to be a part of the Global Ministries Caribbean Initiative. In this region, we see God at work in the world and are called to witness alongside our brothers and sisters. Join with churches in the U.S. and the Caribbean as we celebrate our common faith in Jesus Christ and revitalize our relationships.

### Engage with communities of faith across the Caribbean through:

- Bible studies
- Caribbean hymns and music
- Children's curriculum
- People-to-People Pilgrimages
- Special giving opportunities
- Worship resources
- Videos



### For more information

[Globalministries.org/caribbeaninitiative](http://Globalministries.org/caribbeaninitiative)

Toll free: 866-822-8224 ext. 3227 Email: [wcm@ucc.org](mailto:wcm@ucc.org)



## Embrace the Spirit in worship

A new album of Caribbean hymns and praise music, complete with lyrics in English and Spanish is now available!

Download the free album today

[globalministries.org/caribbean\\_music](http://globalministries.org/caribbean_music)

