

Lord's Day Closing Ceremony (for Sunday Evening)

Our God and King, guide and defend the people called by your Name. Strengthen and prosper all who cherish thoughts of good towards your people, and fulfill their purposes, but frustrate those who devise evil plans against your people, and make their designs of no effect; as it is said, "Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us" (Is 8:10).

Open to us, Father of Mercies and Lord of Forgiveness, in this week and in the weeks to come, the gates of light and blessing, of redemption and salvation, of heavenly help and rejoicing, of holiness and peace, of the study of your teaching, and of prayer. In us also let the Scripture be fulfilled:

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." (Is 52:7)

GROUP: Amen.

The Leader extinguishes the Lord's Day candle, if it has been left burning throughout the day. A song may be sung to conclude..

Blessing before the Meal

Begin with a song and perhaps a time of praise. The following prayer, adapted from the blessing of Zechariah from Luke 1, may be included at this point, or the Leader may decide to move directly to the next prayer.

LEADER: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people,
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets
from of old, that we should be saved from our
enemies,
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to perform the mercy promised to our fathers,
and to remember his holy covenant.
The oath which he swore to our father Abraham,
to grant us that we, being delivered from the
hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all the
days of our life.
For the day has dawned upon us from on high
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in
the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The Leader pours a cup of wine, raises the cup, and continues as follows.

LEADER: Behold, God is my salvation.

GROUP: I will trust and will not be afraid.

LEADER: For God the Lord is my strength and song.

GROUP: And he has become my salvation.

LEADER: Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Salvation belongs to the Lord.

GROUP: Your blessing be upon your people.

LEADER: The Lord of Hosts is with us.

GROUP: The God of Jacob is our refuge.

LEADER: God's people had light and joy and gladness and honor.

GROUP: So be it with us.

LEADER: I will lift the cup of salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord. Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who have created the fruit of the vine.

GROUP: Amen.

Prayer after the Meal (the Concluding of the Day)

LEADER: Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who sanctify us through faith in the resurrection of Christ and bless us in this day set apart to celebrate his victory. Blessed are you, Lord our God, who have given us new life in your Son.

GROUP: Amen.

Pass the common cup of wine and recite the following prayer while the cup is being passed.

LEADER: Father in Heaven, grant that we may begin the working days which draw near to us in peace; freed from all sin and transgression, filled with the joy of your Holy Spirit, and following in the ways of your Son Jesus. May we be fully clothed in him, the New Man, created after your likeness in true righteousness and holiness.

Father of Mercy, bless and prosper the work of our hands. Make us fruitful in every good work, unwearied in well-doing, knowing that in Christ our labor is not in vain. May all that we do, in word or deed, be to the praise of your glory through Jesus your Son.

As the cup is being passed, the following blessing is recited over some bread if the ceremony is being conducted within the context of a meal.

LEADER: Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who bring forth bread from the earth.

GROUP: Amen.

Distribute the bread and begin the meal.