Bless This Meal
By Gwen Van Velsor

A common moment of shared prayer is before a meal. Inspired by the exhibit “Layers,” by Hadiya Williams in the dining room at Woodlawn, and by the Arcadia sustainable food program, this prayer is meant to honor all of those at the table, including those who birthed, grew, prepared and served the meal.

Bless this bread
Touched first by the ground as it was born
Torn from its mother at harvest
Crushed into flour
Molded into dough with living yeast and living water
Baked with fire
Served by hands

Bless this wine
Touched first by the ground as it was born
Torn from its mother at harvest
Crushed into juice
Fermented with living water and never ending time
Bottled under pressure
Poured by hands

Bless this meal
Touched by many souls
Transformed into sustenance for our living bodies
Bringing together our hands in gratitude