

# Family Liturgy Resource

## We Welcome the New Year

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**Symbols: Bowls of pineapples surrounded by candles**

### Opening Hymn

**Procession of community members light candles to symbolise hope and new life.**

#### Leader:

In Hawaii pineapples are a symbol of welcome and hospitality. People hang pineapples on their doors to say, 'Welcome, come on in and rest with us awhile'. We come together with our families, friends and neighbours to welcome the new year. We welcome the hope the new year brings, we welcome the new beginnings the new year brings and we welcome the opportunities the New Year brings to each of us.

Together we take a moment to reflect on our lives and the reality this new year brings. Maybe this is the year we move house, move job, find or lose love, become a parent ... this year will bring many changes in our lives, in us. One thing for sure is that this year we can become *more* than we are. We can grow in love and humanity as well as trust and holiness. We can work to allow peace and love to settle in the depths of our hearts, to engage forgiveness and genuine healing as part of our relationships and to embrace the divine invitation ever present in our lives.

**Reflection on the gospels: Jesus explains his relationship with us**

#### Reader 1:

'I am the vine, you are the branches.'  
(Jn 15:5)

#### Reader 2:

Jesus is the source of life.  
We are invited to bear the abundant fruit of love for others.  
*Pause*

#### Reader 1:

'I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.'  
(Jn 10:14)

#### Reader 2:

Jesus knows us through and through. He loves us always and unconditionally. How do we show our friends, our

families and our communities that we love and support them when they strive for the good of all?

*Pause*

#### Reader 1:

'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'  
(Jn 6:35)

#### Reader 2:

When we take the time to develop our relationship with Jesus, he fulfils all of our needs.  
How can we plan our days to ensure that we carve out some time, no matter how short it is, to be with Jesus in prayer and silence?  
*Pause*

#### Reader 1:

'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'  
(Jn 8:12)

#### Reader 2:

Jesus is a companion for each of us on the journey of life. Through his life, ministry, death and resurrection, Jesus shines a light on our pathways. Jesus shows us the way. This is not always the most convenient way, the easiest way, but it is the most holy way.  
How can we become an authentic companions for others? How can we lead by honest example?  
*Pause*

#### Reader 3:

##### Knowing God

Knowing the presence of God in our lives means *being* present to God.  
Finding peace and stillness in our hearts means resting in God's words.  
Sharing in the love of God with others means embracing God's unconditional love.

Following the way of Jesus means honestly trying to walk in his footsteps.

#### Reader 4:

##### I Give You My Hands

The Prophet Micah says:

The Lord has told us what is good.

What the Lords asks of us is this:  
To do justice,  
To love kindly,  
And to walk humbly with our God.

### Reflection Hymn

Spend a short while reflecting on the new year. How can we make good our relationships with family members, with friends? How can we offer authentic forgiveness to those who have hurt us? How can we continue to build relationships from heart to heart, with truth and love?

#### Leader:

This year we welcome an opportunity to be fully human and fully alive. We welcome the new year with trust, openness, hospitality and love.

Lord Jesus, we give you our hands to do your work here on earth.

**All:** Hear our prayer.

We give you our feet to walk in your footsteps.

**All:** Hear our prayer.

We give you our eyes to see with love, truth, tolerance and compassion.

**All:** Hear our prayer.

We give you our mouths that we may speak your words often.

**All:** Hear our prayer.

Above all, we give you our hearts that we may love with your holiness and beauty.

**All:** Hear our prayer.

#### Leader:

As families, neighbours, friends and companions, we gather to welcome the new year.

#### All:

May 2018 be a year of hope;  
May 2018 be a year of justice;  
May 2018 be a year where we embrace opportunity;  
May 2018 be a year of compassionate love and peace;  
May 2018 be *the* year we take each step in hope, towards God.

### Closing Hymn