

**A Celebration of the Holy Eucharist  
with Spiritual Communion**

Adapted from the Book of Alternative Services

Prepared for the Diocese of Niagara

June 2020

## INTRODUCTION and NOTES

This adaptation of the Order for the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist with Spiritual Communion has been prepared during a time of pandemic to allow our communities to resume Eucharistic practice as far as is safe to do so. This rite leans upon the tradition of 'Spiritual Communion'<sup>1</sup> which has deep roots in our practice and tradition and remains part of the practice of some dioceses to this day where, because of vast distances, people are unable to be physically present to receive bread and wine.

Working on the assumption that this celebration will be offered primarily online to a scattered community, the preparation of this liturgy has tried to take into account the limitations of time and movement for most churches inherent in the 'live-streaming' of this worship and so parts are optional and may be shortened.

It is expected:

- That no more than 5 people will be physically present for the celebration of this liturgy.
- That member(s) of the laity will be present and take a part in the offering of the service.
- That all hygienic practices and physical distancing measures will be in place and strictly adhered to by participants. Masks should be worn except when leading prayer, reading, or receiving communion.
- That those present may be seen to receive in one kind (bread) and that wine will be consumed solely by the celebrant, off camera if possible.
- That a communal prayer of spiritual communion will be said and the congregation watching will be offered the prayers herein to make their personal spiritual communion.

Rubrics:

- The chalice and paten may already be charged upon the Altar and covered before the service begins.
- Only one person, the celebrant, should touch and prepare the vessels and elements.
- It is prudent to have two patens: one for the priest host and a second for individual wafers for those present. A third may be necessary for gluten-free hosts.
- Bread should be taken directly from the paten, not handed to the communicant.
- The vessels should be removed from the Altar following spiritual communion and ablutions be attended to by the celebrant with any liquid reverently returned to earth following the service.

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<sup>1</sup> Augustine reminds us in his commentary on the Gospel of John that reception of bread and wine is primarily a spiritual reception that leads to inner life, while Aquinas extols us to cultivate a deep spiritual hunger for the sacrament that we might draw closer to Christ.

## The Gathering of the Community

*A Hymn may be sung as the community gathers.*

*This or other appropriate seasonal greetings may be used.*

Celebrant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with you all.

**All: And also with you.**

Celebrant: Almighty God,  
**All: to you all hearts are open, all desires known,  
and from you no secrets are hidden.  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### The Collect

Celebrant: Let us pray.  
*(the celebrant leads the collect of the day)*

All: Amen.

## The Liturgy of the Word

### The Readings

*One or more readings from the Old Testament, Psalms and Epistles reading may be read.  
They may conclude with these or other suitable words:*

Reader: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.  
**All: Thanks be to God.**

### The Gospel

*The Gospel of the Day will be Proclaimed.*

Reader: The Lord be with you.  
**All: And also with you.**

Reader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to \_\_\_\_\_.  
**All: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*At the conclusion of the Gospel reading:*

Reader: The Gospel of Christ.  
**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## The Sermon

*Words of reflection or teaching are offered.*

## The Creed

*The Nicene or the Apostles Creed may be said.*

## The Prayers of the People

*Prayers for the needs of the Church, the world, community, and individuals of the community are offered.*

## Confession and Absolution

*The people are invited to confession in these or similar words.*

Celebrant: Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy;  
God welcomes sinners and inviting us to this holy table.  
Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

*Silence is kept.*

Celebrant: Most merciful God,  
**All: we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us,  
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**All: Amen.**

## The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**All: And also with you.**

*A bow or similar contactless action is offered to those present as a sign of peace.*

## THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

*A Hymn may be Sung. If the Altar is not already prepared note the rubrics in the introduction to this service.*

## The Prayer over the Gifts

*When the gifts have been prepared, the celebrant may say the Prayer over the Gifts proper to the occasion, following which the people say, Amen.*

## The Eucharistic Prayer

*The following, or a Eucharistic Prayer from the Book of Alternative Services, Anglican Church of Canada or from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada may be used.*

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts in adoration,

**All: We lift them to our God**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Living God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: We rest in you timeless One, giver of peace, bringer of hope,  
you have knit us together, and breathed your life into us.  
your Spirit moves beckoning us to join your song;  
you wait to speak even though we are slow to listen,  
you call us in still small voices,  
command us to be still and know you,  
in the depths of our being,  
beyond the veil of time.

Still us now so that, ever more aware of our connection  
with you and with all who seek you in faith, we may find and repeat the praises  
that ring from the rocks of earth to the saints in light as we say:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory,  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: We bring to this table God of Grace, all the concerns we carry,  
all of the gifts we have to offer, all of the hope we long to see fulfilled,  
so that as bread and wine are transformed, we may experience your presence,  
and our restless hearts find rest in you.

Speak to us as Christ spoke to those first disciples,  
when gathered at a table Jesus took bread and gave you thanks,  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples saying:  
Take and eat, this is my body which is broken for you,  
do this in remembrance of me.

After supper he took the cup of wine, gave you thanks and shared it saying:  
This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

Come Holy Spirit, upon us and upon these gifts,  
open us to receive Christ afresh in the depths of our hearts  
transform us, so we may be moved to adore the One whose  
mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

We worship you, we adore you,  
we seek you, we await you.

**All: Amen. Alleluia.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant: As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,

**All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

*Or*

Celebrant: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

*The celebrant breaks the consecrated bread for distribution, and may say one of the following:*

Celebrant: "I am the bread of life," says the Lord.

"Whoever comes to me will never be hungry; whoever believes in me will never thirst."

**All: Taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are they who trust in him!**

*Or*

Celebrant: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: We, being many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.**

*Or*

Celebrant: Creator of all, you gave us golden fields of wheat,  
whose many grains we have gathered and made into this one bread.

**All: So may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

*Or*

Celebrant: "I am the bread which has come down from heaven," says the Lord.

**All: Give us this bread for ever.**

Celebrant: "I am the vine, you are the branches."

**All: May we dwell in Christ, as Christ lives in us.**

*Then the priest will say....*

Celebrant: The gifts of God for the People of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Invitation to Spiritual Communion

Celebrant: Dear friends,  
I invite you in this moment, wherever you may be,  
to receive Christ, in communion with the saints,  
and the gathering of God's people, unseen and yet present with us now.  
Many are made one.

*The following prayer is said by all, during this prayer the elements may be elevated, in offering to the people.*

Celebrant: We receive you Lord Jesus Christ,  
**All: we welcome your presence in us,  
and together proclaim our love for you;  
with our hearts, minds, our souls and our strength,  
with the saints we worship you,  
with the angels we adore you,  
with your whole Church we proclaim your reign.  
Come to us, though many,  
and make us one in you. Amen.**

## Prayers of Reception

*A time of silence should be kept to allow people to make their act of spiritual communion.*

*Following this silence, the people physically present receive communion in one kind by taking the bread from the paten while the chalice remains covered upon the Altar. Finally, the celebrant should reverently consume the wine.*

*Any and all of the following prayers may be used by those making spiritual communion from afar.*

**One: I worship and adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,  
present in bread and wine, and present in your people, who are gathered in spirit.  
In this moment I join with them to receive you in my heart, and in our community.  
May you, enthroned on the altar, be now enthroned in my heart,  
may you, present in bread and wine, feed and renew my soul,  
may you, who gives yourself to us again, fill us with grace, and heavenly blessing.  
Even as I am fed, may my hunger for you and for your reign of justice and peace increase,  
that I may, with your Spirit, work for that day when your kingdom shall come on earth as it is heaven. Amen.**

*Or*

**One: Come Lord Jesus and make in my heart your dwelling place and home.  
I seek to love you with all my heart, mind, soul and strength,  
and so, through your presence in bread and wine  
I receive you afresh and praise you for you are my God.  
As you fill me, so may my love for you and for all your people,  
rise and overflow, that with joy and thanksgiving,  
I may serve you in the world you love. Amen.**

*Or*

**One: Jesus, I believe that you are present with us in the sacrament of bread and wine.  
I love you and I desire your presence afresh in my life.  
Since I cannot now receive the bread and wine of the altar,  
come spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you and unite myself to you;  
never let me be separated from you.<sup>2</sup> Amen.**

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<sup>2</sup> Based on a prayer by St. Alphonsus Maria de' Liguori

**One:** Holy Jesus we receive you in this moment,  
giving you thanks and praise that you make yourself present  
to all your people in the bread and wine of the Eucharist.  
Transform our hearts that we may shine as your light in dark places;  
*Where there is hatred, let us sow love;*  
*Where there is injury, pardon;*  
*Where there is doubt, faith;*  
*Where there is despair, hope;*  
*Where there is darkness, light;*  
*Where there is sadness, joy.*  
And this all, in love for you. Amen.

*Or*

**One:** O Loving God, in union with Christian people throughout the world and across the centuries gathered to make Eucharist, hearing your holy Word and receiving the Precious Body and Blood of your dear Son, I offer you praise and thanksgiving. Even while separated from tasting the Bread of Heaven and drinking the Cup of Life I pray that you will unite me with all the baptised and with your Son who gave his life for us. Come Lord Jesus, dwell in me and send your Holy Spirit that I may be filled with your presence. Jesus, as the hem of your garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch your body, so may the soul of your servant be healed, for though I cannot receive you in the sacrament I can, through this offering of my prayer, receive you in my heart; grant this for Christ's sake. Amen. <sup>3</sup>

*Prayers recommended for use by children:*

**One:** Holy Jesus, thank you for loving us,  
and thank you for the holy bread and wine that reminds us  
that you are always with us.  
Come and live in our hearts,  
so we may know your love,  
and love others too. Amen.

*Or*

**One:** Jesus, you remind us in bread and wine that you are near to us.  
Bring me nearer to you every day,  
and let me carry you in my heart,  
to share your love with the world you made. Amen.

*Or*

**One:** Lord Jesus, thank you that you are always with me,  
I pray that you would remind me to welcome you to share every day with me.  
Thank you for loving me. I want to say that I love you too. Amen.

*Or*

**One:** Jesus, I want to follow you:  
to see you more clearly;  
love you more dearly;  
and follow you more nearly.  
So come into my heart,  
so that we may share life together. Amen

*Following the time of prayer and reception the vessels are removed from the Altar.*

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from a service of Spiritual Communion, Diocese of Chelmsford, Church of England



## Prayer After Communion

Celebrant: Let us pray.

*The celebrant may say the Prayer after Communion appointed for the day.*

*At the conclusion of the prayer the congregation says, Amen.*

Celebrant: Father of all,

**All: we give you thanks and praise,  
that when we were still far off,  
you met us in your Son and brought us home.  
Dying and living, he declared you love,  
gave us grace and opened the gate of glory.  
May we who receive Christ's presence,  
live his risen life and bring life to others,  
and may we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.  
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,  
so we and all your children shall be free,  
and the whole earth live to praise your name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>4</sup>**

## An Act of Praise and Thanksgiving

*The Doxology may be proclaimed together.*

**All: Glory to God, whose power working in us  
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.  
Glory to God from generation to generation,  
in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.**

## The Blessing

*The priest offers this or another suitable blessing.*

Celebrant: The peace of God which passes all our understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God  
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
✠ Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you,  
this day and always.

**All: Amen.**

*A Hymn may be sung.*

## Dismissal

One: Having received Christ by faith, let us go to live in that faith,  
transformed by hope and proclaiming God's love.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Common Worship, Church of England, Holy Communion Order One.