

# The First Church in Albany

## Communion

We come now to the communion liturgy. Remember that if you do not have the elements, you may still partake. And I will refer to the Lord's table, the communion table. We do not have one set up but you can imagine in the spirit of this worship service that your car dash as a table, or imagine that one exists right in front of this pulpit. Let us begin...

## The Invitation to Communion

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Supper we are about to celebrate is a feast of remembrance, of communion, and of hope. We come remembering that our Lord Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled the law of love, even to death on the cross. Because of God's eternal covenant of grace, we are accepted. We will never be forsaken. We come to commune with this same Christ who has promised to be with us always.

Christ is the true Bread which nourishes us and the Vine in whom we must live if we are to bear fruit. The Holy Spirit unites us into one body and in communion with all the saints. So we receive this supper in Christ's love and our affection for one another. We come in hope believing that as surely as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we will be raised from the dead into eternal life.

This table is open to all who confess Jesus as the Christ, and who seek to follow Christ's way. Come not because you must, but because you may. Come not because you are fulfilled, but because in your emptiness you stand in need of God's mercy and assurance. Come not to express an opinion, but to seek a presence and to pray for a spirit. Come, then, sisters and brothers, as you are. Partake and share. It is spread for you and for me that we might again know that God has come to us, shared our common lot, and invited us to join the people of God's new age.

## The Communion Prayer

*The Lord be with you.*

**And also with you.**

*Lift up your hearts.*

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

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

*You are worthy of our thanks and praise.*

Lord God of truth, for by the breath of your mouth you have spoken your word, and all things have come into being. You fashioned us in your image and placed us in the garden of your delight. Though we were tempted and rebelled you did not abandon your own. Again and again you draw us into your covenant of grace. You give your people the law and teach us by your prophets to look for your reign of justice, mercy, and peace.

## The Prayers of the People

Loving God, because you have raised Jesus from the dead and because you have raised us up to be a community of faith through Jesus Christ, we praise you with joy. Gathered together and mindful of the communion of saints we offer our prayers for this world which you love and for all people everywhere...  
[prayers]

As we recall Jesus' sacrifice, O God, by your Holy Spirit may these gifts of your creation become for us the body and blood which he shared with his disciples. Form us into the likeness of Christ, make us together into the Body of Christ, and make our words and actions into dependable witnesses to your goodness and truth. .... Until you come again, we pray...

### The Lord's Prayer

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### The Words of Institution and Communion

The Lord Jesus, the same night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me." After the same manner also, he took the cup when they had supped, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

### Sharing of the Bread and the Cup

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. Take and eat. The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ. Take and drink.

### Prayer after Communion

Since the Lord has now fed us at his Table, let us praise God's holy name with heartfelt thanksgiving. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and in peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our risen Savior. Amen

### Benediction