

Good Shepherd Anglican Church Letter from the Vestry regarding Spiritual Communion

Dear Good Shepherd Anglican Church Family,

During this time of uncharted worship style we, the Clergy and Vestry of Good Shepherd Anglican Church Longview want you to know that we fully trust God to lead us in our worship. God will guide us weekly, daily, and even hourly as we find ways to praise Him through this all. As church leaders, we have been prayerfully discussing this since before the lockdowns started. That said worship, as we have been comfortable doing, is changing over the next few weeks as we slowly start to join together physically in a time of worship and prayer. We will be mindful of changes that will need to happen. At this time, we are not returning to the “normal” way of communion, but we are experimenting with ways to return to meeting in public for a “spiritual” way of communion.

We are finding ways to keep distance between us yet still gather together. We are trying new ways to have communion all while we celebrate the memorial of our redemption. We are making personal sacrifices while still giving of ourselves in praise and thanksgiving for all God has given us. This Spiritual Communion Service was created by the Vestry and Clergy so we can join together in praise and worship no matter where we are physically or spiritually during this moment in life.

In the Anglican denomination, we have worshiped God during many pandemics and world changing moments: the Black Plague, Civil Wars, 1918 Influenza Pandemic, World Wars, etc. We have always persevered and found ways to have spiritual communion through the centuries when things turn lives upside down. The term ‘Spiritual Communion’ has been used historically in the Anglican Church to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from physically sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless is able to share in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer below offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist. Our “Spiritual Communion” is molded as closely to a normal Holy Eucharist service as we can make it.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, ‘I am the Bread of Life’. We know that some of us are okay joining together in person and some of us are okay with joining together electronically, and some of us are unsure how we are comfortable joining together because we are torn between both sides. It is okay to be in any part of this spectrum, we will be grateful and thankful for any and all ways we are able to join together in praise and prayer as we celebrate a spiritual communion together.

Please know that your Vestry and Clergy are working together in prayerful discussion regularly and we ask you to join in prayer with us to seek God’s call for us each individually and communally in this time of uncharted waters of faith. Please continue to join us weekly as we worship.

In Christ’s Love,

Amy McCarty
Good Shepherd Anglican Church Longview Senior Warden

Good Shepherd Anglican Church Longview
Service for Spiritual Communion

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

THE ACCLAMATION

Celebrant Blessed be God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen**

In the season of Lent

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.
People His mercy endures for ever.

From Easter Day until the Eve of Pentecost

Celebrant Alleluia! Christ is risen!
People The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia

THE COLLECT OF PURITY

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: 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 SUMMARY OF THE LAW

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

~Matthew 22:37-40

THE KYRIE

Lord have mercy upon us
Christ have mercy upon us
Lord have mercy upon us

SONG OF PRAISE HYMN(S)

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.
The Celebrant prays the Collect of the day from BCP pgs 598-640

People **Amen.**

THE LESSONS

One or more Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying
A Reading from _____.

A citation giving chapter and verse may be added.

After each Lesson the Reader may say
The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Or the Reader may say Here ends the Reading.

Silence may follow.

A psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each reading.

All standing, the Deacon or Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

 The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to _____.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**
After the Gospel, the Reader says
 The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

THE HOMILY

THE NICENE CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed:

Celebrant and People

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, visible and invisible.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy complete and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Deacon or other person appointed says these prayers, or the Prayers of the People in the Anglican Standard Text. The reader pauses after each bidding, and the people may add petitions, either silently or aloud.

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, saying, “Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.”

Let us pray for the peace of the whole world, and for the well-being and unity of the people of God.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for peace of the whole world.

Pray for Foley Beach., our Archbishop, and Todd Hunter., our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people of not only of our diocese and congregation, but of all Christian denominations.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for all religious leaders.

For all those who proclaim the Gospel at home and abroad; and for all who teach and disciple others.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for all who spread the Gospel of Christ.

For our brothers and sisters in Christ who are persecuted for their faith.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for all who are called to be missionaries at home and abroad.

We pray for our nation, for those in authority, and for all in public service especially Donald Trump, our president, Gregg Abbott, our governor, and Andy Mack, our city leader.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for leaders around the world.

For all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for who need God's comfort.

For all those who have departed this life in the certain hope of the resurrection, in thanksgiving let us pray.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for not only those who have died but also for those who grieve.

For all the many blessings and gifts bestowed upon us from our Heavenly Father, let us give thanks.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers aloud or silently for the gifts and blessings given by God through His grace.

Additional petitions and thanksgivings may be added.

The Celebrant concludes with this or some other appropriate Collect.

Heavenly Father, grant these our prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SIN

The Deacon or other person appointed says the following
Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.
Silence

**Most merciful God,
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 neighbors 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.**

Absolution of Sin

The priest or deacon stands facing the congregation and says

Through the cross of Christ, God have mercy on us, pardon us and set us free. Know that we are forgiven and be at peace. God strengthen us in all goodness and keep us in eternal life.
Amen.

THE COMFORTABLE WORDS

The Celebrant may then say one or more of the following sentences, first saying

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

~Matthew 11:28

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

~John 3:16

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

~1 Timothy 1:15

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

~1 John 2:1-2

THE PEACE

Celebrant The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the Name of the Lord

THE OFFERTORY

The Celebrant may begin the Offertory with one of the provided sentences of Scripture.

During the Offertory a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung. The Deacon or Priest prepares the Holy Table for the celebration.

Representatives of the Congregation may bring the People's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the Deacon or Priest.

The People stand while the offerings are presented. The following may be sung:

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below; Praise him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Amen

THE SURSUM CORDA

The People remain standing. The Celebrant faces them and sings or says

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

The Celebrant continues

It is right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is inserted (BCP pages 152-158)

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

THE SANCTUS

Celebrant and People

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

United in Christ with all who stand before you on earth and in heaven, we worship you, O God, in songs of everlasting praise. **AMEN.**

The Celebrant then says

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

Celebrant and People together pray

**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,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen**

THE AGNUS DEI

The following or some other suitable anthem may be sung or said here

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us your peace.

Silence is kept.

COLLECT FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Dear Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to possess you within my soul. And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to you, together with all your faithful people, and I embrace you with all the affections of my soul. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING

Officiant and People

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service,
and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us, and remain with us always.
Amen.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

THE DISMISSAL

The Deacon, or the Priest, may dismiss the People with these words

Let us go forth in the Name of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God.**

or this

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

or this

Deacon Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
People **Thanks be to God.**

or this

Deacon Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

From the Easter Vigil through the Day of Pentecost, "Alleluia, alleluia" is added to any of the dismissals. It may be added at other times, except during Lent and on other penitential occasions.

The People respond

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

Please remember to check the website, GSALT.org and our Facebook page frequently for updates on our weekly service location. Please be understanding and patient while we make weekly decisions based on government and diocesan recommendations and requirements.

If you need more information or have questions, please call our church office number, 903-309-3426