



diocese of California

The Episcopal Church in the San Francisco Bay Area

Introduction

One of the church's great griefs of the pandemic, one of the most significant implications of necessary physical distancing, is our inability to gather for the eucharist. As we anticipate our continued distance from our church buildings, we need to learn about the ways we can reinstate eucharistic fellowship that is both spiritually satisfying, theologically coherent, and physically safe. Two options present themselves to us in these extraordinary days: communion among members of a single household and a congregation's online participation in the liturgy of the presanctified gifts. Each of these practices maintain physical safety, are grounded in ancient theological precedent, and offer God's people the opportunity to share eucharistic fellowship.

Some may find these options to be unsatisfactory, and we must recognize that our absence from eucharistic liturgy neither negates the community of Christ's Body nor does it cut us off from the power of the eucharist. The scholar Nathan Mitchel notes, "The eucharist, after all, is not a precious object, but a sacred outcome—a verb, not a noun, a deed, not a devotion."¹ Even when we are away from our buildings, apart from the bread and wine of the eucharist, the Spirit of Christ remains with us. In these days when we are unable to enter our church buildings, we continue to receive the energy to live as Christ's Body in the world. As Christ's living Body, we enact the eucharist as we continue to do the works of Christ in the world. The ultimate gift of Jesus, the gift that he brings to us from the cross, is to make *us* his

¹ Mitchell, Nathan. "The Amen Corner: Eucharist without Walls," *Worship* 73:2 (March 1999): 186.

eucharistic body. As this living body, we find our way into the world, serving those who need us the most: the lonely, sick, frightened, weak, and desperate.

Some congregations may find that extraordinary means of eucharistic fellowship are necessary. Fortunately, there are ways we may share the gifts of Christ's Body and Blood with the dispersed congregation of the church. As has been noted before, full communion with Christ's Body and Blood is made if the faithful receive only one of the species. So, the members of the assembly need only receive the bread. Eucharistic bread may be taken from the altar to members of the congregation. This practice, where those "who for weighty cause" may not be present at the liturgy, is generally practiced across the Diocese of California. Given the weighty cause of the pandemic, where the faithful have been apart from the eucharist for some time, eucharistic visitors may take the Body of Christ to any member of the parish. The Body of Christ may be taken to people's homes where they may be consumed in household groups after the departure of the eucharistic visitors. The sacrament may be faithfully shared with those who may not be physically present at the celebration of the eucharist.

The provision for consuming eucharistic bread at home is entirely in keeping with both the instructions of the prayer book and the tradition of the early church. As early as the second century, Justin Martyr wrote, "Communion for the eucharistized things is given to each one, and sent via the deacons to those not present."² Robert Taft notes that in the third and fourth centuries, it was customary for the faithful to take home from the Sunday liturgy the consecrated bread for Communion on weekdays when there was normally no eucharistic liturgy.³ This practice was extended to those who were unable to attend the eucharistic service because of illness. It is also clear that absent members were not just the sick. At times of persecution, Communion was brought to Christians in prison. Nathan Mitchell writes, "Quite clearly, Basil regards communion at home as simply an extension of the public liturgy in church; postponing the consumption of some of the bread until a later time is quite inconsequential

² A. Hanggi, I. Pahl, *Præx eucharistica*, vol. 1: *Textus e variis liturgiis antiquioribus selecti*. Spicilegium Friburgense 12, 3rd ed. By A. Gerhards and H. Brakmann. (Freiburg: Éditions Universitaires, 1998). PG 6:428B.

³ Johnson, Clare V., and Nathan D. Mitchell. 2003. *Ars liturgiae: Worship, Aesthetics, and Praxis; Essays in Honour of Nathan D. Mitchell*. (Chicago: Liturgy Training Pub). 2.

since one still ‘takes and receives it from the hand that first gave it.’”⁴ Home communion continued in some places until the eighth century.

With these points in mind, we offer the following two extraordinary liturgies for the people of the Diocese of California.

⁴ Johnson and Mitchell. 37.

Option One: The Online Liturgy of the Presanctified

Outline:

1. Opening:
 - a. Greeting
 - b. Song (Hymn, Canticles, or Phos Hilaron in the evening)
 - c. Collect of the day
2. Word:
 - a. Reading of one or more lessons
 - b. Proclamation and reading of the Gospel
 - c. Sermon (with optional response)
 - d. Intercessions
3. Transferring the consecrated Gifts:
 - a. Song or Psalm 24
 - b. Placing the bread on the table / uncovering the bread
4. Peace
5. Communion
 - a. Form for giving and receiving the gifts
 - b. Lord's Prayer
 - c. Consuming the gifts
 - d. Returning any remaining bread to its place
 - e. Closing prayer
6. Farewell
 - a. Song
 - b. Dismissal

The Liturgy of the Presanctified for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

- *At some prior liturgy, the bread and wine have been consecrated and stored in the aumbry or some other place.*
- *The consecrated bread has been delivered to members of the congregation and stored in their homes.*
- *The necessary technology for live streaming is set up and the broadcast begins.*

Opening Acclamation

Presider Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People Glory to God forever and ever.

Song of Praise

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Lessons

Reader A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord:
Maintain justice, and do what is right,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my deliverance be revealed.
And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord,
to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord,
and to be his servants,
all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it,
and hold fast my covenant--
these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.
Thus says the Lord God,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
I will gather others to them
besides those already gathered.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying.

People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 67

1 May God be merciful to us and bless us, *
show us the light of his countenance and come to us.
2 Let your ways be known upon earth, *
your saving health among all nations.
3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.
4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, *
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the nations upon earth.
5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.
6 The earth has brought forth her increase; *
may God, our own God, give us his blessing.
7 May God give us his blessing, *
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People Glory to you Lord Christ.

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

The Prayers of the People

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying "Lord, have mercy."

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this city, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the absolution and remission of our sins and offenses, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

To thee, O Lord our God.

Silence.

Presider Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Peace

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.
People And also with you.

Transferring the Consecrated Gifts

As the gifts are transferred to the table, this psalm is sung.

The consecrated bread is placed on the table or if on the table already, uncovered.

Psalm 24

- 1 The earth is the LORD'S and all that is in it, *
the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2 For it is he who founded it upon the seas *
and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3 "Who can ascend the hill of the LORD? *
and who can stand in his holy place?"
- 4 "Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, *
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,
nor sworn by what is a fraud.
- 5 They shall receive a blessing from the LORD *
and a just reward from the God of their salvation."
- 6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, *
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 "Who is this King of glory?" *
"The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle."
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 "Who is he, this King of glory?" *
"The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory."

The Prayer over the Presanctified Gifts

- Presider* The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Presider Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.
Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give God thanks and praise.
- Presider* O God of creation, you are always with us,
you blow among us, you unite us in your love;
and so we praise you and we bless you
- People* We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, God most high.
- Presider* Your son Jesus finds each separate heart,
he gathers us together, he welcomes us all
into communion; and so we praise and bless you.
- People* We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, God most high.
- Presider* Your beloved community has met in prayer
to reveal Christ in this bread and wine;
and now we meet once more to praise and bless you.
- People* We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, God most high.
- Presider* Show us gathered here that we too are
Christ's body joined to all your human family
throughout the ages in your love
Feed us, inspire us, fill us with Christ's life
that we may fill our lives with you.
Make this sharing radiant with your presence
and send us out into the world
to shine forth your truth to all
we pray in Jesus' name.
- People* AMEN.

Presider As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray.

Presider and People

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the Bread of Life.
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 forever. Amen.

Presider Holy things for holy people.
People One is holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ
to the glory of God our father.

Everyone shares the bread, both in the church building and at home.

When all have received, any remaining bread is but away.

Presider O gracious God, whose Christ stretched out arms of love upon the hard wood of the cross to embrace all the peoples of the earth: We give you thanks for feeding us with the Sacrament of that precious Body and Blood, which is the sign and instrument of our common life, the food of our pilgrimage, the foretaste of that heavenly banquet of which we shall partake with all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. *Amen.*

We sing a closing song together.

The Dismissal

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

Option Two: Sharing the Eucharist at Home on the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

The Eucharistic Visitors should be accompanied by other persons from the congregation.

The eucharistic bread is to be sealed in a disposable container.

All that follows must take place outside the home, maintaining a safe physical distance.

The Eucharistic Visitors greets the people

Minister The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God the source of our being,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

People And also with you.

Minister Let us pray.

Minister Lord, have mercy.

People Christ, have mercy.

Minister Lord, have mercy.

Together Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your Name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the Bread of Life.
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 forever. Amen.

Minister Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People Amen.

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

The minister and people may share a sign of Christ's peace, avoiding physical contact.

Sharing the Eucharistic Bread

The Eucharistic Visitors give the bread to the people to take into their home and consume. The bread may be placed in the hands of a householder or on the porch of the house or some other safely distanced place.

Closing Prayer

Minister O gracious God, whose Christ stretched out arms of love upon the hard wood of the cross to embrace all the peoples of the earth: We give you thanks for feeding us with the Sacrament of that precious Body and Blood, which is the sign and instrument of our common life, the food of our pilgrimage, the foretaste of that heavenly banquet of which we shall partake with all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. *Amen.*

Minister Let us bless the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.