

# Wheatthill Priory Benefice

## *“Jesus Lives: Follow Him”*

### **Guidance on Spiritual Communion and Coronavirus**

The term ‘Spiritual Communion’ has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares 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.

The *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly ‘eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ’, although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves. Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion ‘regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost’ (Canon B 15).

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’.

The resources which follow may be of help to you in worship

## SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

### When unable to attend a celebration of the Eucharist

*If a household are praying together, one person may act as leader and others as the congregation and join in the words in **Bold type**. If alone then you are encouraged to read all the words aloud. To prepare the space before you begin then you may want to light a candle and have a Bible or cross to look at.*

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

**Almighty God,**

**to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,**

**and from whom 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 and readings - see separate sheet for details, you may also find some of the prayers in the 'Prayer in a time of Coronavirus' booklet helpful.*

### **Confession**

**Lord God,**

**we have sinned against you;**

**we have done evil in your sight.**

**We are sorry and repent.**

**Have mercy on us according to your love.**

**Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.**

**Renew a right spirit within us**

**and restore us to the joy of your salvation,**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and ask him to be with you now*

**Our Father, who art in heaven....**

*Act of Spiritual Reception*

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,  
for all the benefits you have given me,  
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.**

**Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.**

**O merciful redeemer, friend and brother,  
may I know you more clearly,  
love you more dearly,  
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

***(after the prayer of St Richard of Chichester)***

**Lord and heavenly Father,  
we your servants entirely desire your fatherly goodness mercifully  
to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
and to grant that,  
by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ,  
and through faith in his blood,  
we and all your Church may receive forgiveness of our sins and all  
other benefits of his passion. Amen.**

*You might like to add one of these prayers*

**O God, help me to trust you, help me to know that you are with me,  
help me to believe that nothing can separate me from your love  
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Lord, in these days of mercy, make us quiet and prayerful; in these days of challenge, make us stronger in you; in these days of emptiness, take possession of us; in these days of waiting, open our hearts to the mystery of your cross.   *(Angela Ashwin)*

## **A general Thanksgiving**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you most humble and hearty thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness.

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 give us, we pray, such a sense of all your mercies that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we 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 all honour and glory, for ever and ever.   Amen.

## **Conclusion**

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life.   Amen

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<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/Guidance%20on%20Spiritual%20Communion%20and%20Coronavirus.pdf>