

Elder Communion Prayers

The Big Idea

Prayer grows out of a conversation with God, but the conversation at the communion table is a larger conversation between the congregation and God. Elders express an important leadership role when they express heartfelt prayers that lead worshipers to prepare their hearts to receive God's grace with the bread and cup.



SOME 'MECHANICS' OF PRAYING AT FCCBRLA (REMEMBER YOU'RE ON LIVESTREAM)

- 1) Use a strong voice and direct your voice toward the mic. Speak as if you want someone sitting on the back row to hear you whether or not the mic is on. You will sound loud to yourself so, but unless the mic is feeding back (loud whining sound), don't back off from the mic and don't back off on your voice.
- 2) Speak all words into a mic. This is especially true for liturgist—because we don't have a room mic to capture the voices of the congregation, the liturgist needs to lead the congregational response and the entirety of the Lord's Prayer otherwise the Livestream only captures faint mumbling or virtual silence from congregation.
- 3) I recommend that you write out your prayers. It should only take about 10 minutes at most. Use this as a time of personal spiritual reflection, reflection on the scriptures, reflection on what's happening in the service and with the congregation, and perhaps reflection on what's happening in the world around us.

Sources for prayer inspiration:

Scriptural Themes of the Day—use the scriptures to find a spiritual theme in the information sent to you at the beginning of the week. Sometimes it's obvious such as holy days and seasons, sometimes you will want to open your Bible and read the selected scriptures. If you're unclear, feel free to contact the minister and ask what his/her thoughts are.

Google—if you're in a pinch, Google search for “communion prayer” or something like that.

Writing your own—

APPROACH ONE: (FCCBRLA Elder handbook from 2007)

- 1) Community—God is present in the community the celebrates communion
- 2) Service—Communion strengthens us for spiritual service
- 3) Thanksgiving
 - a. For God's mercy & forgiveness
 - b. For Jesus' loving sacrifice
 - c. For our salvation
- 4) Individual examination—Recognize our sinfulness and need for forgiveness
- 5) Remembrance—
 - a. Last supper with disciples
 - b. God's saving act in Jesus Christ, his sacrifice, our salvation
 - c. Remembrance of Jesus more generally
- 6) Unity
 - a. We are joined with the gathered community
 - b. We are joined with all Christians partaking in communion
 - c. We are joined with the Saints who have gone before

Sample prayers:

Let us pray. Gracious God, we thank you for calling this community of Christians together and we recognize that you are present through our shared faith that makes us one. As we come to your table, we admit that we are in need of a savior. For, on our own, we have fallen short of the goal you call us to reach. May each of us search our own heart and discover our need for your grace and mercy. And may we find it here in the bread we break and the cup we drink. May it nourish and strengthen us to go forth from this place to witness all the more boldly to the love of God for all people, through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

APPROACH TWO: (Disciples Eldership by Peter Morgan)

- 1) Thanksgiving
- 2) Remembrance
- 3) Calling upon the Holy Spirit—the presence of the Holy Spirit at the table is an important theme throughout the history of Christian worship.
- 4) Rededication—we commit ourselves to Kingdom service

Sample prayer:

Creator of all that is, we praise you:
For your own self, beautiful and filled with light;
For your works, incredibly varied and fruitful;
For life itself and consciousness with which to enjoy it.
Redeemer of all creation groaning in travail, we praise you;
For your justice that holds us to the standard that all things are created are good;
For your mercy that forgives and renews us when we fall short;
For your promise that all things will be made new.
Most of all we praise you for Jesus Christ:
Through him you created the world;
By his life and ministry you showed us your nature;
Because of his suffering and death you saved us;
By his resurrection you gave us power to live.

We bring you these gifts of bread and wine to be a sign of our gratitude, O God, for all that you are
and have done for us in Jesus Christ.
As we eat the bread and drink from the cup of salvation,
renew in us the presence of your Holy Spirit.
Cleanse us from sin.
Restore us to new life.

And then send us into the world as signs of your creativity and agents of the redemption that you
are bringing.
Through Christ we pray. Amen.

There is no “wrong” way to create a prayer for the table—listen to prayers of others, feel free to borrow words and phrases, and remember to offer your prayer in a manner that everyone can feel like they’re joining in with you!