

Holy Communion
(*Outsiders*)

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 placed a star in the sky
where astrologers would see it and understand.
You speak the language of outsiders,
and practice divine hospitality.
Those who were once not Your people,
You have found ways to allow them to become Your people.
You are the one who teaches us by example to be inclusive.
You are the one who teaches not to judge by outward appearances.
You are the one who speaks every language,
knows every custom,
delights in all our human variations.

Your praise is fullest when it is expressed through ten thousand languages. This is why we go into all the world, and invite all to become a voice in our choir. And this is why we feel so honored to be invited to join with the choirs of heaven, with angels and saints to join in Your unending praise:

**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.**

You are holy, and Jesus is your richest blessing for the whole world.
Jesus came as Immanuel, God with us.
First to Israel, then to Samaria, and then embracing the whole earth.
In Christ there are no strangers.
In Christ all are included.
Yet not everyone feels included,
not everyone knows that they belong.
Jesus sends us out to find them,
To show them holy hospitality,
feeding the hungry, giving drink to all who thirst,
to care for the sick, the imprisoned, those who feel so all alone.
When the disciples felt like outsiders,

Jesus knelt down before them,
and washed their feet,
so they would feel at home.
This is how we are to treat outsiders.

When the disciples felt like outsiders, Jesus took the bread,
set aside to remember those who are oppressed,
with thanksgiving Jesus broke the bread to share with all,
“Take, eat, this is my body given for you.”
This is how we are to treat outsiders.

When the disciples felt like outsiders,
Jesus took the cup, set aside to encourage those alienated by sin,
with thanksgiving, Jesus shared the cup,
“Drink with me, this cup of my blood,
poured out for you as a testimony to God’s eternal covenant of forgiveness with you and with all
the world.”
This is how we are to treat outsiders.

We have been outsiders.
We know what is like for those who still feel this way.
Christ is the one who brought us home.
This is why we choose to embrace this mystery of our faith with this solemn declaration:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Outcast Embracer, Boundary Eraser
envelop these our gifts of bread and wine,
bless them so they might become for us the body and blood of Christ, who makes all one as You
are one.

Outcast Embracer, Boundary Eraser
envelop us in our entirety,
bless us so that we might become for the world
Your church, the body and bride of Christ
who makes us one as You are one.

Outcast Embracer, Boundary Eraser
envelop Valley Forge United Methodist Church,
turn us inside out so that all those who feel outside will become inside.
In us you have provided a safe place for everyone,
let no one feel excluded.
Let no one feel they do not belong.
For in Jesus we pray for all, to feel at home.
For by the Holy Spirit we pray for all, to feel empowered.

For by the Creator of all we pray that all, find that they fit perfectly, and can join together freely to praise Your holy name forever and ever. Amen.

Now as those who were once outsiders, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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 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, forever.
Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

We thank you for including us in this holy mystery of Jesus Christ. In Christ we no longer are strangers, but family. We belong to You and to each other. We have found our home. Now allow us to open the doors of our lives, so we might invite those who feel outside, in. We want them to gain the acceptance we share in you alone. Use our lives to make your joy complete, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.