

## **Reflections on Holy Communion During COVID-19 “Bodies”**

Pastor Amy's Third Reflection - Offered on Sunday, December 20, 2020

Today as we hear about Mary being filled with the Holy Spirit and bearing Christ in her body, it is a good day to think about how we know Christ in our bodies. I offer insights today from Rev. Dr. Benjamin Stewart, Professor of Worship at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago - his reflections upon bodies and the Eucharist during the pandemic.

Dr. Stewart points out Christians have most fully known Christ in our bodies through the power of Holy Communion. As we sing, share bread and cup, and extend peace to one another, our gathered bodies have been filled with Christ's life and healing. Yet now these very things that have been sources of life for us can now mean sickness, especially for those most physically and structurally vulnerable. So, in this time, the distance between our bodies is the primary sign of life and healing. Like a bow we make toward each other, we are honoring bodies by honoring the spaces between us.

Dr. Stewart reflects that in this time, the body of Christ is being broken apart, broken open for the life of the world. In refraining from gathering in person for the Eucharist, the great meal, in honoring the distance between our bodies right now, we are doing something profoundly Eucharistic by breaking open the body of Christ for the life of the world.

People of God, we have been broken apart, broken open in this time. Yet, we are also bound together.

Today we hear in Samuel 2 that God is not confined to a house but moves about with us, wherever we are. God is with you where you are. And by the mystery of that presence, by the power of the Word, and by the gift of the Spirit, we are bound together now as the body of Christ even as we are apart.