

# This is Communion

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Christian community is in essence the experience of being held in reverence by others, and we in turn reverencing them. In others, we recognize the same Spirit that lives in our hearts, the Spirit that constitutes our real self. In this recognition of the other, a recognition that remakes our minds and expands our consciousness, the other person comes into being as she really is, in herself, not as a manipulated extension. She moves and acts out of her own integral reality and no longer as some image created by our imagination. Even if our ideas or principles clash, we are held in unison by our mutual recognition of each other. . . . True community happens in the process of drawing each other into the light of true being. In this process, we share a deepening experience of the joy of life, the joy of being, as we discover more and more of its fullness in a loving faith shared with others. The essence of community then is a recognition of and deep reverence for the other.

After meditation: “Visiting Charlotte and Bard” by Parker J. Palmer at [facebook.com/parkerjpalmer](https://facebook.com/parkerjpalmer), posted November 29, 2022.

He’s 90, full of wit and good cheer. She’s 89, no longer

clear who she's with or what's happening, Before we go in, he explains, "She'll ask the same question time and again. It's hard, of course, but she remains her same sweet self and we love each other more than ever."

Today she wants to know, "when was the last time we saw each other?" "Last year at this time," we say, "right here in your lovely home. It's so good to see you again." "Oh, yes!" she says, with her whole heart. Five minutes alter she asks again.

"Would you like some cheese and crackers?" she asks.

"Sounds good," we say, and I ask if I can help. He warns me off with a shake of his head, quietly saying, "She can still do a few things like this—they help her feel more in control of her life."

She returns with a tray—cheese, crackers, napkins and small plates carefully arranged—stopping in front of each of us until we take our share.

"This is communion," I think, "the bread of life, the wine of love, and our cups floweth over. Never has a cathedral seen a moment more holy than this."

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