Grace and peace to my brothers and sisters here at FELC!

 I’ve been asked to talk a little more about Holy Communion, following up from the Rev Dr Eric Riesen’s conversation with the Adult Sunday Class recently. Where do I start? Well, let’s start with the word of our Lord. “53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. 56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.” From these few words and from the faithfulness of the Church throughout the ages, what has been believed and practiced by most Christians of every time and place, we understand what is called Real Presence. What is Real Presence? As Pr Riesen told us, it is a mystery! It goes beyond our very practical minds and hearts and asks to be believed simply because Jesus said so. It was hard for the disciples, too. “60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” According to our Lord, we believe the consecrated bread and wine become (mysteriously) the true and actual body and blood of Jesus. We believe this because the Holy Spirit teaches us. Notice what is not supported. Holy Communion is not simply a memory event, a way to remember Jesus. It IS Jesus! Holy Communion is not subject to what we think or feel about it. It is what it is! It does not lose significance if we commune more often than necessary. Nor does Jesus lose significance if we commune more than usual. Is it hard to find volunteers to set up Holy Communion each time and to clean up afterwards? Is it hard to serve Jesus? Is it too expensive to add a Holy Communion service? Seriously? Who do we serve? Nowadays, we find the greater concern with those who don’t feel a need for Holy Communion. They believe in God. But the Church is something less necessary. 4Didn’t Jesus say, “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” That sounds kind of necessary! How much better to love our Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength, looking forward to receiving Jesus, our Lord and Savior, even in our hands, being brought so close to Him, in preparation for coming close to Him in heaven forever! It is in Holy Communion that we are united with each other and our Lord and the whole Church in heaven and on earth, an overwhelming and precious gift, received with grateful hearts and minds.

Blessings, Pastor Tim