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# COMMUNION IN WORSHIP

Through the symbols of bread and wine, the act of Communion offers us an opportunity to remember and rejoice in Jesus' love, which he poured out for us. This unifying practice, also known as the Eucharist, displays the remarkable unity present in the body of Christ, regardless of diverse backgrounds, races, or social standings. As participants share in the bread and wine, we symbolically partake in the essence of Christ, uniting as a single body, echoing Christ's invitation to partake in his flesh and blood for eternal life. This tradition, initiated by Jesus during the Last Supper and passed down through generations, serves as a poignant reminder of Christ's sacrificial death and triumphant resurrection, symbolizing liberation from sin and everlasting death.

For Christians, the Communion ceremony prompts both solemn reflection and jubilant celebration, joining them with fellow believers in the triumph and forgiveness found in Christ, truly embodying the peace of God.



# What is the purpose of Communion?

We participate in Communion to....

- 1. Remember.** Through Communion we remember and reflect on the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross. The bread represents his body, broken for us, and the wine (or grape juice) symbolizes his blood shed for the forgiveness of sins. By partaking in these elements, we remember not only Christ's crucifixion but also the resurrection that followed three days later. Communion gives us the opportunity to commemorate our new life in Christ.
- 2. Reflect.** Before approaching the communion table, it is often encouraged to reflect on your relationship with God. It's an opportunity to confess sins, seek forgiveness, and acknowledge once again our dependence on Christ for our salvation.
- 3. Worship.** Communion is an act of worship and gratitude toward God for his grace and love. It's a time when believers express thankfulness for the salvation provided through Christ's sacrifice and the forgiveness of sins.
- 4. Anticipate.** Communion also looks forward to the future return of Jesus Christ. When believers participate in the Lord's Supper, they remember Jesus' promise that he will come again. The act of Communion becomes a reminder of the future hope and anticipation of Christ's final victory over sin and death.
- 5. Unite as a Church Family.** Communion serves as a unifying practice that brings believers together as the Body of Christ. By partaking in the same elements, Christians symbolize their unity as members of the Church, regardless of their backgrounds, races, or social statuses. It reinforces the idea that all believers are part of a larger spiritual family.

**I have already told you what the Lord Jesus did on the night he was betrayed. And it came from the Lord himself.**

*He took some bread in his hands. Then after he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Eat this and remember me."*

*After the meal, Jesus took a cup of wine in his hands and said, "This is my blood, and with it God makes his new agreement with you. Drink this and remember me."*

**The Lord meant that when you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you tell about his death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (CEV)**

*For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Romans 5:10 (NIV)*



# What are some Communion best practices?

Here are some aspects of participating in Communion to consider...

- 1. Create a Rhythm.** Decide on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly rhythm for incorporating Communion into your order of service. This gives the congregation the opportunity to anticipate and prepare for participating in this sacred practice.
- 2. Consider Your Order of Service.** Choose an appropriate portion of your service to gather at the table. After the sermon is usually a good reflective transition to continue in worship through the Eucharist.
- 3. Provide Clear Instructions.** Clearly explain the process of receiving Communion and meaning of the sacrament. Explain the symbolism of the act, and let attendees know if they will come forward to receive the elements or if they will be served in their seats. Welcome all to participate and provide guidance on how to hold and consume the bread and wine (or grape juice).
- 4. Craft a Meaningful Moment.** Develop a Communion liturgy. Use scriptural references and expressions that help participants understand the significance of the elements they are receiving. Incorporate worship songs or hymns that are appropriate for Communion. These can help set the atmosphere and create a meaningful experience.
- 5. Provide Time for Consumption.** Allow attendees sufficient time to partake and reflect. Avoid rushing this solemn moment.

*“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?” asked the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 10:16). “Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf” (verse 17).*



# How can we make participating in Communion more accessible?

Here are some ways to ensure all are able to participate at the Lord's table during your service...

- 1. Clear Explanations.** Begin by providing clear explanations of what Communion is and its significance. Use simple and relatable language so that first-time attendees can understand the purpose and process.
- 2. Accessible Elements.** Provide gluten free and non-alcoholic elements to accommodate the needs of all attendees.
- 3. Assistance and Support.** Have ushers or greeters available to assist individuals with disabilities receive the elements and navigate the process. Train your team to offer support sensitively.
- 4. Inclusive Liturgy.** Craft Communion liturgy that reflects the inclusive nature of the practice and emphasizes unity in Christ. Acknowledge the diversity of the congregation and celebrate it.

## *The Essentials*

Communion is a profound and celebratory observance. To fully engage in its spiritual impact, approach this sacred practice with reverence, understanding, and gratitude. With thoughtful planning and a focus on reverence, integrating Communion into your worship service provides an opportunity for the congregation to deeply experience Christ's sacrifice and unity among believers. Ultimately, the aim is to cultivate an inclusive environment where all attendees, regardless of background, dietary needs, or disabilities, can meaningfully participate and grasp the significance of Communion.