



# Communion and Your Child



**Communion** is one of the two sacraments in a Protestant church (along with baptism). A simple way to understand a sacrament is that it is a tangible, touchable sign of God's grace and love. When we experience Communion together, when we share in the bread and the cup, we participate in a ritual which has strengthened and sustained God's people over many generations. Gathering around the table of our Lord, a symbol of God's abundant and everlasting love, nurtures our spirits ... whether we are children or adults.

Communion is known by many names:

*Holy Communion*  
*Table of the Lord*  
*Eucharist*  
*Lord's Supper*  
*Breaking of Bread*

Understood as a gift from God in which we receive God's love and forgiveness, the sacrament of Communion is anticipated with joy and thanksgiving. Through receiving the bread of life and the cup of the new covenant, by the grace of God we experience the presence of the living Christ.

## **“Do This In Remembrance of Me”**

When we share Communion, we remember the last meal which Jesus and his disciples shared together – a joyful Passover Seder meal in Jerusalem. On that final night that Jesus spent with his friends, he gave them a gift by which to remember him always. Paul, a follower of Jesus, retells the words and actions of Jesus at that Last Supper in 1st Corinthians, Chapter 11, verses 23-25:

*“...the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed  
**took** a loaf of bread, and when he had  
**given** thanks, he **broke** it and  
**gave** it to his disciples, and said,  
**“This is my body that is for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”***

*...In the same way he **took** the cup also, after supper, and said,  
**“This is the new covenant in my blood.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”***

There are three other places in the Bible where you can find a record of that special meal Jesus shared with his friends on what we now call ‘Maundy Thursday’. See if you and your child can find them:

Matthew 26:26-29

Mark 14:22-25

Luke 22:14-20

Jesus took the most common items available to him at a meal—bread and juice—and gave these things a special meaning. He asks us to receive the bread and the cup regularly as a way of remembering him and his teachings for our daily lives.

A good discussion to have with your children in preparation for Communion is to talk together about how they and you feel Jesus is important to your lives — this is a way for you to remember him together, and to be ready to share his meal.

## **Communion Is A Meal of Many Meanings**

### ***Remembrance***

Through remembering Jesus’ love, welcome, and compassion, we remember the depth of God’s love for each one of us.

### ***Thanksgiving***

We give thanks and praise to God for the many gifts we have received throughout history and in our daily lives.

### ***Celebration***

God’s continuing presence with us in all facets of our lives, in times of joy as well as in times when we are hurting, is truly reason for joy and celebration.

### ***Forgiveness***

In Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection our own brokenness is forgiven and healed. As we come to the table we are forgiven again and again. We experience God’s forgiveness for things we have done wrong in our own lives as well as for wrongs we see in the world around us.

### ***Being Fed and Feeding Others***

As we share in the bread and the wine or grape juice, we are reminded that as our needs for food, for God, for love, are cared for, we are called to offer to others the same care and love that is ours from God. As we are blessed, we are called to be a blessing to others.

### ***Belonging***

In communion, as we include people of all ages, and welcome all people, we reaffirm the truth that all belong in the family of God.

*adapted from ‘Communion with Your Child’ by Bette Anne Crowell  
written in 1992 for the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ,  
after adoption of a resolution welcoming Christians of **all** ages to Communion*