

A Guide for Sharing Communion at Home

Communion is important. It reminds us that Christ was human and that he died for us, all of us, no matter where we find ourselves in the world, no matter when we find ourselves in history. Communion connects us, no matter how, or when, or where we observe it.

One of my favorite stories about communion came from a missionary who visited my church when I was a teenager. While sharing dinner with my family he told the story of his first Easter Sunday at his church in the Dominican Republic. The church was celebrating its one-year anniversary with the baptism of several new church members. It was indeed a high and holy day. They spent weeks planning for the special service, choosing a location for baptism and planning out how they would return to the church for worship and celebration. In all the excitement however, one detail was overlooked. No one had prepared the elements for communion. They realized this when the group returned to the church building after baptism and they began to scramble to figure out what to do. It was important to each of the baptismal candidates as well as the rest of the church that communion be observed on this special day, but everything in the country was closed for the holiday and no one was prepared with bread and juice. Finally, someone in the congregation spoke up. "My brother-in-law owns a convenient store nearby. Maybe he will open it for me." He returned some time later with a bottle of grape soda and a box of saltine crackers. The church observed communion, they "proclaimed the Lord's death" with the elements that were provided. Was it ideal, no, but it was meaningful and memorable and the Lord was present.

Today, we find ourselves in the unusual circumstance of being unable to gather to receive communion in the way in which we have become accustomed. However, we can still find meaningful ways to be connected through observing communion. I encourage you to find and use what you have. Perhaps instead of juice, you have grapes available at your table. Grapes can remind us of the sweetness of God's promises to us. Perhaps you do not have bread, but crackers and soda like my missionary friend. Perhaps you happen to have bread and wine. It is not the elements themselves that are important. It is the faithfulness of the one receiving them, the presence of Christ among us, and the gift of grace that is represented that is important.

Here are several suggestions for observing communion together as a family. For each, the leader should use the words in italics and others respond with the bold.

Keep it simple:

You may ask around the table for others to share what communion means to them. Offer communion with these simple words for each element and a simple prayer of thanks to God after serving:

This is for you. **Amen**

Lord, thank you for this time when we can remember the sacrifice you made for us on the cross.

More traditional:

As you receive communion today, you may wish to use these familiar words read responsively as a family:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord,

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Lord Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, this is my body, broken for you. In like manner he took the cup and when he had given thanks he said this cup is the new covenant in my blood, do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

(while offering the bread) *Christ's body given for you. Thanks be to God.*

(while offering the cup) *The cup of love for you. Thanks be to God.*

Less formal, based on Hebrew tradition of questions and answers:

However, you may choose to use something less formal, especially if you are serving children. The Hebrew tradition of the Passover involved the youngest child asking questions to be answered by the adults present.

Why do we take this meal?

To remember and give God thanks and praise

How do we give God thanks and praise?

By praying to him, obeying him, and passing the stories to our children and our children's children

What do we remember?

That Jesus died for us

Jesus lifted up the bread after dinner and blessed it and said, "This is my body given for you." He did the same with the cup saying, "This is my blood, shed for you."

(breaking the bread) *This is for you.*

Amen

(sharing the cup) *This is for you.*

Amen

Super Simple for very small children:

This is a simple way for parents to introduce their kids. Parents can guide kids to repeat the responses in bold while they lead with the italicized words.

Today we are going to praise God in a special way. Show me that you are excited to praise God.

Thank you God! Yay!

What are some ways we praise God?

We can sing and pray!

We can also praise God by taking a special meal called the Lord's Supper. Jesus gave juice and bread to his friends and told them to remember how much he loves them every time they eat it.

*(Offer a piece of bread) Jesus said this is bread is for you, remember that I love you. **Thank you Jesus.***

*(Offer juice or even grapes) Jesus said this juice is for you, remember that I love you. **Thank you Jesus.***

(close with a simple prayer) Dear Jesus, thank you that you love us. Help us to remember your love every day. Amen.