

A GUIDE TO RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION DURING ONLINE WORSHIP

Holy Communion is a sacrament designed to be celebrated in the presence of a local congregation. As we are unable to worship in person, our bishop has granted special permission to receive Holy Communion as a part of livestream worship.

This will require the active participation of each recipient. What follows is a simple guide to receiving communion at home: how to set up a space in your home, how to have communion elements (bread and wine) consecrated by your pastor online, and how to administer and receive the elements and dispose of them properly afterwards.

THE ELEMENTS

Bread and grape juice are the proper elements for Methodist communion. The type of bread doesn't matter (sandwich bread, buns, pita, flatbread, are all fine). In place of bread, a cracker is acceptable.

This is a holy sacrament. Please do not use items that diminish the sacred nature of the Eucharist. Don't use potato chips or goldfish, and strive to get grape juice, not any other beverage. Communion elements should feel sacred and Biblical.

HOW TO SET UP HOLY COMMUNION

Find a special plate and cup, something in your home that is not used on a frequent basis. A piece of fine china, a gift you treasure, a plate you picked up while traveling, or something that has personal significance. This will set the communion elements up for the sacred purpose of the Lord's Supper, and remind us that this is not an ordinary meal.

Before the livestream service starts, place the bread on the plate and cover it with a napkin or cloth. Second, pour the juice into your cup. Cover with a napkin.

Place your communion elements in a special location. Try to create a space for them so that everyone can see them as holy. Perhaps a mantle or the center of your table. Allow them to be the centerpiece.

HOW TO ADMINISTER COMMUNION

The pastor will lead you through a communion liturgy on Galilee's livestream, including a prayer of consecration which asks of God, "Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood." You will then be invited to share the elements with your household. As United Methodists, we believe that we are all welcome at God's Table.

Break the bread into pieces for yourself and any others, saying "The body of Christ, given for you." Once everyone in your location has bread, share the cup by saying, "The blood of Christ, given for you," and each recipient will dip their bread into the cup. The bread and wine will be taken together by each recipient in your home.

Afterwards, the pastor will say a prayer of thanksgiving and transition into the next portion of the service. During these moments, take time to pray for one another, for friends and family, and concerns and situations around the world. Think about those whom you ordinarily worship with and lift them up in prayer. In short, transform this time as you receive Holy Communion and the brief moments afterwards into an opportunity for intercession on behalf of others.

WHAT IF I CAN'T OR DON'T WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

If you do not have the elements available or if you do not want to participate in online communion, use this time for prayer. We realize this is a new process and necessarily a contingent one. We pray for blessings for you and for all, whether you take communion or not.

WHAT ABOUT LEFTOVERS?

We believe the bread and juice used in communion are consecrated (holy). Dispose of them in a sacred fashion. Since the elements came from the ground, they should go back into the ground. Thus, break the bread into small pieces and scatter them outside and pour the juice onto the ground.

For more on our United Methodist understanding of Holy Communion, visit this link: <https://gbod-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy/kintera-files/worship/HolyCommunionWEB-Singles.pdf>