



# A family guide to Holy Communion



# Notes for parents

Holy communion is a gift from Jesus to bless us.

This resource is aimed at helping families with children engage with the gift of the communion in an appropriate way. We want to help families grow together in their understanding and enjoyment of Holy Communion by connecting the sharing of communion on Sundays with teaching at home.

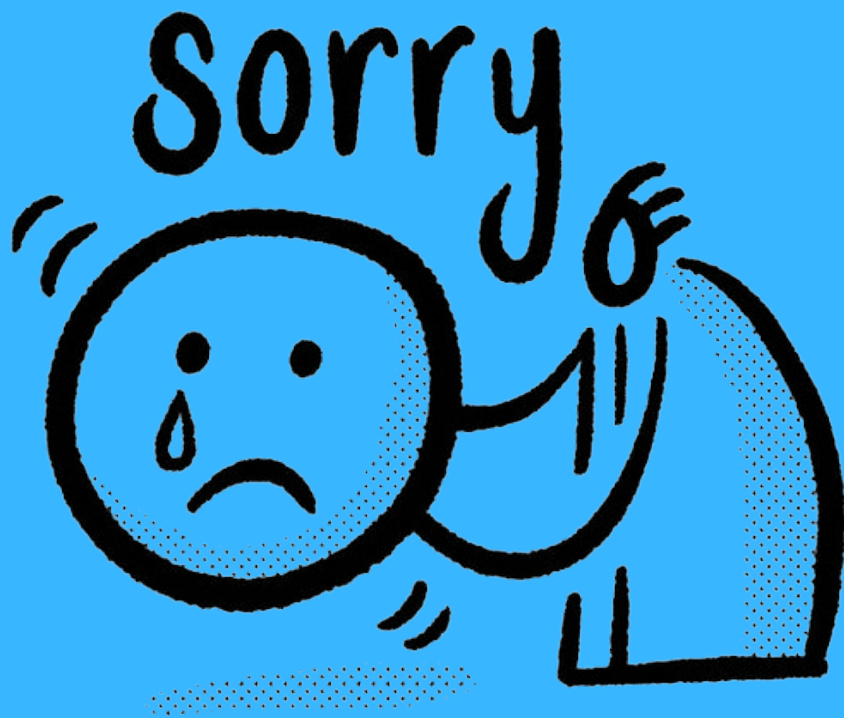
This book is based around 6 pictures that link up with the liturgy used in your church on a Sunday. It helps us understand what the different parts of the liturgy are leading us to do in preparation for receiving and sharing communion. We hope this will help your family better engage with what is occurring with your church family on Sundays.

On the left side of the double page spread you will find an image that matches one of the accompanying cards, with the liturgy used on Sunday mornings underneath.

On the right side there is a short explanation of what we are doing when we celebrate communion. Underneath there is an explanation for parents, a Bible passage, and some discussion questions which will help families with older children.

To accompany this guide are 6 colourful cards designed to be used during the service. On one side are some words from the liturgy to listen out for and on the other is the same picture that corresponds from the book. When we hear those words from the liturgy it is time to turn the card over to the picture side. The hope is that this will have the children listening, engaging and participating in what is occurring as a church family.

There is a Catechism (a series of questions and answers) slotted into this book to extend engagement from older children, and help them to learn by heart more of what it means when we share communion as a church family.



Lord God, we have sinned against you; we  
have done evil in Your sight. We are sorry  
and repent. Have mercy on us according to  
Your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and  
cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit  
within us and restore to us the joy of Your  
salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**We say sorry to God  
because we don't always  
live how he wants us to.  
We think wrong things.  
We say wrong things.  
We do wrong things.**

#### **Instructions to parents**

Young and old... children and parents... we all sin – both against God and against those around us. Modelling saying sorry and asking for forgiveness, as a parent, is a powerful thing for our children to see. Asking for forgiveness is a daily discipline of the Christian life. We don't say sorry to feel sad or guilty. We say sorry to enjoy Jesus' wonderful forgiveness.

#### **Family discussion**

Read Mark 7:14-23 together. Can you work out what our unsolvable problem is? Can you think of something you have thought or said or done wrong this week? Or today? Pray and say sorry to God now.



We do not presume  
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body,  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen

**We come to God. Not because  
of what we have done. We  
come to God because of what  
He has done.**

### **Instructions to parents**

In an age today where many people (both children and adults) feel entitled to many different things – the words here are profound. “We do not presume” to come to the Lord. We have no right to come to him! And yet we come to God because he is gracious and merciful. He forgives our sins.

### **Family Discussion**

Ask how easy is it to approach your friends at school? What about if you saw a famous footballer or singer in the street? Or how easy would it be to approach the Queen? What about God?

Read Mark 7:24-30 together and talk about what the woman in this story does.



Lift up your hearts.  
We lift them up to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right,  
it is our duty and our joy,  
at all times and in all places  
to give you thanks and praise,  
holy Father, heavenly King,  
almighty and eternal God.

**We thank God. It is right to  
thank people for gifts.  
God's gift of Jesus is  
amazing.**

### **Instructions to parents**

We have so much that we might give thanks to God for in our lives and in Jesus. Here is an opportunity for us to practice and cultivate that thankfulness in the service and at home.

### **Family discussion**

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 together. What does it say is God's will for our life? Could your family write a list of 10 things you're thankful for? Put them in a spare jam jar, and take them out one at a time, and say thank you to God for them.



Therefore with angels and archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven,  
we proclaim your great and glorious name,  
for ever praising you, and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord  
God of power and might  
heaven and earth are full of your glory  
Hosanna in the highest.

**We praise God - but  
we're not on our own.  
All of heaven is praising  
God right now! Let's join  
in on earth as in heaven.**

### **Instructions to parents**

God made us to worship Him and He saved us to worship Him. In Revelation 7:9-10 there is a picture of the full and diverse gathering of all God's people from every tribe, tongue and nation praising Jesus. As we join in together with this part of the liturgy we are both joining in with, and foreshadowing, that great day. We thank God because of what He has done. We praise God because of what He is like.

### **Family discussion**

Read Revelation 7:9-11 together. Why does it say Jesus is worthy of praise? Praise God in prayer - pick something from the verse to praise him for. (Remember that "praising" is like saying "hurray" or "wahoo" about Him and to Him)



Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who eat this bread and drink this wine according to your Son Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood.

For on the night that he was betrayed he took bread and, when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.

**We remember Jesus. As  
we eat and drink the  
bread and wine - we think  
of Jesus dying for us.**

#### **Instructions to parents**

As the church family shares Holy Communion it is an act of remembrance. It is not dependant upon us stirring up feelings or trying to imagine what it was like. Simply partaking both remembers and proclaims Christs death.

#### **Family discussion**

Read John 19:17-37. What questions do you have about what you have read? What makes you say 'wow'? How does it make you feel?



Those who are going to partake in this act of remembrance draw near in faith, as we proclaim Jesus' death for us.

Take this bread and eat it remembering Jesus died for you.  
Take this cup and drink it remembering Jesus shed His blood for you.

# **We eat the bread and drink the wine.**

## **Instructions to parents**

We do this together as a church family. This is a meal for all those trusting in Jesus alone for their salvation - that we have hope in life and death only through what Jesus has bought us, through his death and resurrection. If you are confident your child understands this on their level and demonstrates trust in Jesus, then they are welcome to share in the bread and wine. If you're not sure whether they should partake or not, do talk to your church leaders about this.

## **Family discussion**

Read John 6:48-59. What do you think Jesus means in this passage? Why do you think Jesus chose to have us eating something as the thing to remind us how he died for us?



**Holy Trinity** Church