

# Mentor/Student Discussion Guide

## Holy Communion

### May 2021

\*Your goals in your time together today are continue to develop your relationship and to discuss the sacrament of Holy Communion. Use your own judgment on how much time to devote to each part of the conversation.

\*Both mentor and mentee should share answers and thoughts one another.

\*Neither person should be made to feel that they should share more than they are comfortable sharing.

\*You do not need to make sure you have answered every question listed below. They are provided merely as a way to guide your discussion. Neither should you feel limited to these questions.

\*You will not be reporting answers to anyone. If it is helpful to write answers or take notes, feel free to do so knowing that it is not necessary.

\*Remember that each Middle Schooler is at a different stage in the transition from concrete to abstract thinking.

\*Please take a moment to pray together at the beginning or end of your time together. You may pray your own prayer or use the following (spoken by one person or both together).

*We give you thanks, almighty God, that you refresh us each week through the healing power of Holy Communion. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.***

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

#### Check in

\*Check in about any events or conversation from the last time you met.

\*Each person share a high and a low (something good and something no-so-good that happened) from the previous week.

\*Talk about how you might continue to stay connected over the summer/in the future.

#### Scriptural Background

\*Talk through a brief overview of Exodus 1-14. (If you'd prefer to watch a video, check out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uf-PgW7rqE>)

\*Read Luke 22:14-23

-What's going on here? When is this event taking place? Where? What's about to happen to Jesus?

-Why do you think Jesus wanted his disciples to remember him in this way?

\*What's the connection between Exodus 13 and Jesus' last supper with his disciples/communion? *(Definitely talk about the fact that Jesus and his disciples are celebrating Passover. If you want to go further, discuss the lamb in Passover and Jesus as the lamb of God and the concept of redemption.)*

### Small Catechism

\*Read through the "Sacrament of Holy Communion" section of Luther's Small Catechism. Feel free to stop and discuss along the way or read straight through.

\*What is ordinary about Holy Communion? What is extraordinary about Holy Communion?

\*Have you ever thought about preparing to receive Holy Communion? How do you (or could you) do that?

\*How could you respond to someone who said one or more of the following things to you:

-I've done something so horrible that I don't know if even God will forgive me.

-I never feel any different after I receive the Lord's Supper.

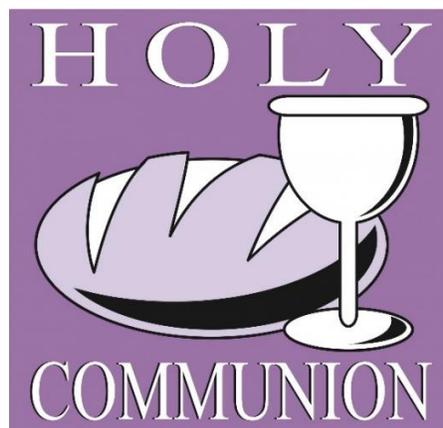
-I just go to Holy Communion because my parents expect me to.

### The Lutheran Handbook

\*Read and discuss "How to Receive Holy Communion" (p. 36-40, see below).

\*Do you agree with these "instructions"?

\*Share experiences of Holy Communion in other congregations or places, including the ways communion has been different in the last year. Does the way you receive the sacrament (standing or kneeling, common cup or small cups, wine or grape juice...) change your experience of it? Why or why not?



## HOW TO RECEIVE COMMUNION

The Sacrament of Holy Communion (sometimes called the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, or simply the Meal) is a central event in Lutheran worship. All five senses are engaged in communion, and it is the most interactive part of the service. Local customs for receiving communion can be confusing or complex, so it's wise to pay attention and prepare.

- 1 **Determine which method of distribution is used.** Verbal directions or printed instructions will likely be given prior to the distribution. The three most common methods for communion are *individual cups*, a *common cup*, or *intinction* (see pages 37–39).

*Note:* Some congregations commune at “tables” (gathered around the altar), and some practice “continuous communion” with bread and wine stations, and some do both.

- 2 **Look for guidance from the usher.** The usher will direct the people in each row or pew to stand and get in line.
- 3 **Proceed to the communion station.** Best practice is often simply to follow the person in front of you and do what they do.
- 4 **Kneel, if appropriate.** Congregations that commune at “tables” often do so by instructing communicants to kneel at an altar railing. When this happens, remember to stand slowly to avoid jostling your neighbor. Assist people who are elderly with altar rail navigation when they need help.

### Individual Cups

- 1 **Receive the bread.** Extend your hands with palms facing up. After the server places the bread in your open hands, grasp the piece with the fingers of one hand. When the server says, “The body of Christ, given for you,” eat the bread.

*Note:* Bread is commonly distributed in both baked or “loaf” form and in wafer form. Either is acceptable.

- 2 **Receive the wine.**

Take a filled cup from the tray. Some congregations provide a tray of empty cups as you come forward. If so, take one and hold it out to be filled by the server. When the server says, “The blood of Christ, shed for you,” drink the wine.

- 3 **Return the empty cup.**

A communion assistant may follow the servers with a tray for the used cups. Deposit your empty cup. It may be necessary for you to carry the empty cup over to a plate or basket located strategically on the way back to your seat.

To receive the bread, make a cross with your hands, palms up.



## Common Cup

- 1 **Receive the bread.**  
See above.

- 2 **Receive the wine.**

The wine will be served in a large cup or "chalice," as a sign of unity. Assist the server by placing one hand underneath the cup and the other hand on its side. Help the server guide the cup to your lips.

- 3 **Avoid leaving backwash.**

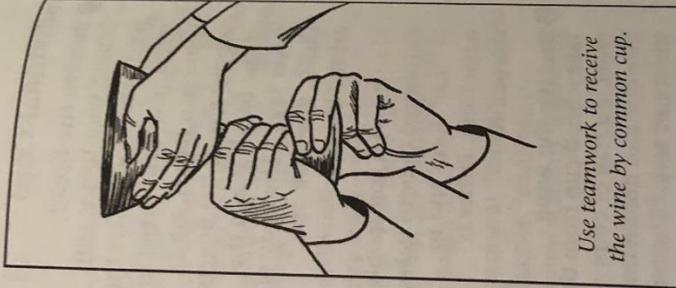
Drink only one sip from the common cup. Remove your lips from the cup immediately after receiving the wine.

## Intinction

*Note:* The word *intinction* is from the Latin word *intingere*, which means "to dip."

- 1 **Receive the bread.**

Follow the same procedure as with individual cups and common cup, but **DO NOT EAT THE BREAD YET**. If you accidentally eat the bread prematurely, **REMAIN CALM**. Simply ask for another piece.

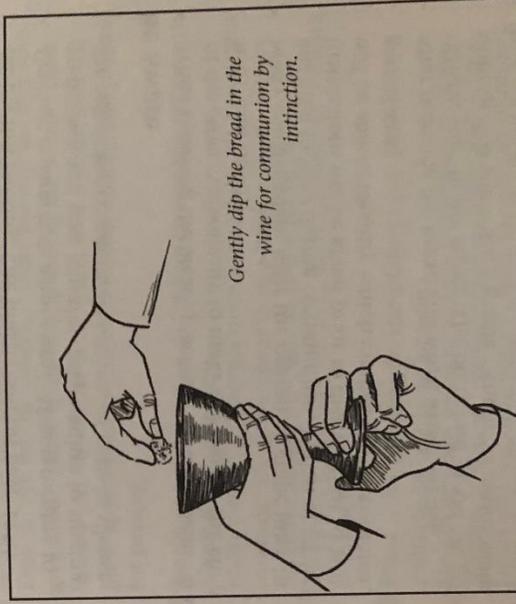


Use teamwork to receive the wine by common cup.

- 2 **Receive the wine.**  
Position the bread you are holding over the cup. Grasp the bread tightly and dip just the edge of it into the wine. When the server says, "The blood of Christ shed for you," eat the wine-soaked bread.

- 3 **Do not panic if you accidentally drop your bread into the cup.**

Again, the server can provide you with more bread. If the person distributing bread is too far away, the wine server may allow you to drink directly from the cup. Receiving only one element (bread or wine) counts as full participation in communion.



Gently dip the bread in the wine for communion by intinction.

## Once You Have Communed

- *Return to your seat.* If communion is distributed in one continuous line, you may immediately return to your pew.

### OR

- *Wait for the completion of the distribution.* If you're being served as a group at the altar rail, you may need to wait until all other worshipers are served before returning to your seat. This is an appropriate time to close your eyes, pray, or listen to the communion music.
- *Receive the post-communion blessing.* When everyone has been served, the presiding minister may bless the group. You may make the sign of the cross on your forehead during this blessing. (See illustration on page 117.)
- *Continue to participate when seated.* After returning to your place, you may join the congregation in singing the remaining communion hymns, or pray in silence.

## Be Aware

- When receiving the bread, place one upward palm on top of the other symbolically to make the sign of the cross with your hands.
- Many congregations offer the option of grape juice in addition to wine during communion. Verbal or written instructions will be given prior to distribution so you will be able to identify which chalice or cup contains grape juice.
- After receiving the bread and wine, avoid saying, "Thank you" to the server. The body and blood are gifts from God. If you wish, a gentle "Amen" is appropriate.
- Pastoral blessings are often available for children or adults who are not communing.