

FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION – CLASS #1

Objectives: Learn the meaning of Sacrament and learn that Holy Communion is a special family meal.

Lesson:

There are 2 Sacraments in the Lutheran Church - 2 special ways to learn about God...

Holy Baptism and Holy Communion...

Holy Baptism is the Sacrament of beginning. (Talk about your personal experience of Holy Baptism.)

Holy Communion: What comes to mind when you hear the words, “Holy Communion?” (wine, bread...)

There are many different names for Holy Communion... (Lord’s Supper. Sacrament. Eucharist. Others?)

2 names for Holy Communion to focus on today:

1) **Sacrament**... something sacred, holy special.
(Luther’s 3 fold definition: Commanded by Christ; an earthly element; heavenly promise.)

2) **Family meal**... Jesus eats with His disciples... family... church...

- When you’re at a family meal, what happens?
- Who prepares the food?
- Who sets the table?
- Do you have a prayer before the meal?
- Do you pass the food around?
- Do you say thank you?
- Who cleans up?

All of these things happen at Holy Communion—a family meal with Christ...

Set the table for the students—bring out the Communion ware... (Cups, Chalice, Paten, Bread, Wine)

Questions. Next week, we look at another aspect of Holy Communion...

Homework:

- Sheet #1 for students: “A Joyful Meal”
- Homework for parents—“There will be Questions.”

Closing Prayer.

HOMEWORK SHEET #1 FOR STUDENT

Name: _____

Date: _____

A JOYFUL MEAL

In what ways is Holy Communion like a family meal (List as many as you can think of...)

When I think about my First Communion, I feel...

Why is Holy Communion a joyful meal?

Pray the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, as I prepare for my First Communion, help me to understand more about this Sacrament. Help me to remember that it is a joyful meal because You promise to forgive my sins. Thank you! In Jesus' name. Amen.

PARENT/GUARDIAN HOMEWORK READING #1

There will be questions... Questions Children Ask...

What does the bread taste like?

The thin wafer used in many Lutheran congregations is tasteless, something like an unsalted cracker, but very thin. It is dry, but quickly softens in your mouth.

My friend told me the wafer got stuck on the roof of his mouth. What do I do then?

Don't worry. That happens to everyone at one time. Wait. Try moving it with your tongue. Do not worry, soon it will become soft and dissolve.

How do I receive the bread wafer?

In many churches, the bread/wafer is placed in your hand. Reach out your hand flat and the pastor will place it in your hand. Do not try and grab it, but simply hold your hand flat to receive it.

What if I'm in a friend's church and I don't know how they commune?

Ask your friend beforehand or watch those who commune ahead of you.

What if I drop the wafer?

Don't worry. Pick it up, if you can do it easily or the pastor may pick it up. Give it to him/her and they will give you another.

Do I get wine too?

Yes, all communicants receive both bread and wine (or grape juice).

What does the wine taste like?

It may tingle in your mouth when you drink it or be more bitter than you are used to. It is a very small amount.

What if I choke on the wine?

This is not likely at all. Drink it slowly. Again, it is a very small amount. If you do cough, there is no need to be embarrassed.

How do I receive the wine?

Various congregations do it differently. At Gloria Dei, you take the small glass from the tray and then discard the empty into a basket.

What is intinction?

Some churches ask you to dip the bread into a chalice of wine.

What will I do with the glass after I've used it?

The acolyte or someone helping will have a basket you can put it into. Place it there. If you're at another church, watch what the people ahead of you are doing.

What if I spill or drop something?

The pastor or helper will clean it up quickly. Again, accidents happen rarely and this Sacrament is all about forgiveness!

In my friend's church, they commune while sitting. Why don't we do that?

Various churches have different ways to take Holy Communion. In the Lutheran tradition, it usually involves some physical action - like walking, kneeling, etc.

I'm afraid I might giggle. What do I do then?

A desire to be silly or giggly often means you are nervous. You are doing something different and you are a bit worried about doing it correctly. Don't worry about others looking at you. Pay more attention to what God has to give you!

I don't think I want to commune. Do I have to?

No. God certainly doesn't want to force you to receive his gifts. However, God does want you to know of His love and receive it in a most meaningful way. (In answering this question, try to discover the underlying reason for it - is the child shy? Are they rebellious? Are they nervous?)

What are those Communion things on the altar?

These are the special vessels we use for Communion: Chalice (cup), Paten (plate), Ciborium (container for extra wafers). There may be other vessels as well, please speak with a pastor if you have more questions.

Am I ready to do this?

(This certainly is the basic and all-important question. Communion is approached with a feeling of anticipation, as well as worry sometimes. Nevertheless, the question concerning readiness is important). We have talked about the meaning of Holy Communion and you have waited for this day. Also, God wants you to receive His gifts in the Sacrament. I think that you are ready, but you must be the one to say yes. In some way, no one is ever fully ready or prepared, we learn our whole lives. Also, it's not so much about being ready as God is ready to give you this gift.

SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT

As you speak with your child, they may have their own questions. Each child is developmentally unique. If they understand "forgiveness" - they are ready. Many factors enter into the decision to commune for the first time - the concern of the family, the influence of the peer group, the program of your parents, and the personality of your child. All these must be taken into consideration as you seek to help your children grow in faith. A parent needs to respect their child's individual personality, faith, and understanding.

Share your own faith with your child - pray with them about their First Communion, talk to them about your experiences and answer other questions they may have as their day approaches. Pray.

FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION – CLASS #2

Objectives: Review previous weeks and read scripture about Holy Communion began and the name “Eucharist” for this meal.

Lesson: Why is Holy Communion also called The Eucharist? What does that word mean?

What are you thankful for? (List 10 things.)

One of the names for Holy Communion is Eucharist = Thanksgiving. Sometimes we even call it “The Great Thanksgiving.” Why?

- Forgiveness.
- Freedom.
- Love.
- That’s all Good News.

We’re also thankful about the future... Messianic Feast - “It’s a big house...” When we take communion, we’re also giving thanks for our future hope - heaven.

Look up Scripture:

- Read Mark 14:22-25
- Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-25
- What is different about these stories? What is the same?

Go over how to receive the Sacrament:

- Receive - gift, hands out.
- Go over the words spoken - “This is my body...”

Questions.

Homework

Sheet #2 for students – Chalice Coloring Page.

Parents/Guardians - Small Catechism for adults.

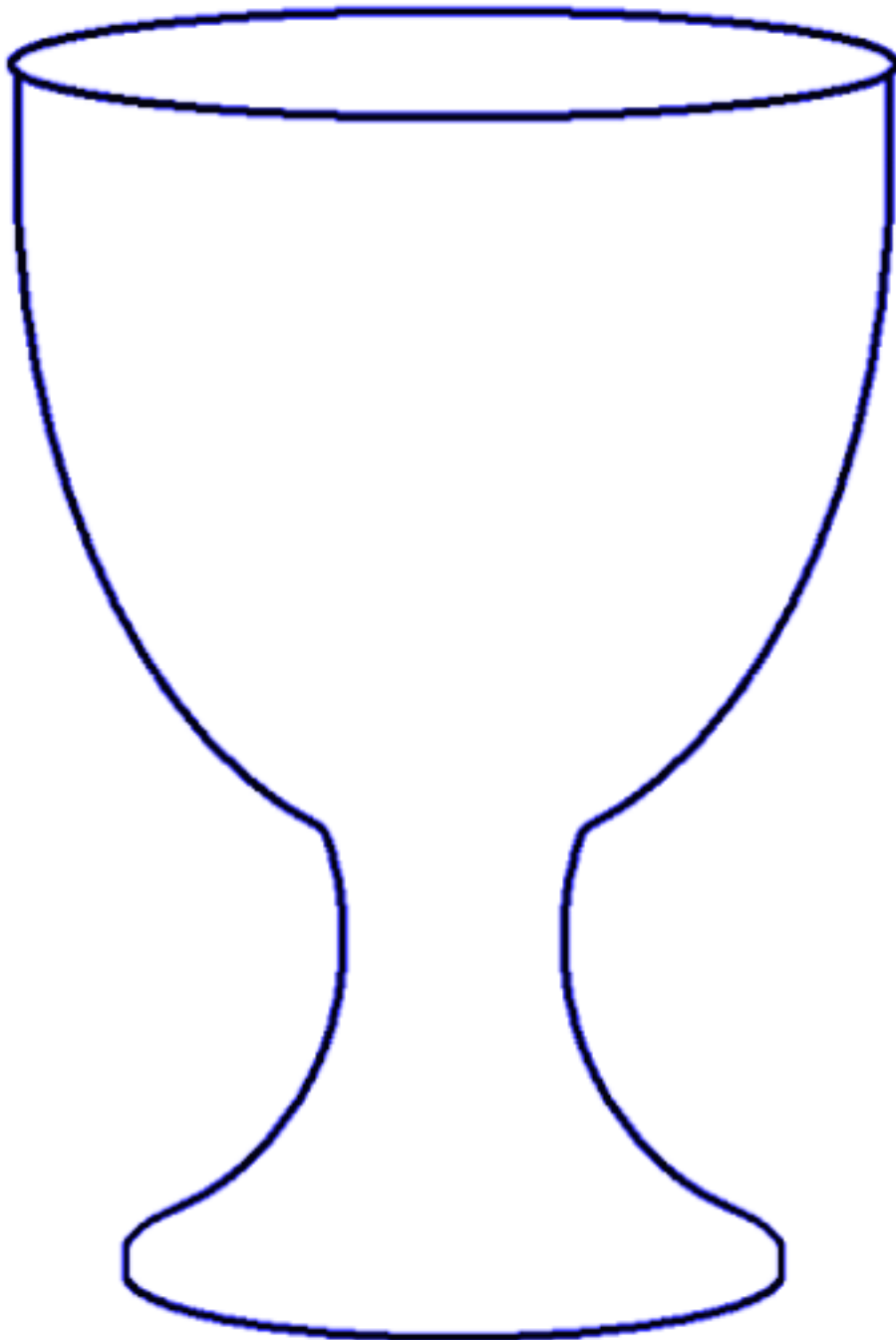
HOMEWORK SHEET #2 FOR STUDENT

Name: _____

Date: _____

CHALICE COLORING

You will be making a chalice and using it for your First Communion. Practice decorating, thinking about what you want to put on it.



PARENT/GUARDIAN HOMEWORK READING #2

Holy Communion (The Lord's Supper, The Eucharist, The Sacrament of the Altar) is celebrated every Sunday at every worship service at Gloria Dei.



Along with Baptism, we call Holy Communion a Sacrament, that is, commanded by Jesus, with an earthly element (bread and wine), and a promise – the forgiveness of sins.

Who can participate?

All who believe Jesus is truly present in this Sacrament are welcome. Gloria Dei practices “open Communion.” If a person chooses not to receive the bread and wine, they are still welcome to come forward for a blessing. Also, for young children, who have not received First Communion instruction, they too are welcome to come forward for a blessing. The pastors offer an invitation with instructions at

each celebration of the Sacrament. As a practical health matter, grape juice is also offered (center cups) and a gluten free wafer is available (speak with a pastor).

Martin Luther wrote the following about Holy Communion in his Small Catechism:

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

The words “given for you” and “shed for you for the forgiveness of sin” show us that forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given in the sacrament through these words, because where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such a great thing?

Eating and drinking certainly do not do it, but rather the words that are recorded: “given for you” and “shed for you for the forgiveness of sin.” These words, when accompanied by the physical eating and drinking, are the essential thing in the sacrament, and whoever believes these words has what they declare and state, namely, “forgiveness of sin.”

Who, then receives this sacrament worthily?

Fasting and bodily preparation are in fact a fine external discipline, but a person who has faith in these words, “given for you” and “shed for you for the forgiveness of sin,” is really worthy and well prepared.”

PARENT/GUARDIAN, WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE “FIRST COMMUNION” A SPECIAL CELEBRATION FOR YOUR CHILD?

- Pray.
- Invite (family/friends)
- Talk about your enthusiasm.
- Other - party, card/letter.
- Prepare - Confirmation will be the next milestone learning experience for your child. Please know that First Communion instruction covers just the very minimum amount of information, but more in depth opportunity will happen later for them.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR CHILD'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH!

FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION – CLASS #3

Objectives: Review previous weeks and learn where Holy Communion comes from—Passover, Last Supper. Talk about forgiveness...

Overview and Review of Course:

Homework... Parent's info... Set calendar with parents...

Review: Family Meal; Sacrament; Thanksgiving-Eucharist; Preparation...

Lesson: Where it all came from?

Holiday = Holy Day. That's what Jesus was doing, a holiday called Passover.

Explain Passover and Exodus...

Explain Last Supper... (Look up passages below.)

- Luke 22:14-21
- Matthew 26:17-19, 26-28
- Mark 14:12-16; 22-25
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

It's about forgiveness... What is forgiveness?

- For – for you...
- Give – it's a gift...
- Ness – it's a process.

Real presence... Jesus is really present... Mystery... That's a good thing...

Go over how to receive it...

- Preparation (+) - making the sign of the cross - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (God be in my head, God be in my heart, God be to my left, God be to my right.)
- What to wear...
- Go over how other churches have different ways... intinction, common cup...

Homework

- Sheet #3 for students - John 6:48-58
- Small Catechism for adults. "Why Do We Offer Holy Communion at Every Service"

JOHN 6:48-58

E	V	E	N	V	A	E	H	S	E
L	I	V	E	N	D	A	E	R	B
A	E	D	Y	A	E	N	Y	O	E
N	D	O	O	R	E	V	E	T	H
R	N	O	S	E	D	F	A	S	T
E	F	L	E	H	O	R	E	E	A
T	A	B	D	T	E	L	I	C	H
E	V	R	E	A	F	A	B	N	I
L	S	E	L	F	E	E	V	A	K
A	N	R	E	T	E	D	A	E	L

BREAD

EVER

BLOOD

ANCESTORS

HEAVEN

FLESH

ETERNAL

DEAD

LIVE

DRINK

FATHER

ANYONE



NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN HOMEWORK READING #3

(ELCA Statement)

WHAT IS HOLY COMMUNION?

At the table of our Lord Jesus Christ, God nourishes faith, forgives sin, and calls us to be witnesses to the Gospel. Here we receive Christ's body and blood and God's gifts of forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation to be received by faith for the strengthening of faith.

JESUS CHRIST HAS GIVEN HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus Christ on the night of his betrayal. In numerous places in the Gospels, the early Church also recognized the eucharistic significance of other meals during Christ's ministry and after his resurrection. Matthew 26:26-29. 1 Corinthians 11:23-24. Mark 6:30-52. Luke 24:13-35.

JESUS CHRIST IS TRULY PRESENT IN THIS SACRAMENT

In this sacrament the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. This real presence is a mystery. The Augsburg Confession states: "It is taught among us that the true body and blood of Christ are really present in the Supper of our Lord under the form of bread and wine and are there distributed and received." The Apology of the Augsburg Confession adds: "We are talking about the presence of the living Christ, knowing that death no longer has dominion over him. The 'how' of Christ's presence remains as inexplicable in the sacrament as elsewhere. It is a presence that remains hidden' even though visible media are used in the sacrament. The earthly element is... a fit vehicle of the divine presence and it, too, the common stuff of our daily life, participates in the new creation which has already begun."

THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION INCLUDES BOTH WORD AND SACRAMENTAL MEAL

The two principal parts of the liturgy of Holy Communion, the proclamation of the Word of God and the celebration of the sacramental meal, are so intimately connected as to form one act of worship. Our congregations are encouraged to hold these two parts together, avoiding either a celebration of the Supper without the preceding reading of the Scriptures, preaching, and intercessory prayers or a celebration of the Supper for a few people who remain after the dismissal of the congregation from a Service of the Word. Holy Communion is not simply appended to the offices of Morning or Evening Prayer. The simple order of our liturgy of Holy Communion, represented in the worship books of our church, is that which has been used by generations of Christians. We gather in song and prayer, confessing our need of God. We read the Scriptures and hear them preached. We profess our faith and pray for the world, sealing our prayers with a sign of peace. We gather an offering for the poor and for the mission of the Church. We set our table with bread and wine, give thanks and praise to God, proclaiming Jesus Christ, and eat and drink. We hear the blessing of God and are sent out in mission to the world.

HOLY COMMUNION IS CELEBRATED WEEKLY

Lutheran congregations celebrate the Holy Communion every Sunday and festival. This confession remains the norm for our practice. The Church celebrates the Holy Communion frequently because the Church needs the sacrament, the means by which the Church's fellowship is established and its mission as the baptized people of God is nourished and sustained.' This practice was reaffirmed in 1989 by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We continue to need "consistent pastoral encouragement and instruction relating to Holy Communion... pointing up Christ's command, his promise, and our deep need.' For a variety of historical reasons, Lutherans in various places moved away from the weekly celebration of the sacrament. All of our congregations are encouraged to celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly, but not every service needs to be a Eucharist. Participation in the sacramental meal is by invitation, not demand. The members of this church are encouraged to make the sacrament a frequent rather than an occasional part of their lives.

HOLY COMMUNION HAS A VARIETY OF NAMES

A variety of names demonstrate the richness of Holy Communion. Those names include the Lord 's Supper, Holy Communion, Eucharist, Mass, the Sacrament of the Altar, the Divine Liturgy and the Divine Service. Each name has come to emphasize certain aspects of the sacrament. The "Lord's Supper" speaks of the meal which the risen Lord holds with the Church, the meal of the Lord's Day, a foretaste of the heavenly feast to come. "Holy Communion" accentuates the holy koinonia (community) established by the Holy Spirit as we encounter Christ and are formed into one body with him and so with each other. "Eucharist " calls us to see that the whole meal is a great thanksgiving for creation and for creation's redemption in Jesus Christ. "Divine Liturgy" says the celebration is a public action, carried out by a community of people. Yet, "Divine Service" helps us to see that the primary action of our gathering is God's astonishing service to us; we are called to respond in praise and in service to our neighbor. The term "Mass" is probably derived from the old dismissal of the participants at the end of the service and the sending away of the bread and the cup to the absent: it invites us into mission. "Sacrament of the Altar" invites each one to eat and drink from the true altar of God, the body and blood of Christ given and shed "for you."