

Maundy Thursday Communion Instructions

As United Methodists we believe that communion is a sacrament which is God's self-giving to us. We respond to this self-giving by taking part in holy Communion as an outward sign of an inward reality.

The outward reality looks like a bunch of folks coming together to eat ordinary bread and drink grape juice - not very exciting. Pretty ordinary in fact. But the inward reality is a rehearsing of Jesus' final act of love as a free man. Jesus' inward reality was to give his disciples a memory of his love for them and his command that they love one another.

What you will need:

- Bread – any amount and form is suitable. Whatever you have will suffice. It is a symbol as well as a reality.
- Juice – grape is preferable, but any juice will work. If you are not a juice drinker but have a sweet beverage, use that so that the sweetness of the liquid affects the taste of the bread. If you have neither, use water. If you like to put a small amount of sugar in the water, please do.
- A plate for the bread and a cup for the juice. Place near you as you participate with us online.
- Please wash your hands well while singing the Doxology 😊.

Procedure

- When it is time to take a communion, take the bread and tear a piece. When you do this recall the tearing of Jesus' body for you.
- Then, with the piece of torn bread in your hand hold it out and say, **"This is the body of Christ, given for you (me)."**
- If you are in a group serve one another and say their name, i.e. "Jason, this is the body of Christ ..." Then give the bread to the person you are serving. (An alternate way is offering the place of bread to the other and have them handle the bread.
- Dip the bread in the juice and say, **"This Is the blood of Christ, poured out for you (me)."** As you do this remember the blood of Jesus that flowed as His life and love flowed out as well.
- It also was the old covenant that was flowing out. His blood represents a new covenant where sins are no longer covered but forgiven, dropped in the sea of forgetfulness, separated as far as the east from the west. It is the precious blood of Jesus!

Prepare yourself spiritually for this event by prayerfully reading through the below scripture. Read as may or a few as you need.

Psalm 23

A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; 3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

23 For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 John 4:7-12

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Psalms 131:1-3

1 O LORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. 2 But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me. 3 O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time on and forevermore.

John 15:1-5

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. 2 He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. 3 You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

John 17:1-5

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all people, to

give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. 5 So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

James 5:7-11

7 Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! 10 As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Prayer and Blessing (a suggested prayer)

“Father, we thank you for the gift of your son, Jesus Christ, we thank you for your gift of the church and most especially we thank you for the gift of freedom from the power of sin. Renew _____ and bless him/her as he/she continues in his/her faithful service to you. We thank you for allowing us to share this meal together and ask that its blessing linger until next time. Amen.”

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