

# Communion

## at Fellowship of Faith

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We're excited you're interested in communion! Below are guidelines to help you take that step.

### **What is communion?**

On the night he was betrayed and arrested, Jesus celebrated the Jewish Passover with his disciples. The Passover commemorates how God delivered his people from Egypt. He did this by sending an angel to destroy the firstborn throughout Egypt, but the angel "passed over" every house where the people of God slaughtered a lamb and put its blood on the doorpost. (See Exodus 11-12.)

When Jesus celebrated this Passover meal with his disciples, he did something interesting. He took the bread and wine and said: "This is my body," and "This is my blood." Jesus reinterpreted the Passover into himself. He identified himself as the new Passover lamb through which God would deliver his people by his death—the sacrifice of his body and shedding of his blood.

So communion, then, is a way we remember that Christ died as a "Passover lamb" for us. It's a way we proclaim that we are his people. And similar to how God came to Israel at that first Passover, communion is a powerful way in which Christ comes to us.

As 1 Corinthians 11:26-30 puts it, "Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

### **How does the Bible describe communion?**

Life. Death. Resurrection. Community. A foretaste of the feast to come. These are just some of the ways the Bible describes communion.

### **Where does the Bible talk about communion?**

Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, and Luke 22:7-38 describe communion in detail. John 13-17 describes the entire night in more detail, focusing more on the conversations and teaching throughout the night.

1 Corinthians 11:17-34 gives instructions surrounding it. (See 1 Corinthians 10, too). Acts 2:42-47 describes the spirit with which the early church practiced it.

Jude 12 refers to it as a "love feast."

## Is communion for everyone?

Communion is for believers in Jesus who approach him with the right heart.

We believe God comes to us in communion. Coming into the presence of God is a powerful, but dangerous thing. The Bible says taking communion with the wrong frame of heart can do you harm.

“Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself” (1 Corinthians 11:27).

Because of this it's important to take communion only if you're in a right relationship with God.

## Who can take communion?

Anyone who can answer yes to the following four questions—

- 1) Do I believe I am a sinner?
- 2) Do I trust in Jesus as my Lord and Savior for the forgiveness of my sins?
- 3) Do I believe Christ is coming to me in this community of believers and meal?
- 4) Do I repent of any sins that stand before God?

Living and believing these things puts you in a right relationship with God.

## How old do I have to be?

There is no minimum age. As soon as you're old enough to understand the questions above and have personally come to a place where you accept and believe them for yourself, you can start taking communion.

## How do I get started?

If you've never taken communion before, we encourage you to talk with one of our pastors, attend Neo, or in the case of kids, come to a special “first communion” class offered on select Sunday mornings.

## What if I've already been taking communion at another church?

As long as you can answer yes to the four questions above, we encourage you to continue communing here as well.

## When are first communion classes offered?

This one-session class is offered during our normal Sunday morning ministry time. Times and dates are on the website and will be posted in The Weekly.

### **When do I take communion for the first time?**

We have a special first communion celebration once per year on Maundy Thursday. You may, however, begin any time after speaking with a pastor or attending one of our preparation classes.

### **Should I be baptized first?**

Yes. While it doesn't matter where you were baptized or how old you were, baptism is an important first faith-step in identifying yourself with Christ.

See the FOF website or talk with one of our staff for information on how to be baptized.

### **Do I need to be a member of FOF?**

No. Members and non-members are welcome to take communion at FOF, so long as you can answer yes to the four questions listed under "Who can take communion?"

### **How do I know if I'm ready?**

Do you love Jesus and want to give him your life? Can you answer "Yes" to the four questions? That's a good indication you're ready. We encourage you to talk with one of our staff. They'll help you navigate any concerns and determine when is a good time to start.