



Joyful Feast



A Communion Curriculum Borrowed and Adapted from Second
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TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT COMMUNION

Communion is a celebration of Jesus' love. During communion we remember Jesus' love. It is a way that Jesus feeds us with his love. In our church we celebrate communion at least once a month, usually on the first Sunday of the month.

Our parents provide food for us because they love us. God feeds us with this special food to remind us that God loves us. We often gather with our family over meals. We eat this special meal to remember that we are all a part of God's family.

It is sometimes called the Lord's Supper because it is a time when we remember the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples. It is sometimes called the Eucharist. Eucharist, in Greek, means giving thanks, which is a major thing we do when we share in communion.

It is called Communion because Communion means coming together, and when we share in this meal we come together as God's family. This is why we wait and take the meal together, as a family. Communion is coming together as a family of God to give thanks to God by remembering what God has done for us, and all the world.

Communion is one of our two sacraments. The other one is Baptism. A sacrament is something Jesus did that he told us we should also do.

When we have Communion we gather together as God's family. We break the bread and share the cup then we eat the meal together.





WHAT DO WE DO AT COMMUNION?

- **WE GIVE THANKS:** The pastor says a prayer of thanks on behalf of all of us. The pastor thanks God for all God has done as each of us says “Thank You” in our own hearts. We thank God for making the Earth, the stars and all the planets, for loving us even when we make mistakes. This reminds us that we are not the only Christians. There are Christians that live in every country in this world, and there are Christians who have lived every year since Jesus lived on Earth. We are not alone in celebrating this meal.
- **WE RECEIVE AN INVITATION:** We are invited to participate in this special meal by hearing our pastor say some words Jesus said. This reminds us that **Jesus is the host of this meal.** He is the one who makes the invitation!
- **WE REMEMBER:** The next thing we do is remember what Jesus did for us. The pastor tells us once again what Jesus did on the night of the Last Supper. The pastor talks about Jesus breaking the bread and sharing it with his disciples, and then pouring the wine into a cup and sharing it also. We remember that Jesus asked us to eat the bread and drink from the cup and to remember him when we do that. These are called the **Words of Institution**, because Jesus says, “**Do this in remembrance of Me.**”
- **WE EAT AND DRINK:** The Pastor reminds us that we are in the presence of the Holy in the “**wine**” and **Bread**. Then the pastor holds up the loaf of bread and breaks it in half like Jesus did. And the pastor picks up a cup of juice like Jesus did. Then we all get a piece of bread and some juice to drink. **The pastor or a Deacon will serve us the bread and juice.** Sometimes there will be small pieces of bread already cut up for us and small cups of juice. Sometimes there might be a loaf of bread that we take a piece from and a cup of juice that we dip our bread into. There are many different ways we share the bread and the cup. The important thing is that, while we eat the bread and drink the juice, we think about God and all that God has done for us. And we think about Jesus and the things that Jesus taught us about God. You may notice that people are quiet while they are eating and drinking. That’s because they are thinking about what God has done for us. Communion is a meal where we use our Best Table Manners, being polite and quiet.
- **WE PRAY A COMMUNAL PRAYER OF THANKS GIVING:** As a community the pastor leads us in a pray of thanks giving to say Thank You to God for being present with us in communion and in our lives. We Thank God nourishing us as we continue to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and bring Gods good news into the world.

If you attend communion at a different church it may be slightly different. If you have even experienced communion at another church, what was it like? How was it similar? How was it different?





Comparing Communion Stories in the Bible

The stories of Passover had been told through the Seder meal for almost 1,750 years by the time Jesus gathered together for this celebration with his disciples. This meal is recorded slightly different in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. We trace our celebration of communion back to these brief passages.

Gather in a circle. *A sentence will be whispered in the ear of the first person and they will then whisper the same sentence to the next person...and so on. The last person will say the entire sentence aloud. Do you think it will be the same? How did the Jewish people remember entire stories? (Rituals, traditions, oral storytelling)*

It is helpful to compare the four gospel passages with one another and with our own service of communion as we learn more about who we are and what we are doing at the Lord's Table.

Matthew 26: 26-29 The Lord's Supper

26 While they were eating, Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take and eat it," he said; "this is my body."

27 Then he took a cup, gave thanks to God, and gave it to them. "Drink it, all of you," he said; 28 "this is my blood, which seals God's covenant, my blood poured out for many for the

forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in my Father's Kingdom."

Mark 14: 22-25 The Lord's Supper

22 While they were eating, Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take and eat it," he said; "this is my body."

23 Then he took a cup, gave thanks to God, and handed it to them; and they all drank from it. 24 Jesus said, "This is my blood which is poured out for many, my blood which seals God's covenant. 25 I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine in the Kingdom of God."





Comparing Communion Stories from the Bible Continued

Luke: 22 15-20 The Lord's Supper

15 He said to them, "I have wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer! For I tell you, I will never eat it until it is given its full meaning in the Kingdom of God.

Then Jesus took a cup, gave thanks to God, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves.

I tell you that from now on I will not drink this wine until the Kingdom of God comes. Then he took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me." In the same way, he gave them the cup after the supper, saying "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood which is poured out for you.

I Corinthians 11: 23-25 The Lord's Supper

23 For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a piece of bread, 24 gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me." 25 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup and said, "This is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me."

Questions

1. Highlight or underline any differences between the reading from Matthew 26: 26-29 description of the *Last Supper* and the other descriptions. Why do you think they are a little different?
2. Is there a connection between our service and the Biblical passages? What?





COMMUNION QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of the prayer of confession?

2. Who invites us to the table?

3. What are the words of institution?

4. Why do we wait and take the bread and cup altogether?

5. Who serves the meal in our church?

6. Why do we celebrate communion?

7. How often do we celebrate communion in our church?





Suggested Guidelines for Discussion A Guide for Parents

1. Discuss with your child, a memorable experience of communion you have had.
2. Discuss what communion means to you personally, and/or, your understanding of what communion means generally.
3. Share what you know, as well as what you don't know. You can learn together. Regardless of how much you may or may not know, it is important for your child to realize that communion as a sacrament is always a mystery and never something we fully understand.
4. Ask your child what they think communion is, based on what they have learned, and what they have seen or heard. Help them fill in the blanks.
5. Read some scripture passages about the Lord's Supper with your child: Matthew 26: 26-29, Mark 14: 22-25, Luke 22: 15:20, and 1 Corinthians 11: 23-25.
6. Share with your child the importance of eating, the many Bible stories where there was food and eating, and the related significance of Jesus feeding us in the meal of communion.
7. Discuss how the elements of bread and juice are very common and not only symbolize Christ's presence, but also, how in their common nature, they represent how God is found in the common every day things around us. (Remind them of how Jesus was born in a common way and was laid in a manger in a stable.)





The Last Supper-Joseph's Story-Moses' Story-The Passover Story



It was at the Jewish feast of Passover - The Seder (say-der) Meal that Jesus has his Last Supper with his disciples.

The scriptures tell us how Joseph brought the people of Israel into Egypt and how they became a great and important community. After Joseph died and a new Pharaoh came to power, the new ruler forgot what Joseph and his people had done for the Egyptians. This Pharaoh made slaves of all of Israel and condemned all newborn males to death.

There was one Hebrew boy who was saved by Pharaoh's daughter and was brought up in the palace. His name was Moses. Later he realized he was an Israelite and caused the Pharaoh to become angry with him. He escaped from Egypt.

While Moses was in the desert God appeared to Moses as a burning bush. God told Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let the Hebrews out of Egypt or God would bring them out! Moses pleaded with Pharaoh, who stubbornly refused to free the Hebrew slaves. God sent ten plagues down on Egypt.

The tenth plague was the slaying of the first born of all families. God told the Hebrews to offer a lamb sacrifice, and to mark their doorpost with the blood of the lamb so that when the Angel of Death passed over their homes, their firstborn would be spared.

So these stories and the celebration of the Seder Meal help us remember and celebrate God delivering Moses and the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. As we look at this meal remember that it was in this setting that Jesus took the bread and broke it...He took the cup and blessed it...and He commanded us to do this and He said, "Whenever you do this, do it in remembrance of me."



Joseph's Story: Genesis 37-45

Jacob had twelve sons and Joseph, the 11th, was Jacob's favorite. Joseph and his brothers tended their father's sheep. Joseph used to get his brothers really angry with him because he would tell Jacob all the bad things his brothers did while they were out in the fields. Because Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons, Jacob had a special robe made for Joseph. (They didn't have jackets back then, so this was a very special jacket). It was very beautiful and had every color you could imagine in it. Joseph loved that coat so much that he hardly ever took it off. The brothers knew that Jacob loved Joseph best and so they really hated Joseph!

One day Joseph had a dream, and he went to go tell his brothers. He said, "Guess what? Last night I had a strange dream. We were tying up bunches of grain out in the field when suddenly my bunch stood up, while all of yours gathered around and bowed to me." The brothers looked at each other in disgust, but Joseph continued. "Then I had another dream that the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down to me."

"Who do you think you are," the brothers asked. "Do you think that you are better than all of us? Do you think that we would ever bow down to you?" This made the brothers dislike Joseph even more.

One day Jacob told Joseph to go find the brothers who were herding the sheep in a faraway pasture. He had to walk a long way, but Joseph finally found his brothers in Dothan, nearly 75 miles from their home!

From the field the brothers saw Joseph approaching. They huddled together and quickly made a plan to kill the boy. They said to each other, "Here comes that dreamer. Let's kill him and throw his body into one of the wells. We'll tell Dad that a wild animal killed him." Brother Reuben didn't go along with this idea, and he convinced the others to throw Joseph into the well and leave him there (he was secretly planning to rescue Joseph later). Then Reuben went to check on the sheep.

When Joseph arrived, his hate-filled brother ripped off Joseph's beautiful robe of many colors. They picked up Joseph and threw him into the empty well. The brothers were so pleased with themselves that they sat down around the well to eat. In the distance, they saw an Egyptian caravan coming toward them, and the brothers came up with a new plan. "Let's sell him as a slave to these Egyptians then we won't be guilty of killing our own brother!" And they were even more pleased with themselves. When the Egyptians arrived, the brothers pulled Joseph out of the well and sold him to them. To cover their dirty deed, the brothers killed a goat and dipped the beautiful robe in the goat's blood. Then they took the torn and bloody robe to Jacob.

"My son, Joseph, has been torn to pieces!" Jacob cried. "I will be sad about my son for the rest of my life." Meanwhile when the caravan got to Egypt, they turned around and sold poor Joseph to an officer in the Pharaoh's palace. Little did the brothers know that their act of revenge changed the course of the Israelites' history. Joseph ended up the Governor of Egypt because the Pharaoh really thought he was great and all the Israelites ended up coming to Egypt to live a better life there because of Joseph.





The Story of Moses and the Plagues: Exodus 4-10

The Israelites were happy in Egypt for a long time, but then the Pharaoh who liked Joseph so much died. That's when life started to get really hard for the Israelites. All the Pharaoh's men made the Israelites become their slaves, and they treated their slaves brutally.

God called on Moses and his brother Aaron to lead the Israelites out of Egypt so that they would no longer be slaves. Moses and Aaron, who always carried walking sticks, did what God told them to do. They went to Pharaoh and said, "The Lord demands that you let our people go." The Pharaoh only laughed in their faces and sent them away.

So God decided to teach the Egyptians a lesson. God sent Moses and Aaron back to Pharaoh to say, "Let my People go or the Nile River will be turned into a river of blood." The Pharaoh just laughed at Moses, so Moses took his walking stick and struck the river. When he did it, the Nile became a river of blood. The fish flopped around on the river banks and died. All those dead fish really made Egypt smell bad.

The Pharaoh still would not let the people go, so seven days later God sent a plague of frogs. They jumped out of the water and hopped all over the Pharaoh and all the Egyptians. It was pretty awful, so Pharaoh told Moses to call off the frogs and he would let the people go. But, Pharaoh was a liar and he did not let the people go.

So God sent a plague of gnats on the Egyptians. Aaron lifted up his walking stick and touch the dust of the ground. Then everywhere in Egypt the dust changed into gnats and they crawled all over the Pharaoh and the people. But still he did not let the people go.

God sent more plagues on Egypt. One was a disease that affected all the farm animals. All the animals got really sick, fell over on their backs with their feet into the air and died. Another was a plague of boils. All the Egyptians broke out in painful oozing sores all over their bodies. The people cried out for mercy, but still the Pharaoh would not give in and let the Israelites go.

The next event was a plague of hail. Huge hailstones pounded down on the people and ruined all the crops, but still Pharaoh refused.

So God sent a plague of locusts. Moses raised his walking stick over the land and a strong wind began to blow. The locusts arrived and covered the land so that people couldn't even see the ground! The locusts ate all the leaves on the trees. Egypt was ruined! Even the Pharaoh's officers begged him to let the Israelites go.

But once again, the Pharaoh said, "No!"





The Passover Story: Exodus 10-12

After the ninth plague, Moses went back to God and said, “Nothing I do works! The Pharaoh just won’t listen to me. I won’t go back there again!”

God said, “Tell you what I’ll do. I won’t send you back. This time the Pharaoh will make you go! And he’ll make you go in a BIG hurry! Instruct the families to do this - kill a lamb, take a bunch of the hyssop plant, dip it in the lambs blood and smear it on the outer doors of your houses. Stay indoors all night. I will pass through the whole of Egypt bringing death to all the first-born sons. But do not worry, with the blood on your doorpost, the Angel of Death will pass over your houses and your children will be safe.”

The next morning a deep and desperate wailing went up all over Egypt. Even the Pharaoh’s son had not been spared by the Angel of Death. Pharaoh summoned Moses to his palace. “Get up and get out...out from among my people!” The people of Egypt were in a panic to get rid of the Israelites. “If they stay here, we’ll all be dead! Let them go!”

It all happened so suddenly that the Israelites couldn’t finish baking their bread...they picked up the unleavened dough, wrapped it in their cloaks and carried the dough on their shoulders. They rushed out of Egypt, not knowing what would happen next. This is the story of the first Passover, but the Israelites were to have





Seder Meal: Remembering the Passover and the Jewish Roots of Communion

Taking place the first two nights of the eight day holiday, the Seder is the most important event in the Passover celebration. Usually gathering the whole family and friends together, the Seder is steeped in long held traditions and customs.

Leading up to the first night of Passover, the home is cleaned and cleared of all yeast foods, called hametz. All hametz is either eaten before Passover begins or “sold” to non-Jewish neighbors and friends.

Only foods that are “Kosher for Passover” are allowed. No leavened (containing yeast) foods or grains are eaten. In their place matzoh and foods containing matzoh are eaten. This is to commemorate the Israelites who fled quickly into the desert with no time for their breads to rise and were forced to bake the dough into hard crackers in the desert sun.

The Seder Meal

With its Passover dish-ware and silverware, the Seder table is different than the regular dinner table. The centerpiece of which is the Seder plate, a special plate containing the five foods that remind us of the struggle of the Israelites in their quest and journey to freedom.

Three pieces of matzoh are placed in a Matzoh Cover (a cloth sleeve or envelope) and placed in the center of the Seder table. Before the meal begins the middle matzoh is removed and broken in half.

One half is returned to the Matzoh Cover, the other - the Afikomen - is hidden, to be hunted by the children at the end of the Seder meal. The child who finds the Afikomen wins a special prize. Some homes break the Afikomen into many pieces assuring that each child present can find a piece and receive a prize.

The Seder plate contains foods that have special meaning for this holiday.

Haroseth: A mixture of chopped walnuts, wine, cinnamon and apples that represent the mortar the Jewish slaves used to assemble the Pharaoh’s bricks. **Parsley (dipped in salt water):** Symbolizing springtime, it is dipped in salt water to remind us of the tears of the Jewish slaves. **Roasted egg:** Another symbol of Spring. **Shank Bone:** Symbolic of the sacrificial lamb offering, the bone can come from whatever the family is eating, such as the leg bone of a roasted turkey. **Bitter herbs:** Freshly grated horseradish reflects the bitter affliction of slavery.

During the Seder, four glasses of wine are poured to represent the four stages of the Exodus:

• Freedom • Deliverance • Redemption • Release

A fifth of a cup of wine is poured and placed on the Seder table. This is the Cup of Elijah, an offering for the Prophet Elijah. During the Seder, the door to the home is opened to invite the prophet Elijah in.

After the meal is eaten, the children search for the Afikomen. The Seder is finished when the children have found the Afikomen and everyone has eaten a piece.