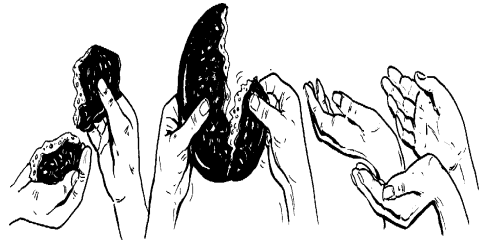


Communion and Children



All children and youth of Ark and Dove in first-grade and older, will have the opportunity to participate in the sacrament of communion on November 30th, the first Sunday of Advent. This Sunday, November 23rd, Pastor Corinne Baker will visit with the Sunday School to show a video on “The Last Supper” as well as explaining the hows and whys of communion. The Time With Children will also be about communion on November 30th, when the Sunday School teachers will bring the children and youth back into the sanctuary for communion. We encourage parents and their children to discuss communion both before and after they have this very special experience. The Q&A section in this pamphlet may help prepare you for discussion with your family. Parents may want to visit the Christian Education page of the Ark & Dove website for additional resources to aid in this discussion.

Q: Who may take communion in the Presbyterian Church?

A: Any baptized child or adult of any Christian church is welcome to receive communion.

Q: At what age are children allowed to take communion?

A: The Presbyterian Church does not set a specific age and technically, if a child has been baptized, they may take communion. However, Jesus' call to "do this in remembrance of me" implies awareness and appreciation of Jesus Christ - some knowledge and appreciation of him in his life, his death, and his risen life. A child may not know as much as older members, but they can have the attitudes required for communing in a worthy manner. A child can show that childlike trust, love and wonder which fit him/her for the kingdom of God. On their level of imagination, feeling and understanding, he/she can discern that the Lord's Supper is a very special meal to be observed with respect. They can possess a sense of need and dependence. They can share a sense of belonging to the family of the Church gathered around the table. They can desire to participate in communion and be willing to do it in remembrance of Jesus and in gratitude for him.

Q: What does the sacrament of communion mean?

A: On the day of his resurrection the risen Jesus made himself known to his followers in the breaking of bread. In the same way we celebrate the presence and power of the risen Christ in our lives in the celebration of Holy Communion. In the breaking of bread and pouring of wine we are reminded of Christ's radical acceptance of us as individuals and as a church community. In this sacrament we hear that in spite of sin the Lord gave up his life for the human family. When we eat the bread and drink the wine (or grape juice), God's covenant of grace with us through Christ's self-offering is, once again, sealed (reaffirmed, made secure, guaranteed).

Q: Are there other names for communion?

A: Yes, and each name has its own special meaning.

Communion emphasizes what we have in common. In the sacrament we are together not only in our shared faith but also in our common need for Christ's grace and truth in our daily lives. The term Lord's Supper reminds us that we share this meal in the memory and Spirit of the risen Jesus, who so often shared table fellowship with his followers and many others, rich and poor, sinners and saints. Eucharist is an expression that means "good grace," for the sacrament is a precious gift the Lord has given to his people. As this term is used in other Christian churches we are reminded that it is a celebration that joins together a great diversity of Christians around the world.

Q: What's the difference between communion served by passing it in the pews and communion served by intinction (bread broken from a common loaf and dipped in a common cup)?

A: Neither method of receiving communion is better than any other. Both express Christ's self-giving and the new life we share in his name. Some people have a preference for communion in the pews, while others find it meaningful to go forward to receive the sacrament by intinction.

Q: How often does the congregation of Ark & Dove celebrate communion?

A: We celebrate the sacrament on the first Sunday of the different seasons of the Liturgical Calendar as well as other special times of the year. The up-coming schedule for Communion is: December 28th, January 18, February 29, March 28, 2004. May you and your child experience the gift of grace as you participate in the Sacrament of Communion.