

Holy Communion At Home

Dear friends,

As we wait for the eventual return to our congregational communion table, I want to encourage you to celebrate holy communion in your own home. This is how the early Christians practiced it, before there were church buildings. “Day by day...they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts...” (Acts 2:46) Martin Luther encouraged this practice during times of crisis as well. The Lord’s supper reminds us that we are not cut off from the presence of Christ when we are physically apart. This presence of Christ in the “breaking of bread” is more important now in our time of isolation than ever.

So, I invite you to **set a table for the Lord** on Sunday morning (or whenever you decide to worship). Place a clean cloth on the dinner table, set out a piece (or several) of bread and a small glass (or several) of wine (or grape juice). Light a candle, if possible. If you are by yourself, you might open the church directory in front of you, or simply think about your siblings in the church, and imagine them sitting across from you. If you are more than one person, gather around the table.

Use the on-line worship service. Let yourself be guided as needed. Feel free to say the words yourself within the context of your time of worship. If there are several of you, you might want to split up the readings.

If you are using this order of service independently of the online worship service, **read the gospel** text for the Sunday. (e.g. April 19 – John 20:19-31; April 26 – Luke 24:13-35; May 3 – John 10:1-10; May 10 – John 14:1-14). After the reading you could spend a few moments reflecting and/or sharing about the gospel.

Pray this eucharistic prayer:

“Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

“In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

“Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

“Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

“Christ has died, Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

“Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all glory and honor, now and forever. **Amen.**”

Pray the Lord’s Prayer

As you take the bread, say the words “The body of Christ, given for you,” to each other or to yourself. Say “The blood of Christ, shed for you,” as you take the wine.

After the meal, if you are alone, say: “Peace be with me!” If there are more than one, turn to each other and say: “Peace be with you.”

After the meal:

Concluding prayer: “Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ’s resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son’s resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**”

Blessing: “The blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain on us, now and forever. Amen”

If you want, you can phone someone else to include them. You could also connect to people on the internet and invite them to share this time of worship with you. You can add songs and prayers, if you are not celebrating with the online worship.

With your family of Glory Lutheran Church and around the world, I hope that you feel free and empowered in these exceptional times to celebrate holy communion in the way that the apostles encouraged us to do: “at home... with glad and generous hearts.”

Pastor Markus