Communion Guide

We believe that the collective action of communion was designed for God’s church to practice in unity together in large or small groups. However, we recognize there will be times when this is not possible. We are in one of those very exceptionally unique times. We offer this guide to give guidance on how to communion with a friend, family, or gathering of two or three. Our prayer is that your genuine action will bring about the opportunity for you to know God even more and experience the freedom He has for you. We are confident that this will motivate you to an even greater purpose and impact in life.

Where does the practice come from?
The original origins are from the night when God passed over the houses that were marked with the blood of a lamb and causing the first born of unmarked homes to perish. When the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, God sent Moses to tell the Egyptian leader to set the people free. The Pharaoh of Egypt refused. God caused plagues to happen in Egypt to demonstrate His power. But, the Pharaoh was stubborn. After nine plagues Pharaoh still would not listen. So, God sent one more plague; the death of the first born. God wanted to protect those who were faithful to Him. So, He gave instruction about a special meal, the Passover Meal. Everyone who trusted God and placed the blood of an innocent lamb on their door posts, would not be affected by this final plague. So, the faithful survived.

Why is blood so important?
There are many various details about this incident that you can read in Exodus 11 and 12. The primary point in the story is that an innocent lamb was sacrificed to save the first born in the home. The time would come and has since past when the only (first) Son of God would die to save the world. Everyone who is faithful, and has Christ’s “blood” over their life, can be saved eternally.

Colossians 1:19-20 (NIV) 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
Ephesians 1:7-8 (NIV) 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding,
1 John 1:6-7 (NIV) 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

How is Jesus central to communion?
I know this is odd to many of us today. But, when we pause and reflect, we are reminded that life is in the blood. Leviticus 17:14 (NIV) 14 because the life of every creature is its blood. It is a simple, yet essential reminder about God’s passion for us to have life. The big picture in the “Exodus Story” is that it foreshadowed what God would do for all of us. Jesus talked about this when he shared His last Passover meal with His close friends and disciples.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NIV) 23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do
Jesus broke the bread and shared the wine with his disciples explaining that God was establishing a new covenant with His people. And the new covenant is that our relationship with God is based on our faith that Jesus is the Son of God and He is the promised Messiah. The Christ; meaning the promised Messiah of the Jews or the anointed one.

Jeremiah 31:31–32 (NIV) 31 “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord.

**How do we practice communion?**

Jesus made the sacrifice of His life to offer us new life. His death resulted in His body being beaten and His blood being poured out. Now we practice the passover supper in a new and living way. We recognize Jesus as the lamb and we reflect in a way that is worthy of His sacrifice as we take the bread and juice that allow us to remember and reflect. We call this the Lord’s Supper or communion.

1 Corinthians 11:27–28 (NIV) 27 So then, 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. 28 Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

The important point in this action is that we need to be able to reflect on our lives and understand our actions. Some children may be too young for this. This is also the reason some parents may need to wait until they allow their younger child the opportunity to be baptized. In the end, our goal is to receive and take the communion elements in a way that will glorify our Lord Jesus, cause us to reflect on and confess sins, repent of thoughts and actions that do not honor God, and commit ourselves to His plan. If it is only a religious action, we miss the meaning and importance. It is our vision and hope that all Christians will recognize the tremendous cost of God’s grace, and never cheapen that gift.

1 Peter 3:18; 4:1-2 (NIV) 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit… 1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. 2 As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

**What Supplies do I need?**

Bread and juice. These are the best representations of the body and blood of Jesus. These are symbolic symbols to help focus our minds properly. The bread is unleavened. The reason that God required unleavened bread in the passover meal was to identify the preparation his people were supposed to have to leave quickly. Unleavened bread doesn’t have yeast, yeast in bread requires time for it to rise. The symbolic gesture was for God’s people to be ready as He prepared to do a powerful work to free them.

This doesn’t mean that if you don’t have unleavened bread or a grape juice that you cannot take communion with your family or friends. Use the best you have. Crackers and flat breads can work fine and people tend to have those in their home.
How do I prepare?
Take time to just be still. Take time to read a few scriptures. Some have been provided. If you have children, reading these scriptures with them and prayer ahead of time is great. It would be a good practice to speak of the things you know you need to repent of. A good example would be to tell a child, “You know when I yelled at you the other day, I was inpatient and as a result I was mean and that is not how I should act. This is one way I can care for your better and honor my relationship with God.”

Another great way to talk about this and prepare with children could be to watch Moses, Prince Of Egypt. This is a great animated movie that helps tell the passover story.

What are some good scriptures?
John 6:35 (NIV)  
Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”  
In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Acts 2:42 (NIV)  
They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Isaiah 53:5 (NIV)  
But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Matthew 26:26–29 (NIV)  
While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”  
Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

1 Corinthians 10:16–17 (NIV)  
Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.

I want a little more please!
Maybe this has been a great learning experience for you and you find yourself excited to know more. While Leviticus 17 was mentioned, here is an even deeper look into those divine revelations and how they make essential connection to Jesus in the new covenant. Leviticus 17:11–12 (NIV)  
For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.  
Therefore I say to the Israelites, “None of you may eat blood, nor may any foreigner residing among you eat blood.”

Some people choose to hyper focus on the last verse and may be very legalistic about it even today. But the essential point here is God declaring the scantily of blood and how it should be looked upon with great care. Think of it as that special china cabinet in your grandmother’s
house that you could not play around or mess with. It contained special things set apart. Now, let’s look into the New Testament and the new covenant that God established for us through Jesus. In the old covenant, the body and blood of the lamb substituted for our sins; but this was not perfect and final. In the new covenant, the perfect body and blood of Jesus substitutes for us perfectly. There is no need for a high priest to enter on our behalf year after year.

Hebrews 9:7–10 (NIV)  
7 But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.  
8 The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still functioning.  
9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.  
10 They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.

Hebrews 9:12–14 (NIV)  
12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.  
13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.  
14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 9:15 (NIV)  
15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Please, read all of Hebrews 9 and 10 to get the best contextual information that pertains to the sacrifice of Jesus as the new, lasting, and perfect sacrifice for your sins, the sins of the world.