

Welcome to a Year of Celebration!

Week 38: September 18-24, 2022

Celebrate Communion

This year, we are focusing on who God is and how we can celebrate him and the life that he offers to us. We will draw deeper into a relationship with the Lord through examining his nature and desire for personal intimacy with us as his people, and we are going to do so in such a fun way! We are going to journey in 2022 through practical ways to celebrate various holidays! We will look at many of your favorite celebrations: Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day and much more. We will explore the historic, liturgical holidays of the year, learn about the Jewish festivals of the Bible days, and even consider some of the celebrations of other religious faiths. I'm so glad you will be on this journey with us.

In this packet, you will find some ideas for you to grow closer to God, your family, and others. Nothing is required. It is all for fun and your personal enjoyment and growth. There are enough activities that you could do one or two per day during the week if you want. If you don't want to do something, skip it. If another idea comes to mind, do it. Watch for God's abundant goodness and celebrate it.

Come Join Us as We
CELEBRATE GOD!



**“They celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.”**

Dr. Patrick Wilson

(Psalm 145:7)

2022

Video Devotional

Go to Patrick Wilson's YouTube page and watch the video devotional for this week: Celebrate Communion. Then, consider and discuss with your family/friends the following questions:

- What name that we use for the meal to remember Jesus' sacrifice resonates with you best? Why?
- How does Jesus identify with the meaning of Passover?
- Who did Jesus die for? Explain your answer.
- Why do you think Jesus washed the feet of all the guests?
- Who do you think should be included at the communion table?
- How did Jesus give his body and blood for us?
- What does it mean to take communion in an "unworthy manner?"

Craft: Bread and Cup

1. Have each person open the brown bag. Then, have them wad it up as much as they want.
2. Open the bag back up and begin to roll the bag with the top of the bag on the inside of the roll. Keep rolling until you have an oval. This makes the "bread."
3. Have each person open the white bag. Grab the bag just above the bottom and squeeze it together but leave the bottom flat.
4. Twist the white bag upward a few inches to make a stem for the cup. Roll the top edge in just a little and smooth out the wrinkles to finish. This makes the "cup."
5. Talk about the meaning of the bread and the cup.

Needed Supplies:

- Brown Paper Bag
- White Paper Bag

Food to Prepare

Take time to read through the article: Why Is the Lord's Supper Significant in the Bible? By Bible Project:

<https://bibleproject.com/blog/lords-supper-in-the-bible/#:~:text=Followers%20of%20Jesus%20take%20part,to%20a%20new%20life%20source.>

Communion centers around the "table." As stated in the article, "The Lord's Supper is an invitation into life." Let's briefly look at the two elements:

BREAD: Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and distributed it to his disciples. Jesus made a parallel analogy between the broken bread and the coming brokenness of his body, given as a sacrifice on the cross. He identified himself with us as broken human beings and offered himself to us. Just as the bread, when eaten, enters the body, changes form, and provides life-giving energy to us, so Jesus wants to enter into the very depth of our being and empower us to experience transformation in him.

This week, try to make bread. Here is an easy bread recipe:

<https://butterwithasideofbread.com/homemade-bread/>

CUP: Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to his disciples. Jesus made a parallel analogy between the crushed grapes used to make the wine and his blood, shed on the cross for us. He identified himself with us as flesh and bone bodies, dependent on the flow of blood through our veins. Like the bread, when drunk, the contents of the fruit provide nourishment to our lives to go out and bear spiritual fruit of a transformed life.

This week, try your hand at making something from grapes. Here are a few ideas:

<https://insanelygoodrecipes.com/grape-recipes/>

Baby Food Puree for Dinner

Put a different spin on dinner one day this week. Either buy a variety of pureed baby food or make your own. Remove all of the labels. Put some of each jar on the table or in small bowls. Let everyone taste them one at a time and see who can guess correctly.

Movies to Watch

If you are movie fan, pick out a favorite movie to watch alone or with family/friends. According to Farewelling.com these are the best dramatic movies about death. If you'd rather, just pick another great movie to watch together. Pop some popcorn, curl up on the couch, and enjoy the show!

Da Vinci's *Last Supper* Painting



Dramatic Movies About Death:

- Marley and Me
- Field of Dreams
- Me and Earl and The Dying Girl
- The Lovely Bones
- The Descendants
- Bridge to Terabithia
- The Bucket List
- My Sister's Keeper
- The Sixth Sense
- Steel Magnolias
- Stand by Me
- Now and Then
- My Girl
- The Big Chill
- This is Where I Leave You
- Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close
- Final Destination

Spend time looking deeply at Da Vinci's painting above or online. Study the depictions of Jesus and each disciple. Look at their expressions and interactions.

Imagine what it might have been like to be there. Consider the thoughts, feelings, and uncertainties of the disciples. Consider what was on Jesus' mind, heart, and soul. Consider why Da Vinci painted this picture the way he did. Discuss these things as a family or with a friend.



Bible Study

“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” (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

The word, Eucharist, comes from the Greek word, eucharisteo, which means “to give thanks.” Thus, when Paul speaks of communion he ties in the importance of “giving thanks” when we celebrate.

Paul unites having a grateful heart with personally participating in a union with Jesus and each other. In most homes in the first century, a common cup was passed around and shared with the entire group. Loaves of bread were broken and passed around the table. Hence, each person participated in eating the same bread and drinking from the same cup. The same elements entered each of their bodies, uniting them together as one “body” in Christ.

Using the imagery that Jesus used in the upper room, Paul identifies the cup as the blood of Jesus and the bread as his body. So, in addition to us uniting with each other as one, unified body of Christ, Paul speaks about the depth of our union with Jesus as his “blood” and “body” enter into us. This union we have with God through the death of Jesus should cause us to be ever thankful. We share life with one another and with Jesus, the giver of true, abundant, and eternal life.

Prayer Time

“Communion is a sacred time for you as a follower of Jesus. But before you participate in this memorable occasion, take time to spend some reflective moments in self-examination. What does that mean? How should you pray? While this is an individual matter between you and God, here [in the link below] are some communion prayer thoughts and meditations that might help you as you prepare for this beautiful time of remembrance. “ *The CrossWalk Devotional*

For an example of a communion prayer and scriptures to help you prepare to take communion, go to:

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/prayer/a-prayer-before-taking-communion.html>



Serve: Take Communion to Someone

Sometimes we make the sacredness of communion into something that it is not. While remembering Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross is the pinnacle of human history and the most important event for followers of Jesus, the term "communion" comes from the Latin word, *communio*, which means "fellowship, sharing, or participation." In other words, it is to be about us coming together with God and each other.

Unfortunately, there are people who cannot "come together" for communion. They are confined to a nursing home, assisted living center, or are homebound. Others simply do not have transportation to come to church. As followers of Jesus, we should not exclude those who would like to participate in communion but who cannot do so without assistance.

Consider people that you personally know that might be restricted from participating in communion. If you have connections or interest, reach out to a local nursing home or assisted living center to offer to bring a brief communion service to the residents. Gather up some form of cracker and drink (It doesn't have to be the ones used at your church.) or request extra supplies from your local pastor/church. Remember that these are symbols of Jesus' broken body and spilt blood and as symbols they do not have to be an exact item to provide the significant meaning.

NOTE: While different denominations may view those who lead in communion differently, please don't let feelings of inadequacy interfere in your ability to minister to others through taking communion to them. If you are reluctant, ask your pastor or priest to assist you in this ministry opportunity. Otherwise, remember that you are a minister for Jesus and are capable of serving others as his representative.

When you go, you might include the reading of the Last Supper in Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-25, Luke 22:7-20, or John 13:1-30. Otherwise, you can summarize these events. Be sure to participate in communion with those you are ministering to. Pray with them and for them, thanking God for the opportunity to share his table with others.

Worship

Carve out some time to listen to worship music, hum or sing along. Here are some great songs to get you started. These songs are about Jesus' sacrifice. Look them up on YouTube if you don't have them in your music repertoire.

Pick your own songs and spend time worshipping and celebrating who God is to you and all the ways that he has blessed your life.

Communion Worship Songs:

- Oh the Blood
- God So Loved
- Jesus Messiah
- Oh the Cross
- King of Kings
- In Remembrance
- Communion (Third Day)
- Nothing But the Blood
- Communion Song (Bethany)
- Cornerstone
- Jesus Paid it All
- Mighty to Save
- Victory in Jesus
- How Deep the Father's Love for Us
- There is Power in the Blood

Challenge: Open Communion Table

Take some extra time this week to really consider your understanding of who can/should participate in communion. Is it just for believers or anyone? Is it just for members of your church or should those who worship Jesus elsewhere participate? What are your reasons for or against an open table?

"Eating, and hospitality in general, is a communion, and any meal worth attending by yourself is improved by the multiples of those with whom it is shared." —Jesse Browner