

communion outline



We believe communion enables us to participate in a personal, communal and panoramic experience of the Christian faith. At Grace Church we encourage you to break bread by considering the past, the present and the future. Before we do so, we encourage you to prepare in the following ways:

Come ready

Consider the following practical questions before you meet together:

- How can I prepare myself to be a blessing when we meet?
- What can I contribute to the gathering?
- How could I bless those who are leading the gathering?

“If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment.” (1Cor11v34)

Come reconciled

Before you gather, consider your relationships in the community. If you have a relationship to repair, please do so before you break bread.

- Has anyone wronged me who I need to talk to?
- Have I wronged anyone that needs a conversation?
- Are there any relationships that need repairing?

“If Your Brother Sins Against You...” (Matt 18v15)

“So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matt5v23-24)

“For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (1Cor11v29)

For further guidance please see your Community Group Leader.

Thanksgiving

We begin our gatherings with a time of thanksgiving. Come ready to share and invite others to give thanks for how the Lord has blessed us.

We follow the example of Jesus who gave thanks (Matt26v27) and remember what He did for us as we approach the table (Luke22v19).

Self-examination

Before we break bread, we consider if we want to receive Christ's love and walk His way. If we are not walking with Christ in good conscience and do not want to, it is inappropriate to share communion.

A time of silent reflection around the following questions can be helpful.

- Do you see your need and limits and approach Christ with confidence?
- Is your love for God genuine and growing?
- Do you have a positive approach to relationships (friends, family, work, church community) due to confidence in his work?
- Do you show social concern and actions which show His love for the world?

It is best to simply say 'I am not ready,' if you are not in a place to receive.

"Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup." (1Cor11v28-29)

Confession

We expect the Spirit to bring areas of life to mind which He is calling us to change. As we turn to Him, we are expressing our faith in His ability to change us over time. Prayer in small groups or pairs may be appropriate here. Please ask your Community Group Leader for '4R' prayers if needed.

"But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world." (1Cor11v32)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1John1v9)

the present

Up

We join in God's work in the world as we express our ongoing acceptance of his love and forgiveness. In Christ, He has paid for our sins on the cross and freely adopted us into His family. We expect to encounter Him in a special way. You may wish to read the following verses and then eat together.

"Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matt 26v26-28)

"...he was known to them in the breaking of the bread." (Luke24v35)

In

We affirm our love for each other and our unity in Christ as His body and family.

"Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." (1Cor10v17)

Out

We tell the story of Christ, publicly offering His life to anyone who would receive Him by faith through Communion and Baptism. If anybody wants to begin following Jesus, communion and baptism can be offered. At Grace Church we would recommend our Faith Foundations course alongside. Please speak to Community Group leader for further information.

"As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death." (1Cor11v26a)

the future

We follow the pattern of Jesus as we consider His return as a comfort and motivation for today. We suggest you consider what will change when He returns and what difference that makes today.

Anticipate

"I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt26v29 & Mark14v25)

"Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more... for the former things have passed away." (Rev21v3-4)

Listen

This is a great time to share any sense of how the Lord is leading or prompting us to live in light of the future.

"...test everything; hold fast what is good." (1Thess5v16-21)

Pray

We use the opportunity to pray and encourage each other to take part in what He is doing now. We want to see God's gracious activity visible and join in through our words and deeds.

We suggest you pray for your work, neighbours, communities and families and that our lives would be a 'signpost' to the future.

"He said... "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt6v9-10)