

ORDER FOR HOLY COMMUNION WITH CHILDREN

This Order follows the sermon and confession of faith (which can be one of the liturgical confessions of faith approved by the General Assembly). It is modelled on the Jewish seder as a service to teach children the meaning of Holy Communion in relation to our Lord's death and Resurrection. The sermon preceding the Order below should be brief.

The 'Teaching Moments' are opportunities for the minister to interrupt the liturgy to explain aspects of the faith portrayed in the celebration of Holy Communion. Themes for the Teaching Moments are suggested. Only one, or at most two, of the Teaching Moments should be used in any one service, and they should be kept brief.

Song and Collection

The Minister says:

Let us worship God with our gifts.

*The Minister may announce a song to be sung while the offering is collected.
The children collect the offering and bring it forward to the Table.*

Peace and Offering

When Jesus was on earth he told his disciples,
'If you are about to place your gift on the altar
and remember there that someone is angry with you,
leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go:
first make peace with that person;
then come back and offer your gift to God.'

Matt. 5:23f.

(Teaching Moment 1: The meaning of peace with God or the importance of peace with one another)

The peace of the Lord Jesus be with you.
Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

*The children leave the offering near the Table.
The people greet one another with the peace of Christ.
The children come forward again to place the offering upon the Table.*

Let us pray.

Out of all that you give us every day, Lord,
we bring these gifts to you.
Accept them, we pray,
and use them, and us, to your glory
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

GOD'S SACRAMENT

FIRST ACTION: TAKING (AS JESUS 'TOOK A LOAF OF BREAD')

The Minister asks:

Where are we to find bread for these people to eat?

Children: **There is a boy/girl here who has bread and wine!**

Jn. 6:5,9

A boy or a girl comes forward to the Table with the bread and gives it to the Minister. The Minister (uncovers the elements and), holding the bread with both hands, says:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe,
**who created the fruit of the earth
and have brought us to this Table.**

A child asks:

**Every day we eat together as a family.
How is this meal different from other times we eat?**

When Jesus lived on earth, he often enjoyed eating with his friends.
On the night he was betrayed, as darkness was beginning to fall,
he sat at table with the disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem.
At this Last Supper with his disciples he told them
to do what he did, and then he would be present with them.

A child asks:

**We are his disciples and want to do what he told us.
What did Jesus do?**

The Lord Jesus took a loaf of bread and, after he had given thanks,
he broke it and gave it to them saying,
'This is my body, which is for you.
Do this to recall what I did for you.'
And after supper he did the same with the cup, saying,
'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, as often as you drink it, to recall what I did for you.'

I Cor. 11: 23-25

(Teaching Moment 2: The bread and the wine as sacramental signs of Jesus' body and blood)

As the Lord Jesus took bread,
I now take this bread and wine to be used for this holy meal.

SECOND ACTION: GIVING THANKS (AS JESUS 'GAVE THANKS')

(Teaching Moment 3: The importance of saying 'Thank you' to God or the reason why we re-enact what Jesus did)

As Jesus then gave thanks,
let us give God our thanks and praise.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The people stand.

Loving God,
you made this wonderful world for us to enjoy.
Everywhere we look we see traces of your beauty;
everyone we meet has something of your image in them.
You bless and care for every one of your creatures.
For your kindness to us and your goodness to all creatures
we give you thanks.
And we join with the angels and saints
in the joyful hymn of praise:

The people sing a verse from a song about God's holiness. Or they say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

*Isa. 6:3
Ps. 118:25f.
Matt. 21:9*

We thank you, O God, that you showed your love for us
by sending your only Son to be born as a little baby in this world.
We thank you that he told us about you, our Father in heaven,
and that he healed the sick,
gave his life for us,
rose again from death,
lives to reign with you for ever,
appears before you on our behalf
and leads us into your very presence.
We thank you that he has broken down all that separates us from you
and from one another,
and made us friends with you and with one another.
We thank you that he has brought us together at this Table,
to share his very self with us
and so make us all one with him.

The Minister may stretch out hands over the bread and wine and says:

Come, Holy Spirit, upon us and our eating and drinking
so that through this meal
we may truly receive the body and blood of Jesus
and be made one flesh with him and he with us,
and from now on be his faithful followers,
showing your love to all people.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
we glorify you, almighty Father,
for all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

And now let us all join together in the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.

Matt. 6:9-13

The Amen is sung or said.

THIRD ACTION: BREAKING (AS JESUS 'BROKE' THE BREAD)

(Teaching Moment 4: The death and resurrection of Christ as the basis of Communion)

A child asks:

**As we break the bread, and pour out the wine
what does this bring home to us?**

The Minister takes the bread and says:

The bread that we share stands for Jesus' body.
He suffered great pain for us on the Cross;
he was wounded for our sins;

(the Minister breaks the bread)

upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his stripes we are healed.
But God made us alive together with Christ
by raising him from death.

Isa. 53:4f.

Eph. 2:5

The cup of wine that we drink stands for Jesus' blood.

(the Minister pours the wine from a flagon or suitable container and raises the cup)

By the blood that he shed
Jesus sealed a new covenant with us
in which our sins are forgiven
and we are brought into the family of God.

FOURTH ACTION: SHARING

(Teaching Moment 5: The importance of being united with Christ and sharing that unity with one another)

In giving the bread and wine, the Minister says:

Taste and see that the Lord is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him!
Eat the bread and be filled!
Jesus is the Bread of Life and the True Vine.

Ps. 34:8

The Minister partakes of the bread and wine first.

The Minister then administers bread and wine to an assisting Elder or to an older child, and the people, including all children, come forward to stand, or kneel, at the Table. The Minister and the assisting Elder or child then serve all those who indicate that they have been baptized by holding out their hands, the Minister placing his/her hand on the head of every child not so indicating, to bless him/her.

Alternatively the Minister invites the children to come forward and they are served first in the same way. Appointed children (if necessary, each accompanied by an Elder) then take the elements to the people in their pews.

Alternatively the Minister administers bread and wine to the Elders, who then take the elements to the people in their pews, including the children, each child sitting with his/ her parents or a responsible adult.

When all have received, the vessels are returned to the Table, and the Table is covered.

Because there is one loaf,
we who are many are one body,
for we all share the same bread.

1 Cor. 10:17

THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

Prayers of Intercession and Self-Offering

Lord Jesus, we thank you
that we can gather around your Table
and that no matter how different we are from one another

we are all members of your family,
a family that stretches around the whole world
and through all of history.
We pray for the other members of that family now.
May those who are close to you and know you well
shine with your love in a dark world.
May those who are far away from you
be brought home again.
May those who suffer injustice be treated fairly
and those who are poor, hungry and forgotten
be given what they need.
May those who are sick be made well again.
May those who mourn have friends to comfort them.
And now we offer ourselves in your service
and ask that as we go into the world
we may reach out to all people with your love and mercy.

Or

Lord Jesus, we thank you
that you have shared yourself with us in this meal.
Please help us to share you with the world.
Make us channels of your peace.
Where there is hatred, help us to bring your love;
where there is hurt, forgiveness;
where there is doubt, faith in you;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, your light;
where there is sadness, joy;
Lord, help us to comfort others rather than seek our own comfort;
to listen rather than demand to be heard;
and to love rather than seek to be loved.
For it is in giving that we receive;
in forgiving that we are forgiven;
and in dying that we are born to eternal life. **Amen.**

Francis of Assisi

Hymn

GOD'S SENDING

Commission and Benediction

(Teaching Moment 6: The meaning of Christ's commission)

The Minister then dismisses the congregation, using this or a similar charge:

Go into the world to love and serve the Lord.

The Minister blesses the congregation, using this or some other scriptural benediction:

The LORD bless you and watch over you;
The LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;
The LORD look kindly on you and give you peace.

Num. 6:24-26