

# Preparing for HOLY COMMUNION



***"A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace."***

**St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430 AD)**

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Dear Family,

Imagine that you're planning a party. What is the *most* important thing for any good celebration? Food! As Christians, we have a very special meal that we eat together. It's called Holy Communion or The Lord's Supper. It's named that because Jesus (the Lord) gave his friends this meal at his last supper before he was arrested and died on the cross. After Jesus rose again from the dead, his friends remembered that he had told them to keep celebrating this special meal as a way of remembering his sacrifice for them on the cross and celebrating their new life together as God's family. When you are ready to follow Jesus and you have been baptized with water, then you're ready to receive the bread and wine (or grape juice!) as part of the Holy Communion service at church.

This book will help prepare you to begin receiving Communion, or help you to grow in understanding what Communion is all about if you are already eating the bread and drinking from the cup. We suggest that you read the pages together as a family, giving about 15 minutes each time you open the book to complete one question (which is often two pages). We recommend using the NIRV, NLT or another simple to read bible translation. It's very helpful to have one copy of this book per person in your family.

It's ok if you don't know everything right away. Even grown-ups spend their whole lives growing in loving Jesus, and learning more about what Holy Communion means for us! Just remember that Jesus says: ***"I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst"*** (John 6:35).

## WHAT DO THESE PICTURES MEAN?

You'll notice these images on many pages. They will help you *respond* to what you're learning. In many cases, you'll find an introduction and teaching on the left page and an opportunity to respond on the right page. There's no need to rush—make sure you take time to do both pages.



READ



DRAW



SNAPSHOT



LISTEN



NEW IDEA



PRAY



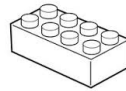
QUESTION



ACT



DISCUSS



BUILD



WRITE



THE GOSPEL

### ***How to Find a Bible Verse:***

MARK      10 : 45  
└──────────┘ └──────────┘  
Book      Chapter & Verse

## WHAT IS A SACRAMENT ANYWAY?



While Jesus was on earth, he gave his disciples two sacraments as a gift for his church. The word sacrament means “holy.” The two sacraments are Baptism and Holy Communion. You can *SEE* a sacrament with your eyes, but it also works inside you as a special hidden gift from God.

Baptism is only needed once. It happens when a person is beginning their new life in Jesus Christ. For Anglicans, this can often happen when you are very young—maybe even too young to remember! The water used at Baptism is a symbol which reminds us that when we belong to Jesus, we are washed clean by his death and resurrection and born again as a new creation through the power of the Holy Spirit! This is very exciting, but not always very easy to understand or easy to see a change in our lives right away.

That’s why Jesus gave us a second sacrament. Holy Communion doesn’t just happen once. It is a regular family meal for all Christians. The Lord’s Supper is a symbol which reminds us that Jesus died to forgive our sins. The bread reminds us of Jesus’ body, and the wine reminds us of his blood. As we eat and drink by faith, Jesus feeds us spiritually to help us grow up strong in a living and active trust in God.

This book is all about Holy Communion, and the best place to begin preparing for Communion is to explore the Gospel. Let’s get started!

**J. I. Packer:**

***“As the preaching of the Word makes the gospel audible, so the sacraments make it visible, and God stirs up faith by both means.”***

## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The word gospel means "good news." When you are preparing to receive Holy Communion, an important question to answer is: What is the gospel? Or in other words, WHO is Jesus and WHAT has he done for me?

This is very helpful to memorize:

Question: **What is the gospel?**

Answer: **The gospel is the good news of God loving and saving his people through his Son, Jesus Christ.**

On pages 8-20 we will take a closer look at the gospel together.



## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?



What is the best news that you ever heard? Tell the story to the other people in your family.



Read Colossians 1:13-14. No one likes the darkness very much! What is the good news that you find in these verses?



Copy the Question and Answer from page 6.

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 1. God's Best Way to Live



The Bible declares that God created the heavens and the earth. He made everything and best of all he made people in his image. When God looked at everything he made he said "it is very good!"

Adam and Eve lived in perfect friendship with God and with each other. God loves us and he wants to live in perfect friendship with every person that he has lovingly created in his image.



## God's Best Way to Live



Read Genesis 1:26-28



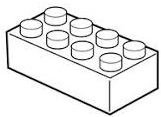
Write something new that you learned from these verses.

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Draw a picture of Adam and Eve living in perfect friendship with God and one another in the garden. Include animals, trees and other beautiful things that God made in your picture.



OR Build a scene of life in the garden of Eden. How many colours can you include? How many plants and animals?

## 2. Saying NO to God



Adam and Eve had everything they needed to be happy. But they chose to disobey God's word and when that happened sin entered God's perfect creation. Sin is the bible's word for saying NO to God and going my own way. Sin separates me from God, which makes God very sad. Every person who ever lived is infected by sin.

## Saying NO to God



Genesis 3:1

*"Now the snake was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"*



Discuss what happened next in the story. What does the snake say to convince Eve to eat the fruit? If you're not sure, read Genesis 3:1-6

What is the consequence when Adam and Eve disobey God's word? Do you think people disobey God's word today?



Fill a clear bowl with water. Now add a few drops of food colouring or other dye to the water. What happens? Does the dye change all the water or just some of it? How does this illustrate the affect of sin in our lives? Discuss.



Genesis 3:15

***"I will make you and the woman hate each other.  
Your children and her children will be enemies.  
Her son will crush your head.  
And you will bite his heel."***

Do you know who the Son is in this verse? It's Jesus! Right from the beginning, God has a plan to fix the problem of sin by sending his Son to crush the snake's head. What a promise!

### 3. The Problem of Sin



Every part of God's creation has been touched by sin. Each one of us is guilty before God the Judge. Even if we try to do the right thing, sin is too strong for us to beat on our own. We can never work hard enough to get things back to the way they were in the beginning. Working hard and doing good isn't enough to fix our broken friendship with God or with one another. We need help!

## The Problem of Sin



Read 1 John 1:8-10



Is there a word in these verses that you don't understand? Find out what it means and write something about it below.

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Pray together, saying sorry to God for your sin. Consider telling God that you know that you can't work harder to please him and you need his help and his rescue.

When we confess our sin at church we say:

***"Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep..."***

#### 4. God's Rescue Plan



God had a plan from the very beginning to fix this very BIG problem! God sent his Son Jesus to rescue us from sin. Even though Jesus didn't sin or do anything wrong, he died in our place so that our sin is forgiven and we can be friends with God again. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays his life down for the sheep. This is very good news!



2 Corinthians 5:21

***"Christ didn't have any sin. But God made him become sin for us. So we can be made right with God because of what Christ has done for us."***

## God's Rescue Plan



Listen to the song "Jesus Paid It All" recorded by David Crowder. Here is a link to a video with lyrics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP-Nxcfo3lo>



Write something new you learned from this song or your favourite line

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Make a song book for "Jesus Paid It All." Draw pictures of what you hear in the song and write some of the words in your song book too.



John 3:16

***"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."***

## 5. Jesus the King!



After three days, Jesus rose from the dead! This happened just like he said it would. He showed himself to his friends. They saw him with their eyes, heard him with their ears and touched him with their hands. He was really alive!

When Jesus rose again, he showed that he's stronger than death and proved that ALL God's promises come true in Jesus.

When we say sorry to God and put our whole trust in Jesus, he gives us the same new life that he has. He washes us clean and gives us the gift of eternal life which begins NOW as we follow Jesus day by day.



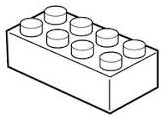
## Jesus the King



Read Luke 24:1-12



Draw a picture of what the women found when they arrived at the tomb.



OR Build a scene of the story using Lego, Playmobil or other building toys and figures



2 Corinthians 1:20

***"For all God's promises find their YES in Jesus. It's because of Jesus that we shout AMEN to God for his glory!"***

## 6. How Do I Follow Jesus?



Following Jesus starts with two things: Repentance and Faith. Repentance means *turning away from sin and towards God*. Faith means *trusting in Jesus as my Rescuer and King*. They're always two sides of one coin—like heads and tails! Following Jesus means knowing that he is always with me. He is my Lord and Saviour and I am a child of God. He gives me the Holy Spirit as a Helper to change my heart and make me more and more like Jesus. I'm not perfect—I still sin. But sin doesn't rule over me anymore! God has given me his word, the Bible to help me follow Jesus. He speaks to me when I read it, and he loves it when I speak to him in prayer.

And one day, King Jesus is coming back to judge the world. When he comes, everyone who trusts in Jesus will be with him forever. That will be the best day ever and it will continue for eternity!

Have you ever told Jesus that you want to follow him? If you've heard the good news of who Jesus is and what he has done for you and you want to follow Jesus as your Lord and Saviour all you have to do is talk to him about it.

**Would you like to respond to the good news that Jesus has for you?  
Here's an example of what you might say:**

Dear Jesus,

*I'm sorry that I say no to you sometimes. I'm like the lost sheep and you are my Good Shepherd. I know that I can't rescue myself from the big problem of sin.*

*Thank You for dying in my place to rescue me. Thank you that you've washed away my sin and made me a new person in Christ. Thank you that you love me and you've given me the gift of the Holy Spirit to help me follow you. I know this means you're always with me and I am a child of God.*

*Please help me to trust you with all my heart and please show me more of who you are everyday.*

*Amen.*



Listen to Slugs & Bugs song "I'm Adopted."

Here is a link to a fun video with lyrics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmmxYMBzDY8>



Write a message to Jesus thanking him for what he's done for you and telling him that you want to follow him. What will turning away from sin mean for you personally? What do you find hard about trusting Jesus? Talk to him about it in prayer.

Dear Jesus, \_\_\_\_\_

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## WHAT IS HOLY COMMUNION?



Holy Communion is also sometimes called The Lord's Supper. It is the family meal for all Christians given to us by Jesus at the Passover meal he celebrated with his disciples before he died on the cross.

At his last supper with the disciples, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks to God, he broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, "take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

And then Jesus took a cup, and when he had thanked God, he gave it to them saying, "drink this, for it is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

The Lord's Supper is a symbol which reminds us that Jesus died to forgive our sins. As we eat and drink by faith, Jesus feeds us spiritually to help us grow up strong in a living and active trust in God.

## WHAT IS HOLY COMMUNION?



Read Luke 22:14-20



Write out the words that Jesus said as he gave his disciples the bread and wine (you'll find them in verses 19-20:

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Now circle all the action words that Jesus uses (verbs)

Discuss together: What are these action words and what is Jesus commanding us to do? Why do you think this is important?



Arrange a "field trip" with a minister at church. Arrive early on a Communion Sunday and get a tour of the Communion table, the bread and wine and all the other things used in preparing for the Communion service.

## WHAT IS PASSOVER?



In this picture you can see Jesus and his friends eating the special Jewish meal called Passover. That's when Jesus gave them the bread and wine to eat and drink. Every year, God's people celebrated Passover to remember that the LORD God had rescued them from Egypt many years ago. You can read the story of God's rescue in the Bible book called Exodus.

On the night that God led his people out of Egypt, he told them to kill a perfect lamb and paint its blood on their doorposts to protect them. The lamb died instead of one of them. The LORD passed over each Israelite home and those with the blood on their door posts were not harmed. The next day Moses led all the people out of slavery and into freedom and a new home!

Jesus chose Passover as the time to give his friends Holy Communion because he wanted them to remember the Exodus story after he rose from the dead. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He died in our place to rescue us from slavery to sin. The Lord's Supper is God's gift to his church to help us grow in trusting him.

## WHAT IS PASSOVER?



Read Exodus 12. This is a long chapter. Consider taking turns reading or having one person read while others draw the suggested picture below.



What is something new you've learned from your reading?  
Write it down.

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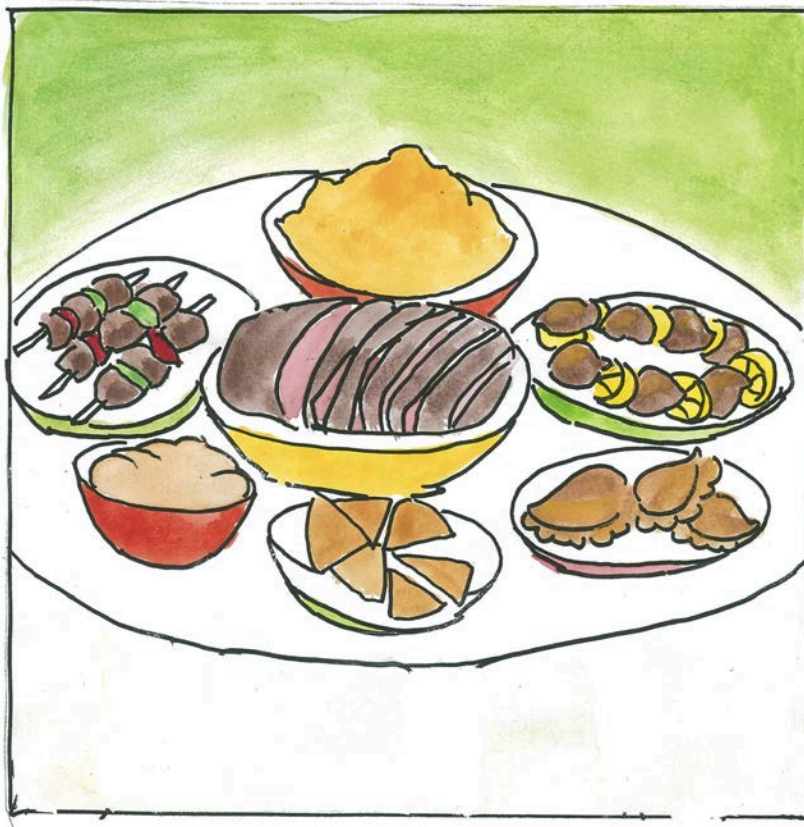
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Draw a picture of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. Remember that there were men, women and children and animals and carts loaded with supplies. I wonder how many Israelite people left Egypt? It must have been a lot!

## WHY DO WE EAT FOOD?



What is your favourite food? Who are your favourite people to share a meal with?

*WHY* do we eat food? (*Discuss*)

We eat and drink to nourish our bodies and help them grow. Of course we also eat because food tastes good!

Mostly we eat with our family, but food is also an important part of celebrating. Birthday parties have cake and Christmas dinner usually has turkey. Nothing brings people together to talk and enjoy each other quite like food and drink!



## WHY DO WE EAT AND DRINK THE LORD'S SUPPER?



In the same way that my body is nourished by eating food, my spirit is nourished by the bread and wine at Holy Communion. As I trust in Jesus, he strengthens me when I receive his body and blood by faith, and he renews the love and friendship I share with other Christians because we're all part of one family—the body of Christ! I know that Jesus is always with me and I'm with him.

As we regularly celebrate Communion together, we're also looking forward to the day when Jesus returns to bring us home and we will eat and drink with Jesus in his Father's kingdom!

## WHY DO WE EAT AND DRINK THE LORD'S SUPPER?



Psalm 34:8

***"Taste and see that the LORD is good!"***



Listen to "The Table" by Chris Tomlin.

Here is a link to a video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyXjaiidm68>



Write down something new you learned from this song

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Pray together that God will prepare your hearts to receive him by faith as you come to his table at Holy Communion. Pray that he will nourish your spirit and strengthen you to trust him with all your heart and love those around you day by day.

When we sing at church we say:

*O LAMB of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us thy peace.*

## WHAT HAPPENS IN A HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE?



Holy Communion is a regular part of worshipping God as a member of his family, the church. When we go to church we rehearse the good news of the gospel with our whole bodies. We sing praise with our voices, we listen to God's word, the bible, with our ears, we see the bread and the wine with our eyes, we touch the same with our hands and we taste them last of all. We use all five senses!

An Anglican worship service has a pattern, sort of like a quilt. This pattern helps us prepare our hearts to receive the Lord's Supper.

First, we confess our sin to God in prayer

Second, we hear a reminder that God always forgives us.

Third, we respond to God by telling him that we love and trust him.

Have you ever seen a carousel going round and round? Well, the Anglican Communion service prepares us to receive the bread and wine by taking us on a *Gospel* Carousel ride. SIN → GRACE → FAITH.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN A HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE?



Listen to “Behold the Lamb” by Stuart Townend.  
Here is a link to a video with lyrics:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACHPwx7EGQA>



Bring home a Holy Communion service sheet from church. As a family, look through the service together and discuss the order of service. Parents, share with your child(ren) what you’ve learned about the service—what is meaningful for you and why.

Investigate together where you might find the carousel of SIN→GRACE→FAITH on display in the liturgy (you may want to start by defining those terms).

Mark places in the service where you use one of your five senses. Which one do we use the most?



Write about something new you discovered in the service sheet:

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## HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M READY TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION?



1. I believe that Jesus died for me to rescue me from my sin
2. I have asked Jesus to forgive me for my sin
3. I have decided to follow Jesus and trust him with all my heart
4. I have been baptized by water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

If you're not ready to receive Holy Communion yet, that's ok! You can still be part of the service. When it's time to come forward to receive, simply cross your arms over your chest and the minister will pray a blessing on you. It might sound something like this:

*May the LORD bless you and keep you; may the LORD make his face shine on you  
And be gracious to you; may the LORD turn his face toward you  
and give you peace. Amen.*



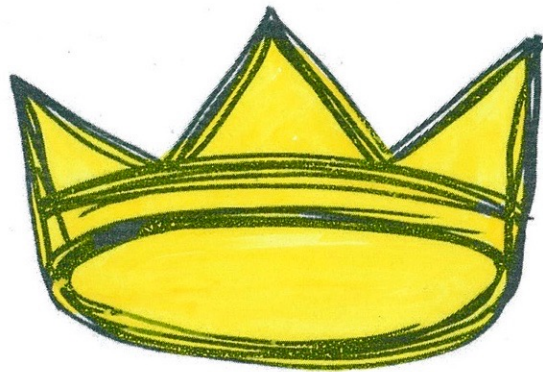
Romans 10:9

***"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."***

Revelation 3:20

***Jesus says: "Look I'm standing at the door and knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and them with me."***

## A CLOSING PRAYER



At the end of any worship service, the minister will pray a blessing for the church family. The prayer reminds us that we belong to God and that he is preparing us to go out into his world to love and serve him and love and serve the people we meet. As we finish this book all about Holy Communion, here is a closing prayer for your family:

***“Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.” Amen.***