

VIRTUAL COMMUNION SERVICE

Do This in Remembrance of Me

PREPARATIONS

Unseen messengers are present at the Lord's Supper; both holy angels to strengthen us, and messengers from the prince of darkness to try to divert our attention, to turn our thinking from the solemnity of the occasion. So reverent and meaningful is the service that we feel deeply Christ's presence, hear His still small voice speaking to us, feel the Holy Spirit working on our hearts, thus Satan's angels can have no influence on us.

In partaking of the bread, the symbol of our Lord's broken body, and the wine, a symbol of His spilled blood, our thoughts turn once more to His suffering, His great sacrifice, and His infinite love for us. The scenes of Calvary pass before our mental eye.

The Lord's Supper is not to be a season of sorrowing, a time to remember our sins or past religious experiences. Communion services should be as refreshing rain, bathing us with renewed spiritual strength. They should put a song of praise and thanksgiving upon our lips, and point forward to that wonderful day when we will hold Communion in heaven with our resurrected Lord.

We practice open communion for those who have been baptized in Jesus Christ. We cannot read the inner thoughts of those Christians who assemble with us, but we know that the Holy Spirit is present to woo any resisting sinners who make only a profession of faith. Who can say that, as the Spirit uplifts the loving Christ, no one will respond to this act of cleansing and fellowship?

Notice this counsel for the church: *“Christ’s example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord’s Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Cor. 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? . . . There may come into the company persons who are not in heart servants of truth and holiness, but who may wish to take part in the service. They should not be forbidden. . . . “Christ by the Holy Spirit is there to set the seal to His own ordinance. He is there to convict and soften the heart. Not a look, not a thought of contrition, escapes His notice. For the repentant, brokenhearted one He is waiting. All things are ready for that soul’s reception. He who washed the feet of Judas longs to wash every heart from the stain of sin.”* White, *The Desire of Ages*, p656.

Christianity, as it is portrayed in the Scriptures, is a believer’s religion. To enter into union with Jesus Christ through the rite of baptism, an individual must be old enough **(1)** to understand the truths of the faith (see Matt. 28:20), **(2)** to make an intelligent commitment to Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour and Lord (Acts 16:30, 31), and **(3)** to repent from sin (Acts 2:38).

Like baptism, foot washing is a believer’s ordinance—as is the Communion service, a ritual reaffirmation of the believer’s faith in Jesus Christ. The focus of the Communion meal emphasizes the believer’s profession of faith in his Redeemer and union with like believers who compose the church—Christ’s body.

So Let us do as Christ has done and partake of this act of cleansing and communion, looking forward to that blessed day when we shall all be together, in one place, fellowshiping with Christ face to face!

Due to the separation of God's people during these last days, for a number of reasons, by God's grace we have developed a way for each to participate with us in partaking of communion services. These services include the ordinance of humility—foot washing. The pastor will direct you on the ordinances—foot washing and receiving communion. All you need to do is make the necessary preparations for foot washing, have the emblems ready and follow along online.

Because this communion will take a little extra preparation on your part, **here's what you can do:**

Prepare your heart: Ask the Lord to prepare your heart and ask for His forgiveness. Seek to forgive anyone who has wronged you, and make peace with anyone you have wronged.

Prepare a table or place for the emblems before our worship service begins.

- ❑ Gather and place your foot washing materials (i.e. towels and warm water) where you intend to use them.
- ❑ Ensure that there are enough basins/towels for everyone in your home who plans to participate.
- ❑ Fill washbasins, large pots, or other vessels with hot water to ensure that it is still warm by the time foot washing begins.
- ❑ Background music should be played during this portion of the service (8-10 minutes approximately).

Communion Bread

The story is told of a deaconess who, having been asked to make communion bread, felt the privilege and sacredness that went with this task. On Friday morning she cleaned her house thoroughly. Then she bathed, put on fresh, clean clothing, read appropriate chapters from *The Desire of Ages*, and had prayer and meditation. Finally, putting on a clean apron, with loving hands she made the bread, a song of praise on her lips. It is a wonderful story!

Only the finest ingredients should be used for the emblems as they represent the Savior. Scriptures tell us that the bread used in the feast of the Passover and that used in the Lord's Supper was unleavened. The grain was ground entirely. White bread today is but a new invention. Christ is the great Life giver, but white bread, depended upon exclusively for food and hardly of any nutritional value, cannot sustain life. Whole grain flour is thus recommended.

[Exodus 29:40](#) and [Leviticus 2:1](#) give special directions as to the ingredients that are used in making of bread for sacramental purposes, "fine flour," "mingled with . . . beaten oil." Since sin is often symbolized by leaven/yeast in Scripture, the important thing here is that it is *unleavened* bread, as it contains no yeast or other leavening agent.

Such items as Wheat Thins and Soda Crackers contain leavening and cannot be used for the Lord's Supper. Some stores do carry kosher unleavened wafers specifically made for communion and these can be used. You can also make your own bread to use. **Here is a good recipe for making communion bread:**

- ❑ 1 cup fine-ground flour (preferably whole grain)
- ❑ 1/4 teaspoon salt
- ❑ 2 tablespoons cold water
- ❑ 1/4 cup olive or other vegetable oil

Sift the flour and salt together. Pour the water into the oil, but **do not stir**. Add to the dry ingredients and mix with a fork until all the flour is dampened. Roll out between two sheets of waxed paper to the thickness of thick pie pastry. Place on an un-greased, floured baking sheet. Bake at 450 for 10 to 15 minutes. Watch carefully during the last five minutes so that the bread will not burn. You may half this recipe for smaller groups.

Communion Wine (Unfermented Grape/Raisin Juice)

Wine used for communion services must be the best quality grape juice. The juice of raisins may be used if it is impossible to obtain grape juice. Purchase an appropriate amount of grape juice, such as Welch's 100% grape juice. Be sure that it is 100% grape juice with **no added sugar or artificial sweeteners** for such sweeteners that are not natural to the grape are considered a symbol of sin and Jesus had no sin.

EMBLEMS DURING THE SERVICE

Take out as much bread as you need for yourself/your family or group, if you baked your own then break the bread into enough pieces for all and set it on a special plate. Pour a small amount of grape juice in a glass for each participant. Put remainder of juice in the refrigerator. The grape juice in the cups will be blessed for use in the service.

It is best to finish all the blessed emblems, bread and juice, at the communion service.

FOOTWASHING

Participants reverently gather at the place for the services. In most circumstances, normal circumstances, women are to wash the feet of women, but in some particular circumstances they can wash the feet of men.

*"There is no example given in the Bible for brethren to wash a sisters' feet; but there is an example for sisters to wash the feet of brethren. Mary washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. (See also 1 Timothy 5:10.) I saw that the Lord had moved upon sisters to wash the feet of brethren and that it was according to gospel order. All should move **understandingly** and not make the washing of feet a tedious ceremony."* White, Early Writings, p117.

The pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, having accepted the Sabbath truth, eagerly reached out to follow the word of God in every particular, while at the same time they were careful to protect themselves against distorted interpretations of the word and any extremes or fanaticism. They saw clearly the privileges and the obligations of the Lord's Supper established for the church by our Lord. There was some question about foot washing and Ellen White was given a vision.

There was a question about the propriety of men and women washing one another's feet. On this point Ellen White brought forth scripture evidence which indicated that it would be proper for a woman under certain conditions to wash the feet of a man but the counsel was against a man washing the feet of a woman.

However, *"God wants us all to have common sense, and He wants us to reason from common sense. Circumstances alter conditions. Circumstances change the relation of things."* White, Selected Messages, vol. 3, p217.

We live in a situation where circumstances have altered conditions. In such circumstances husband and wives can wash each other's feet. The norm though is that women wash the feet of women, and men the feet of men. It is encouraged that this be done if possible.

With a family/group it is good to have a person officiating over the foot washing items and handling the basins and the towels; handing out basins with water and towels, pouring out the used water and collecting used towels. Used water may be poured down a drain or into a bucket and disposed of later. Used towels may be placed in a basket to be washed later. Often the lights are dimmed, candles are lit and sacred music is played in the background to give the place a feeling of reverence.

The Pastor comments on the significance of the Ordinance of Humility (Foot-washing) and has prayer.

- ❑ Fill each basin with warm water.
- ❑ The first servant takes a basin of water and a towel while the second servant prepares to have their feet washed by removing shoes and socks. Ladies often leave their nylons on during foot washing.
- ❑ The first servant kneels with the second servant and has a personal prayer before washing the feet of the second servant.
- ❑ The first servant returns the basin and towel to be washed later, washes their hands and returns with another basin/towel for the second servant to use, while the second servant puts their socks and shoes back on.
- ❑ The second servant now repeats the actions of the first servant in foot washing.
- ❑ **Participants wash their hands** and return to seats and meditate upon the blessings that the Savior has given while awaiting the ordinance of communion.

COMMUNION

After the foot washing has been completed then communion is ready to begin. If using your own baked unleavened bread, be sure that there are enough pieces for all participants.

The Pastor comments about the importance of the Lord's Supper and the symbolism of the bread.

- ❑ There is prayer over the bread and it is passed out to participants.
- ❑ The Pastor reads scripture.
- ❑ Participants eat the bread.

The Pastor comments about the symbolism of the wine.

- ❑ Prayer over the grape juice and it is passed out to the participants.
- ❑ Pastor reads scripture.
- ❑ Participants drink the juice.

The Pastor comments and reads Psalms 115-118.

- ❑ Closing Song.
- ❑ Benediction.

LEFTOVER EMBLEMS

The unused portion of the bread that was blessed represents the blessed body of Jesus, and it must be disposed of by fire—DO NOT THROW AWAY IN TRASH OR DISPOSE OF IN ANY OTHER MANNER THAN BY FIRE. This blessed bread represents the body of Jesus and must be treated appropriately.

The bread that was not blessed at communion you may use anytime you would like. Some freeze the bread to use for communion at a later time.

Any unused portion of grape juice that was blessed, representing the blood Jesus has shed on the cross, must be poured out upon the ground—DO NOT POUR IT DOWN A DRAIN OR DISPOSE OF IN ANY OTHER MANNER THAN BY POURING IT OUT UPON THE GROUND—SOME ELDERS POUR IT UPON THE GROUND UNDER A TREE (REPRESENTING THE CROSS).

The grape juice that was not blessed at communion you may use anytime you would like. Some choose to use it at a fellowship meal.