

Communion Encounter

Holy Communion

MY NAME IS:

When you were baptized your parents and sponsors made some important promises. This study is intended to help them keep these promises. Others, such as your Sunday School teachers, will also be helping this to happen. Those promises are:

1. To include you as God's people gather to worship.

2. To teach you such things as the Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, the Ten Commandments, and their meaning to your life.

3. To help you grow up in the church; including such things as being a part of Holy Communion.

You may have already talked many times with your parents and sponsors in Baptism about what Holy Communion means. Your "**COMMUNION ENCOUNTER**" gives you another chance to talk about things, ask questions, and learn more. You will find that there are things in this booklet for you to do. Some of them you will be able to do on your own. You may want to ask others to help you with other things. You will want to include your parents, sponsors, Sunday School teachers, and friends in much of what you are doing. Ask your pastor(s) for help any time you need it. They care about you too!

It would be good to put this booklet and other items you collect in a scrapbook or a notebook so that you have it to look at as you get older.

There are words we use a lot in church, and it is important that we know what they mean. As you go through this study you will discover the means of several important words.

A word you will use a lot is **"HOLY"**. "Holy" means...

"SPECIAL"

Think about the questions below. Write in your answers, if you can. Feel free to have someone help you!

1. What are some "special" things or events in your life?
2. Who are some people who are "special" to you?
3. What makes things and people special?
4. Who might think YOU are "special"?
5. Why do you suppose we call Baptism and Communion "HOLY" or "Special"?

Another word to learn is... **"CELEBRATION"**...

What do you think a **"CELEBRATION"** is? Write your definition here (as always, ask someone for help if you need to):

Who do you like to **"celebrate"** birthdays and holidays with? Draw their faces in the "balloons" below, and put their names above the faces. Include your face in one of the balloons if you want to!

How do people **"FEEL"** at a **"celebration?"** Draw a circle around the faces that look to you like they are **"celebrating."** Add a face or two to show how you think people look when they are **"celebrating."**

We call **"HOLY COMMUNION"** a **"celebration."** How do you think God wants us to **"feel"** when we **"celebrate Holy Communion?"**

What are we **celebrating** at **Holy Communion**? See if you can guess what the pictures below say we are **celebrating**. The Bible verses above each picture will help you to find the answers.

John 3:16

Matthew 26:28

"Forgiveness" is another important word to know the meaning of! Before we can understand its meaning, we need to know the meaning of another word: **"SIN."**

"SIN" is that which spoils life for us and others. It is what tries to get us to make poor choices in life. Sin hurts us, other people, and even the world God made. It makes God sad to see life spoiled, so God does something about it: He makes it possible for sin to be **"FORGIVEN!"**

How did God make it possible for us to be forgiven? God made forgiveness possible by sending Jesus to do what had to be done to take away the hurt that sin causes. Jesus did this by dying on the cross for all the sin that happens in the whole world! Jesus died, giving His body and blood so that we wouldn't lose our lives because of sin. It doesn't mean sin is ever "OK." It simply means that Jesus made it possible for us to be free of the way it could otherwise spoil life.

When we come to the Lord's Supper, God is saying to us: Because Jesus died for you, you can know I forgive you. I let go of your sin. Now, you let go of it and live a good life.

Let go of the sin others have done to you, just like I let go of your sin. I don't want your sin or other's sin to spoil life!

On the blank page facing this sheet make three columns or sections. In the first one, write or draw pictures of some of your sins you are glad that God "lets go of" and doesn't hold against you. In the second one put some of the things you hope others will forgive you for. Finally, in the last column put in some things you want to let go of, to forgive others for.

Feel free to use words or pictures only you know the meaning of, if there are things you want to keep private. You and God will know what you are talking about! Then on top of everything write the word, **"FORGIVEN!"** in great big letters.

The celebration of **HOLY COMMUNION** has a couple of other names that we use a lot. See if you can draw a line from the name to the picture that it belongs with:

We Lutheran Christians talk about two things as being **"SACRAMENTS"**. A **"SACRAMENT"** is a **special** or **holy** event through which God comes to us. From the pictures below can you figure out what they are?

H _ _ _ B _ _ _ _ _

H _ _ _ C _ _ _ _ _

(The answers are at the top of the next page . . .)

We believe that **BAPTISM** and **The Lord's Supper** are "**SUPER SPECIAL**" because three things are true about them:

1. **Jesus Christ "started" them**, and wants Christians to continue them.

To find out where and when Jesus "started" Baptism, take your Bible and look up **Matthew 28:19, 20**.

Now look up the story of how the "Lord's Supper" or "Holy Communion" was started. You will find this story in **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**.

(You may find it good to have someone in your family read these verses out loud while the rest of you listen.)

2. **They include physical things** you can touch, see, and feel.

In **Baptism** the physical thing is _____.

In **Holy Communion** the two physical things are:

_____ and _____

3. **They give us God's "Grace."** To help you remember what "**GRACE**" is, go back to page 7 and write its meaning here:

Pretend that you are a report for a newspaper or TV station. Ask your parents about your baptism. You may want to use these questions that

reports usually ask, and any other questions you want to. (Ask someone to write down the answers for you if you want to be able to concentrate on asking the questions.)

1. WHEN WAS I BAPTIZED?
2. WHERE WAS I BAPTIZED?
3. WHO WAS THERE WHEN I WAS BAPTIZED?
4. HOW WAS I BAPTIZED? (Was the water poured or sprinkled over me, or was I dipped in the water?)
5. WHY WAS I BAPTIZED?
6. HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE PEOPLE WHO WERE TO BE MY GODPARENTS?
7. WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU REMEMBER ABOUT MY BAPTISM?
8. WILL YOU SHOW ME PICTURES OF MY BAPTISM DAY?

When you were baptized there may have been some special people there called **"godparents"** or **"sponsors."** They were baptized Christians who promised to be kind of "second parents" to you.

They promised to care about you and about your life as a Christian. See if you can get pictures of them and attach them in the space below. Be sure to put their names under their pictures! Maybe someone can give you a picture from your baptism day that includes our "sponsors", your parents, and even you!

Write a letter to your godparents or sponsors to ask them what it means to be such special people in your life. On the next pages you will find letters you can use to send them. All you have to do is fill in their names and yours, and add a note, if you want to. Write your own letter if you would rather. When you get their answers, add them to this booklet.

Here is **one last question for you to ask your parents.** Write their answers here, or ask them to (add another sheet of paper if you need more room or if they would rather do it on a separate page).

"What do you remember about the first time you took part in the Lord's Supper?" (You may want to ask other family members or friends this same question and include their answers also.)

Holy Communion is a time when we eat some bread and drink a little wine or grape juice. As we eat the bread and drink the wine or juice, they enter us and become a part of us. They give us strength, just like other things we eat or drink.

But...it doesn't stop there! There is a **"MYSTERY"** that happens...
Something we don't understand and can't really explain, but it is **"REAL!"**
As we hear God's Word and receive the bread and wine in Communion something awesome happens: Jesus Christ is here in a way that is different from all the other times He is with us.

First, Jesus comes to us, as always, in other Christians who join us at the Lord's Table. To be "one with Christ" means Jesus is not only in each of us, but also comes to us through all other Christians.

Second, Jesus is present in all of us in a way we can touch and feel through the bread we eat and the wine we drink. This is a presence that is "special" or "holy."

Some people find it meaningful to call the way Jesus is with us as we receive the bread and wine, and at the same time welcome Jesus' presence in each other a **"SACRAMENTAL PRESENCE!"**

Every time of HOLY COMMUNION is a time when we celebrate that we are loved by God, and how we are one with each other in Christ!

In the space below, draw your face and the faces of some of the people you would like to have with you when you commune. Be sure to put their names above their faces! Don't forget to put your own name above your picture. You may not recognize yourself years from now when you are looking at this booklet!

God loves you very much!!! God invites you to this very special "meal," and has also invited all the other Christians who may want to come.

No one is telling you that you "have" to come. You are **"WELCOME"** to

come to the Lord's Table whenever you want to or need to come. Other Christians are also looking forward to having you join them at this very special "Supper."

Most of all, **Jesus Christ is looking forward to having you come to the table, Often!**

Here is a prayer you and your loved ones may want to pray on the day you receive the Lord's Supper for the first time, OR any time!

Dear God,
Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ
to die on the cross for me and for all of us!
Thank you for forgiving my sin,
and for welcoming me
to come to the Lord's Table
as a part of your family!
Help me always to welcome
all of your other children
to eat and drink with us.
Thank you for making us one with you and each other!
Amen!
COME FOR ALL IS NOW READY!

This booklet is intended to be a tool to help parents and sponsors in Baptism extend God's welcome to the Lord's Table to those Baptized into the Body of Christ. It is meant to be talked about at home, in class, and among friends. The more people who are involved in sharing the faith together the more opportunities God's Holy Spirit has to work in the lives of all. There is much more that could have been said or covered. There are things that could have been put in a better way. I welcome your ideas, comments, and responses to this effort!

John E. Swensen, Pastor
c/o Olivet Lutheran Church
1330 South University Drive
Fargo, ND 58103
701-235-6603
My address is:

Today's Date: _____

Dear _____

I am preparing to receive Holy Communion. Part of my homework is to send a letter to my sponsors, and to ask two questions:

1. What does it mean to you to be one of my sponsors in Baptism?
2. What does it mean to you to receive Holy Communion?

Please add any "stories" you can remember about my baptism and send copies of pictures you may have.

I plan to add your letter and other things you send to me to my booklet about this special time in my life.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR DOING THIS!

Your godchild,

My address is:

Today's Date: _____

Dear _____

I am preparing to receive Holy Communion. Part of my homework is to send a letter to my sponsors, and to ask two questions:

3. What does it mean to you to be one of my sponsors in Baptism?
4. What does it mean to you to receive Holy Communion?

Please add any "stories" you can remember about my baptism and send copies of pictures you may have.

I plan to add your letter and other things you send to me to my booklet about this special time in my life.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR DOING THIS!

Your godchild,