

a place  
for you  
AND  
your children

each Sunday morning at  
8:30am and 11:00am



inquisitive. inclusive. intentional. intimate. inspiring.  
[www.evangelicalucc.org](http://www.evangelicalucc.org)  
a church for you AND your questions

Communion  
Eucharist  
Lord's Supper  
Mass

What we often refer to as "communion" is known by different names in different churches:

*Holy Communion* — the word "communion" means a close relationship; sharing the bread and wine or grape juice is something that we do together in community

*The Eucharist* — "Eucharist" is a Greek word meaning "thanksgiving"; we give thanks to God for God's great gift of new life through Christ's life, death, and resurrection

*The Lord's Supper* — this is the Christian family meal; we remember that during Jesus' last supper with his disciples he said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

*The Mass* — this name comes from the final words of the traditional Latin words used during the sacrament, "ite, missa est," which means, "Go, you have been sent."

"Seasons of the Spirit",  
Wood Lake Publishing



Children  
and  
Communion



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## Communion

It is a special time when Christians share bread and wine (or grape juice) together and remember Jesus. During the last meal that Jesus had with his friends before the crucifixion, he took a loaf of bread and a cup of wine and shared it with them. Jesus asked his friends to remember him every time they shared bread and drank wine together. And we, as followers of Jesus, still do that today.

*Seasons of the Spirit*,  
Wood Lake Publishing

## Our Practice

Communion is shared each week at the 8:30am service and on the first Sunday of each month at 11:00am.

The words we share vary but most often our pastor begins by sharing,

- words of invitation
- remembrance of Jesus last supper
- blessing prayer

We share communion by "intinction", meaning that we walk forward, take a piece of bread from the loaf ("the body of Christ"), dip it in the juice ("the cup of Blessing"), and then eat.

Before returning to our seats we are invited to light a candle at the altar in prayer and leave an offering in the offering plates.

*Note: Some children share at the table from the time they can reach the bread and do so with remarkable sensitivity. At the same time, we respect each family's need to discern what timing is best for your children.*

## Hints for welcoming children

### *As worship leaders...*

- our invitation to the table specifically includes children
- we include children as servers of the bread and wine
- we include sessions about this sacrament as a regular part of the church school curriculum.

### *As parents...*

- explain the rituals around this sacrament practiced in our community
- talk with children about their experiences of the sacrament
- share some of your own feelings about the meaning of this sacrament
- read the story of Jesus' last supper with his friends, from one of the gospels (Matthew 26:20-29; Mark 14:17-25; Luke 22:14-38)
- talk about the ways in which this "meal" is similar to and different from a family meal

adapted from "Seasons of the Spirit",  
Wood Lake Publishing



Following Jesus' example, we gather as a community to "worship, learn, and serve." This practice is graphically represented by the Seasons of the Spirit logo as the blue wind moves among us (worship), the green leaf grows (learn), and the brown hand reaches outward (serve).

## Reflection

As I hold the bread each Sunday, I name each person coming forward (to the extent that my post-40 memory will allow). This exchange is holy, the presence of the living God is palpable as our eyes meet over the breaking bread.

Sometimes the mood shifts even to joviality as a child frowns and offers an innocent "no, thank you!" or if the bread of the day seems unbreakable. But even in these moments, I cherish this sacred space. "George, the body of Christ shared with you."

The treasure of the moment certainly lends insight into the timeless debates around who is welcome at the table. In our tradition the debate centers around the appropriate age, the words to be used, and the type of bread shared. In some traditions there is an element of recipient 'worthiness'. But the rules seem to miss the holiness of the experience.

As I speak the name of each congregant coming forward and experience that moment of connection, I am awed by the intangible truth that there is a spirit at play which is not in my control. To be sure, in fifteen years of serving the bread I have encountered situations where I wanted to duck into another line. I can vividly recall times that I wished to avoid serving a person with whom I had conflict or concern. But it is in precisely this moment of mutual vulnerability that the spirit is most vibrant.

The irony of this moment is that it is exactly the cumulative effect of these moments that will shape us into the persons of faith that the spirit would have us be.