



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Do Justice · Love Kindness · Walk Humbly

COMMUNION GUIDELINES

EVERYTHING YOU THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SERVING COMMUNION AT WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

People Needed

1. The team includes two pastors and five servers; the organizer recruits:
 - Two to serve wine (W)
 - Two to serve grape juice (J)
 - One to “direct traffic” (T)

While on the chancel, the servers are stationed as shown here with their backs to the congregation.

W J T J W

Supplies Needed

2. The key to the Sacristy resides in a plastic pouch on the pulpit shelf. After using it, ALWAYS be certain to return it to the pulpit shelf.
3. A day or two before the service, check the Sacristy for wine, grape juice supplies. Gluten free baguettes can be purchased at Whole Foods. September through May you will need 8 loaves for the two services. 6 get cut up and 2 remain whole for Chris to break (do not cut these). The bread is frozen so please check mid- week to make sure there is enough in stock at Whole Foods. Thaw and slice Saturday and place in zip lock bags for Sunday use. Purchase any other supplies as needed. No wine sales on Sunday morning, plan ahead!
4. You will need the following supplies per service.
(The quantity would be doubled from September to May since there are two services per Sunday)
 - Grape juice - at least 20 ounces
 - Rose or blush wine – at least 12 ounces (75cl = 25 oz.)
 - 3 baguettes sliced and one left whole

Setting up prior to distribution

5. Fill two goblets about 3/4 full with wine and two others with grape juice. While providing enough for the service, do not fill overfill. Place pieces of bread in each of the two baskets. Pour 4-5 oz. of grape juice in the pitcher and place it in the center of the communion table with an empty goblet beside it. Arrange the communion table as follows as you face the table with the congregation at your back:

Wine Juice Bread Pitcher Goblet Bread Juice Wine

Cover the bread with an unfolded napkin and the filled goblets with a folded napkin.

For the organist, fill a small glass communion cup with juice and place a piece of bread on a small plate. Set them both on the left side of the organ.

Serving

6. 15 minutes before the service, the entire team, servers and pastors together, will meet in the Holderness Mission Center to confirm details and to center themselves through prayer.

7. After the pastors have said the words of invitation, the lead pastor will nod for the servers to come forward, placing themselves in the order shown in paragraph one. When the pastors have prepared the bread for serving and distributed the **cups** to the servers, the lead pastor will nod to indicate that all should take their stations. The servers will step down to the sanctuary floor with the wine servers at each end and the grape juice servers second in between the wine server and the pastors.

8. Westminster uses the Eucharistic practice of intinction – dipping the bread in the wine so that a communicant receives both elements together. As each person approaches, make eye contact (call them by name if known), hold the cup forward and say either “The blood of Christ” or “The cup of Salvation.” Some communicants, especially visitors from other denominations/churches, may be accustomed to a different way of receiving the wine element and may attempt to drink directly from the cup. If they have already eaten the bread, work with the pastors to be as gracious as possible, and the pastors can offer another piece of bread. There is no best way to handle this situation, just seek to work well with the person and the leaders beside you. Again, be gracious.

9. The choir and lector will receive communion before the rest of the congregation. Once communion is served to the choir and lector, the (T) server will invite congregants on each side to come forward. About midway down the center aisle, the “T” server should signal to those in the balcony to come forward. Be certain to ask those who did not leave their pew if they would like to be served. As the last person approaches the chancel, tell one of the pastors about those wishing to be served at their pew. A server with grape juice will join the pastor in serving those individuals. Also be sure there are no individuals in the choir who may need to be served.

Once serving is complete, the team will return to the communion table where the **pastors** will offer communion the servers and each other. The pastors will cover the remaining elements and dismiss the team to return to their seats.

Cleaning Up

10. The elder in charge of the 11am service is responsible for washing the utensils after that service and for laundering and ironing the communion linens. These linens are fragile and should be washed on a “delicate” cycle. **Do not** send them to a commercial laundromat. As the table cloths are ironed, they should be rolled and stored into a special round holder found in the sacristy so they will not have wrinkles or creases. Napkins are in bags with the correct amount for each service. The napkins should be ironed and folded and replaced in the bags for the next services. In light of this laundry duty, a fair

division of labor has the elder who organizes communion at the 8:30am service, purchase the supplies for both services, clean up following the 8:30 service and set up for the 11am service. A vacuum and brooms are in the closet next to the Sacristy. DO NOT RUN THE VACUUM WHILE THE ORGANIST IS PLAYING THE POSTLUDE! This should be agreed upon in advance by the two elders involved.

11. After the 11am service, wash and dry the serving pieces and put them back in the cabinet. Do NOT leave any opened wine or grape juice in the sacristy (even with a screw on cap) as they both sour quickly. (Thick mold floating on wine or juice is truly and ugly sight!☹). Vacuum all bread crumbs and wipe up any spills. The 11am organizer also takes care of the laundry as described above.

12. **PUT THE SACRISTRY KEY BACK IN THE POUCH ON THE PULPIT SHELF.**



Suggestion for bread cutting. Cut baguettes crossways in $\frac{1}{2}$ "- $\frac{3}{4}$ " segments then cut each segment into quarters. The bread will be frozen and should be defrosted and cut on Saturday before Communion on Sunday. Leave two loaves uncut for Chris to break during Communion.