

Holy Communion — the bread of life

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Holy Communion is the main act of worship for the Christian Church. It is a service given by Jesus himself so that we can understand what his death and resurrection mean and carry on meeting him and being fed by him. Sometimes it is called the Eucharist.



Party time

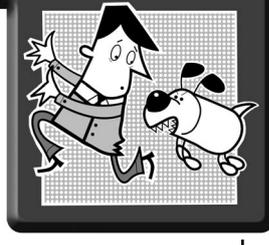
Jesus gave us Holy Communion. That's why it is the main act of worship for the Christian Church.

- **Last Supper** – On the night before he died Jesus broke bread and drank wine with his friends.
- **Breaking bread** – Jesus did this to help his friends understand his death. Like the bread, his body was going to be broken and, like the wine, his blood was going to be poured out.
- **Remembering** – Jesus told his friends to break bread and drink wine together as a way of remembering him. After Jesus rose from the dead his disciples would have

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remembered his strange words at the Last Supper – ‘This is my body, this is my blood, do this to remember me’ – and come to realize that this was a way they could know his presence with them.

- **Thank you** – The word ‘Eucharist’ means Thanksgiving in Greek (the language the New Testament was written in). Holy Communion, Mass and the Last Supper are other words used for this service which celebrates and gives thanks for what Jesus has done in dying on the cross and rising again.



Everyone's invited!

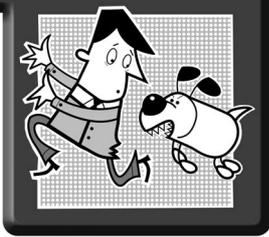
In the Eucharist we encounter Jesus in three ways:

- **In the Bible.** We cannot hear Jesus speaking to us today as people could when he was alive on earth, but we can hear him speak through the Bible. Through readings from the Bible and the sermon God teaches and encourages us in our faith.
- **In bread and wine.** We cannot experience Jesus feeding us like he fed the five thousand or had supper with his

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friends, but he does feed us when we share bread and wine. Jesus promised he would always be with his people. One of the ways he is with us is through the sacrament (or promise) of his body and blood. When the bread and the wine are blessed and broken and shared they take on a new value – they become for us the body and blood of Jesus.

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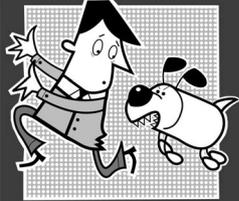
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- **In each other.**

We cannot feel Jesus holding us or blessing us physically, but we can feel his love through other people. The sharing of the Peace is the sign of our belonging to each other as God's people.



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Share it!

But this isn't the end of the Eucharist. The final prayer says this:



**Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son
Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls
and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen.**

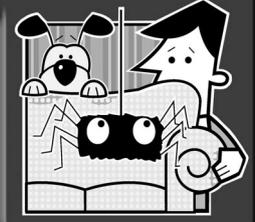
*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the
Church of England (Church House
Publishing, 2000), p. 182.*

We are sent out to share with others the good things we have received. The Eucharist is a party to celebrate our faith. But we have also been issued with invitations to give to everyone.

What is it about meeting Jesus in the Eucharist that you want to share with others? How might you do this?

interfacing

Pray for the many people in the world who do not have enough food to eat.



processing

Where else might we encounter Jesus this week? Think about the different ways we can hear, experience and be challenged by Jesus in our daily lives.



do something about it

Take your second bread roll home and share it with someone else.



coming soon

Next week: Becoming a Christian.

