



Welcoming Baptized Members to Communion

Parent Information

A Baptized Member's Participation In Communion



The Lord's Supper is one way that Jesus Christ nurtures a growing faith in his Church. Including Baptized members at Communion not only enriches the life of our faith community, it also nurtures the faith of your child. The Lord gives parents the tremendous responsibility to do all they are able with the aid of the Christian Community to raise their children as those who belong body and soul to our Lord.

As a parent you are in the best position to sense when your child is ready to come to the Table. Here are some sample questions that you may consider using to open the discussion with your child about his/her desire and readiness to participate in the Lord's Supper.

Baptized members are ready to come and participate at the Table when they are able to grasp that:

- Jesus died for us—including them personally—to save us from the consequences of sin.
- The Sacrament helps us remember in a special way what Jesus gave up for us.
- We receive the Bread and Cup thankfully (as we do our daily bread).
- We are all called to live faithfully to Jesus Christ in word and deed.

Steps Toward Your Baptized Child's Participation in the Lord's Supper

Step 1: The decision of whether a baptized person is able to participate meaningfully in the Lord's Supper begins at home. The parent(s) and child need to discuss the child's desire to participate and his/her expression of faith in Jesus as the Savior. When the parent(s) and child are confident that the child can participate meaningfully, they are invited to move to Step 2.

Step 2. Parent(s) and child arrange for a meeting with their district elder (and perhaps another elder or the pastor) for an age-appropriate discussion of the child's desire and faith. Please note the expectation of the child's ability to express faith is directly tied to the child's level of maturity. It is an age-appropriate expression of faith that is most important.

Step 3: Your Elder will report to the Elders on the conversation in Step 2 and make a recommendation regarding your child's participation at this time or if further discussions are needed.

Step 4 Following the decision to welcome your child to the Table, the child is included as a participant at the Lord's Supper and the congregation is informed and invited to celebrate his/her joining with us in communion.



Sample Questions to Ask Your Child

- When the Bible says God Loves us, how does He show us His love?
- Why did Jesus die on the cross?
- Why did Jesus rise from the grave on Easter?
- When you see the bread and the cup at the Lord's Supper, what do they help us think about?
- What do you do to show God that you love Him back?
- Why do we celebrate the Lord's Supper in a worship service?
- What are some of the things you most enjoy about being with God's people?
- Do you trust that Jesus forgives you?

Encouraging Growth in Faith

Here are some significant ways that you encourage your child's growth in faith:

- Consistently pray both for and with your child for his or her faith growth.
- Ensure that your child participates in church's youth classes and groups.
- Consistently participate with your child in family devotions and public worship.
- Model using one's gifts for others and help your child use his/her gifts.
- Talk with your child about matters that impact his/her faith---what questions or concerns come up at school or church or when they are with their friends?
- Consider sending your child to a Christian School.
- Explore with your child what cultural values and messages he/she experiences through the media or on their teams.
- Clearly, the most important way parents encourage faith growth in their children is for parents to be consistently growing themselves. Ongoing commitment to devotions, public worship, liberally using one's gifts, participation in groups—all model the desire to continue to grow in faith.

Toward a Public Profession of Faith

Baptized members who participate in the Lord's Supper through the process outlined here do not share in the same level of commitment to Christ nor to the Church as do professing members.

Profession of Faith is a public statement that one is ready to commit himself/herself to be a life-long follower of Jesus Christ and a participant in His Church.

As baptized members mature in their faith and after receiving Christian instruction, they will be encouraged to make their public profession of faith and become a professing member of First Church. Full rights and expectations for professing members come to those who are at least 18 years old.

All are encouraged to make a public profession of faith as soon as they are ready to claim God's promises and commit themselves to life-long discipleship.