



## **Extending the Communion Table: Keeping Connected Through the Sacraments**

Communion is an activity that connects the body, mind, and spirit. The first Sunday of the month, or Communion Sunday is a special day for many Christians. Persons who are home-bound,

in a the nursing home or in the hospital often are also in great need of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper which can feed them emotionally, spiritually, and socially. Providing this ministry is an important link back to the congregation, to the church, and to an on-going personal relationship with God.

Preparation for Serving Communion to those not at church:

1. Set time/ make arrangements for the visit
2. Bring Sunday bulletin or material to leave
3. Bring Communion kit (Hymnal for prayers if not in kit)
4. Prayerfully prepare
5. Identify each person's role if not going alone
6. Bring hand sanitizer and hand wipes

Arrival and Access to individual:

- Inform staff that you are ordained ministers and come to provide the sacraments
- Do not interrupt care being given
- Check with Nursing Staff for special precautions for the patient or special protective items for visitors
- Ask if there are dietary restrictions or difficulty swallowing
- Use hand sanitizer before entering room
- Knock on individual's door before entering. Introduce yourself to patient, family, and any roommates
- Explain purpose of visit and close door for privacy
- Some nursing homes have prayer cards to place on door



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## Serving the Lord's Supper

Preparing and serving the communion emblems in a non-church setting should be done in a similar spiritual atmosphere while maintaining safety and cleanliness to prevent infections for the ordained and the congregant.

- Use a napkin or towel to set communion kit upon
- Use hand sanitizer to clean hands before preparing emblems
- Consider whether better to stand, sit or kneel to say prayers
- Assist picking up the emblems for the person if needed
- A straw or larger cup may be used if needed
- Discard disposable cups or items before leaving room
- Reconnect the individual to the congregation (review the morning worship service or recent events), leave bulletin
- Offer a prayer for the individual (and the family if present)
- Ask if person would like sacrament of laying on of hands
- Return furniture and any items to original location
- After leaving room, clean communion kit with hand wipes and hands with hand sanitizer
- Forward information back to the person in charge of communion to the homebound so future servers are aware of nuances, elders designated for anointing, or the pastor
- In case of allergies or difficulty swallowing, substitutes may be used for grape juice and bread



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