

# c@mmunion and children

ENCOUNTER CHURCH

*On the night that Jesus was betrayed and arrested, he gathered with his followers and shared a meal of bread and wine that symbolized his body and blood. He instructed them to continue this practice until he comes again. We regularly celebrate communion as a way to remember the sacrifice and experience his presence through the Holy Spirit. We also believe God meets us and nourishes our soul in a special way during communion.*

# 1.

**COMMUNION IS ONE WAY WE PRACTICE TRUTH AT ENCOUNTER.**

**IN THE BIBLE, THERE IS NO AGE REQUIREMENT FOR COMMUNION.**

Due to its significance and importance (*it's one of two sacraments we practice, the other being baptism*), it is often **common** to have the **question(s)**:

1. can my child participate in communion at Encounter *and*
2. are they ready?

**COMMUNION IS AN ACT OF REMEMBRANCE REQUIRING UNDERSTANDING AND REFLECTION.**

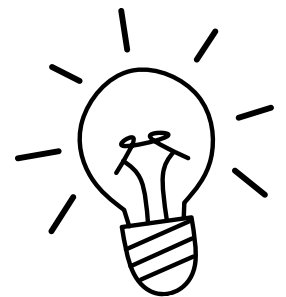
**Waiting for that understanding** and significance; can be a good thing for your child.

The decision of *when* to allow your child to participate in communion is one **you will and should wrestle** with.

The only prerequisite is that the participant be a believer in Jesus.

A simple starting point is: **Does my child believe?**

# 2.



**AT ENCOUNTER...**

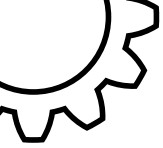
**EVERY BELIEVER, REGARDLESS OF AGE, IS WELCOME TO RECEIVE COMMUNION**

We exist to bring people far from God to new life in Christ, and **that includes kids**.

Children are a vital part of Encounter - as they are - not for the adolescent or adult they will become. Children are a vital part of the body of Jesus, and if we strive to keep **Jesus at the center**, our kids should be a part of that.

**THE DECISION FOR WHEN A CHILD BEGINS TO TAKE COMMUNION IS ULTIMATELY UP TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THEIR CHILDREN.**

# 3.



## EXPLAIN TO THEM WHAT THE BREAD AND JUICE REPRESENT.

Kids *almost* always benefit from knowing what exactly is happening.

tools for the communion decision

The **bread** represents Jesus' body that was broken.

That's why the pastor leading communion breaks the **bread**.

Then you eat the **bread** in the remembrance of Jesus' broken body and death on the cross.  
(Matthew 26:26)

The **juice** or wine represents Jesus' blood shed on our behalf.

His blood washes away our sin. He took our sin on Himself on the cross and paid the price with His blood.

You drink the **juice** to remember the blood that Jesus shed for us.  
(Matthew 26:27-29)

### TODAY! RIGHT NOW, IS THE BEST TIME TO TALK WITH YOUR KIDS

- tell them about your first communion experience or your first memories of communion
- read or share the story of the last supper found in Matthew 26
- talk about the things that make communion 'real' or 'special' to you - *what do you feel before, during and after you take it?*
- prepare a 'practice' communion experience at home, so they are not seeing it for the first time at church

# ARE YOU READY?

### OTHER THINGS TO TELL CHILDREN ABOUT COMMUNION

#### DID YOU KNOW?

THE WORD  
'COMMUNION'  
MEANS  
CONNECTION

**Communion connects us** to the disciples at the Last Supper

Communion connects us to everyone who, like us, have followed Jesus for hundreds and thousands of years.

**Communion is** not a snack - we don't take communion just because we're hungry in the middle of church. That's what mints & goldfish are for. It's **a meal for the soul**, not the body.

Communion is not a to-go meal - **finish it when you receive it**, there are no 'to-go' bags.